

The Ancient Paths: Guidance

Exodus 13:21-22 ❖ Philippians 1:9-10

"The will of God is discovered as we become acquainted with Him, learn His ways and become His friend. As the friendship grows, we will know instinctively what actions would please Him, what decisions would be in accord with His way."
("Study Guide for 'Celebration of Discipline,'" Richard Foster, p. 68)

Guidance 101

In 1997, when I was the pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Greenfield, Tennessee, I wanted to begin a _____ ministry. There was no _____ media in those days, but there was a radio station that most people in the _____ listened to. The _____ approved the idea and used the church's general ministry fund to pay the start-up costs. The _____ enthusiastically supported the new outreach through an offering that was collected every Sunday. The 60-second radio _____ aired Monday through Friday at 6:50 am and 4:50 pm.

"God does guide the _____ richly and profoundly, but He also guides _____ of people and can instruct the individual through the _____ experience." ("Celebration of Discipline," Richard Foster, p. 176)

God uses the _____ means to guide individual Christians and groups of Christians - _____, prayer and _____.

"Thy _____ be done on earth as it is in heaven."

The fifth membership question is: Do you _____ yourself to the _____ and discipline of the Presbyterian Church and promise to further her purity and her _____?

Three Biblical Examples of Guidance

"By _____ the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of _____ to _____ them on their way and by _____ in a pillar of _____ to give them light so they could travel by day or night" (Exodus 13:21).

"Some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, 'The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses.' The _____ and _____ met to consider this question. After much _____, Peter got up and addressed them: 'We believe it is through the _____ of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, _____ as they are'" (Acts 15:5-7, 11).

Paul wrote, "This is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in _____ and depth of _____, so that you may be able to _____ what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ" (Philippians 1:9-10).

Three Historical Examples of Guidance

At the annual meeting of the Society of _____ in Philadelphia in 1758 a _____ decision was reached that _____ was wrong. By 1776, every Quaker in America had _____ his or her slaves.

In opposition to the _____ of church leaders and members in Germany who supported the _____, the Confessing Church in 1934 courageously adopted "The Theological Declaration of Barmen." It stated that Jesus Christ was Lord, not _____.

In 2008 a unanimous recommendation of the _____ at HHPC led to a unanimous vote of the _____ to leave the PCUSA and join the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

"Blest Be the Tie that Binds"

Rev. John Fawcett began his ministry in a small church in an _____ town in northern England. The congregation could barely pay him a minimal salary, partly in _____ and wool. Under his leadership, the congregation began to _____, and a _____ had to be added. His growing family was often _____, so in 1782 when he received a call from a large, _____ church in London, he accepted. But as they were leaving, members of the church came and begged them to _____, which they did - for _____ years. The next Sunday, Rev. Fawcett wrote this hymn:

"Blest be the tie that _____ our _____ in Christian love;
The fellowship of _____ minds is like to that above."

Practical Advice on Guidance

"We cannot _____ revival, but we can _____ our sails to catch the wind from heaven when God chooses to blow upon His people once again." (G. Campbell Morgan)

What might God be guiding us to do as a congregation?

What might God be guiding us to do as American Christians?

