

Conditions for Divine Guidance Walter Beuttler

[Comments: 1) All scriptures are from the KJV except where noted; 2) This message has been transcribed word for word (from Beuttler's own teaching) as accurately as possible (due to the quality of the recording); 3) Beuttler had his own dictionary of favorite words he used throughout his messages, and they have been transcribed and spelled out accordingly; 4) Spelling on certain proper names, airports, hotels, locations, etc. may not be exact; 5) Messages were spoken late 1960's, early 1970's; 6) Beuttler was a Bible teacher at NBI (a.k.a. EBI, Eastern Bible Institute) for 32 years traveling worldwide since early 1950's until a year before he went to be with the Lord in 1974.]

Most of my teaching has been in the Old Testament. The reason is that I pretty much specialize in the Old Testament as they are my major subjects in the school. Even while a student in Bible school, God saw to open up the Old Testament to me so that it has become my general grazing grounds. So most of my teaching comes from the Old Testament, but of course, has New Testament principles.

In Deuteronomy 28, Israel had continued in her disobedience to God, and if I err not, I have already mentioned to you on a previous occasion that in the final analysis, *disobedience is the rejection of the throne rights of God. Disobedience is a very, very great sin.* You don't need to agree with me at all, but I have come to the quite firm conviction in my own heart that *disobedience is probably the greatest sin.*

In fact, *all sin is disobedience.* When you consider that because of one act of disobedience the whole human race fell, and that therefore one act of disobedience cost the Son of God His life, I think from that we should get an idea as to the seriousness of disobedience. When we disobey, it is tantamount to pushing God off His throne and placing ourselves upon it instead of God.

The Lord gave me this definition some years ago, "*Disobedience is the rejection of the throne rights of God.*" What makes it still worse, we establish our own throne rights so that we, in fact, when we disobey, become a usurper. We usurp the throne rights of God over our own lives and tell Him in effect (not in so many words, but in effect), "*It is none of Your business what I do. I can do as I please and You stay out.*" That's what it is.

Do you recall in Jeremiah when God had reproved His people and they replied and said, "*We are broken loose. We will come no more unto Thee?*" They had so rebelled against the throne rights of God that they said, "*At last we've got away from You. Now we can do as we please.*" That's a terrible thing!

And so Israel here is in a state of disobedience, and the scriptures we shall now read contain the consequences of that disobedience. For our purpose tonight, we'll concentrate on the consequences of being out of the will of God.

“And among these nations thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind: And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life: In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! And at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! For the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee. Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.” Deuteronomy 28:65-68

What I’m doing here, in principle to begin with, is to point out certain things, which result by being out of the will of God. What we have here is a whole list of symptoms of being out of the will of God. Now mark these words. These same symptoms sometimes have other causes besides being out of the will of God. You have to be careful here.

You can go to a doctor and you might describe to him a certain symptom. You say, “*Well doctor, I have a headache.*” A headache can be the result of emotional strain. It can be the result of an injury to the head or elsewhere. It can be the result of stomach disorders. If I err not, I read that there are over 200 different causes of headaches. Poor eyesight or wrong eyeglasses can do it. Symptoms can have different causes and I want to caution you about this so you don’t diagnose yourself too readily. Here also, we have conditions which are symptomatic of being out of the will of God. These things may have other causes. Don’t forget that. On the other hand, these symptoms do occur either individually or in combination and in varying degrees as a result of being out of the will of God.

Now these possible symptoms that we have here are:

Uneasiness - That’s in here as **“Thou shalt find no ease;”** *restlessness*—**“Neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest;”** *grief of mind*. Oh! That’s a terrible thing—that constant knowing in the mind. That’s awful! To continue, we have *grief of mind, uncertainty, fearfulness, lack of assurance, a state of discontent, spiritual bondage*. There are others, but these are symptoms that sometimes indicate that somewhere something is out of alignment with God in our relationship with Him. Repeating again, *uneasiness, restlessness, grief of mind, uncertainty, fearfulness, lack of assurance, discontent and spiritual bondage*. Now as I said, there can be other causative factors here to be sure, but nevertheless, when these conditions are present, it might be well to consider, *“Have we somewhere missed the purpose and the will of God?”*

I know a certain pastor and a very good man. He was in a church for quite a number of years. I had felt for close to a year that his ministry was finished in the church. I thought I noticed something that I couldn’t help but feel, *“I think it’s time for that man to move on.”* I liked him and highly appreciated him.

One day we were riding along in the car and he said, “*Brother Beuttler I must tell you something. I don’t know what’s wrong with me. I feel so restless in my spirit and don’t know what to make of it.*”

I said, “*Brother, have you ever wondered whether your time is up as pastor?*”

He said, “*You know, you’ve got something there!*” It wasn’t very long before he resigned and moved somewhere else, and it was evident that God was in it. He went through months of such a restlessness, lack of peace, and it had never occurred to him that that might be associated with the fact that it was time for him to change to another place. Then he took a much higher position, was much more influential after that. Of course, as I said, you have to be careful with that, I understand.

These things that I have enumerated from this passage, to me anyhow, reemphasize the necessity of knowing the mind of God in those things that pertain to our lives where the mind of God is necessary to be understood.

In dealing with divine guidance, we need to consider that the subject can be divided (if that is the word for it) into *two distinct categories*:

There is what I would call, *unconditional guidance* where your guidance and mine is unconditional. There is a guidance from God which is not contingent upon our meeting certain conditions. God guides us in sovereign grace independent of anything we do or don’t do.

Have you ever noticed the passage in Isaiah 45, which has to do with Cyrus the Great? I’m not reading it to save the time. God said,

“I will open before him the two leaved gates, and the gate shall not be shut...and I will give him the treasures of darkness that he might know that I the Lord...am the God of Israel.” (v. 1, 3)

If you are remembering history, you will recall who Cyrus the Great was. Cyrus was an idolater. He was a heathen. He didn’t know the God of Israel at all, yet of him God said, **“I will open before him the two leaved gates...”**

The **“two leaved gates”** were the gates of the city of Babylon. God had chosen Cyrus. In fact, to use Isaiah’s language, God had anointed Cyrus, the heathen, and called that heathen king His **“anointed”** (Isa 45:1). Think of it! He didn’t know God. He was an idolater, yet God called him His anointed. God caused his name to be mentioned 200 years before his birth, and God was leading that man in a phenomenal way—yet he didn’t know God. *Here divine guidance is exercised in sovereignty.*

The two leaved gates are the gates of the city of Babylon. As you might recall from history, the river flowed right through the city. The city was built on both sides of the river. At the river bank there were 25 gates on the opposite shore. Ferry boats connected

the two parts of the city. By night, the gates of brass were shut so that no enemy could come down the river and get into the city through the gates.

There were also two walls around the city. One wall was so wide that 40 chariots could ride on top of the wall side by side. The city was impregnable. There was no power on earth at that time that could take the city, but Cyrus took it anyhow. God gave it to him. Cyrus didn't know what to do, but then Cyrus had a dream. In the dream God revealed to him how to take the city.

He waited until there was a three-day festivity going on in the city of Babylon. He had asked his troops in the meantime to dig ditches around the city outside the sight of the soldiers in the city. He had canals dug all around the city, waited until the day of the feasting came. Then he opened the canals and diverted the River Euphrates around the city, so the water flowed around the city. Cyrus used the dry riverbed to come down with his troops. But that didn't do him any good in itself. The gates were in his way. But when Cyrus got into the city, he discovered that the keepers of the gates were so drunk they forgot to lock the gates. The gates were open.

Cyrus with his troops poured in, and it's at that moment where you have the handwriting on the wall at the feast of Belshazzar, **"Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting."** When Belshazzar saw that writing, Cyrus and his troops were pouring through the gates into the city and shortly thereafter it was all over. Why that's out of this world! What happened? *God was guiding that man unconditionally in order to accomplish His purpose.*

I wouldn't be surprised if most of you could testify to the fact that God had been guiding you unconditionally before you were saved. He did me. Some of you that were in range of my hearing at another time might recall that when I came to the United States, I entered the country with a gun in my shoe, in the instep. I had the bullets in my suitcases. I didn't know Uncle Sam didn't let you in with a gun and bullets.

We had to line up on deck and got examined. The harbor police was there, the immigration officials, the doctor and the custom's man. We had to line up and walk right up to the man in the middle, the doctor. He was examining us as we walked toward him to see if there was anything about us that was suspicious and merited further investigation. And Beuttler walks up with his gun in his shoe!

I wasn't saved, but I sure was sweating. It's a wonder he didn't say, "*Man, do you have a fever?*" I had a fever alright. I had a feverish pride. And I walked up to that doctor and heard him say, "*Okay.*" How that man missed my limping is beyond me. I tried to hide it, but I'm sure it wasn't all hid.

Then it was the customs man's turn. Nobody told me they opened your suitcases. I thought what was in my case was nobody's business. And I had to open up. I still see that custom's man digging like this in my suitcase and feel around like that. I knew he had his hand where the ammunition was. At least it looked that way. He felt around, felt around,

felt around. He took the cover of the case, closed it and opened the next one. I had some more ammunition in the next one. He dug around, felt around, looked around, lifted up, but missed it. As far as I'm concerned, only God made him miss it, because God knew if they found me out, that would be the end of Beuttler for sure as far as the United States was concerned. Well God guides us. I had nothing to do with it.

As a youngster, I don't know what it was, a dream or a vision, but I found myself walking along a road. From the right there came a road which crossed mine. The Lord walked on that road with His disciples. When He crossed my road, He stood still, turned around, looked my way and stretched out His hand toward me. I still remember the print of the nail in His hand. He never said a word, but I could tell on His face what He said, "*Will you come and follow me?*"

The disciples stood and looked at me wondering what I was going to do. I came to and woke up all shaky. That thing lasted for about three months before it gradually subsided. Later on I discovered that (way back then) the Lord was entering my life to bid me follow Him. I had nothing to do with it. In sovereign grace He approached. Many times we are led without meeting any condition on our part, or I suppose some of us wouldn't even be here. But that is not what I'm dealing with here.

There is also *conditional guidance*, and that is what we concern ourselves with this evening. Here I want to take you to Isaiah 58.

“And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul (notice the if); then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.” Isaiah 58:10-11

You know folks, No matter how other people might get away from God, you and I individually can walk with God and be like a watered garden, always fresh in God though everything around us might become barren. This is an individual thing. Now coming back to what we're after.

“If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, If you satisfy the afflicted soul...then the Lord shall *guide thee continually.*”

Here you have the principle of *conditional guidance*, and I find in the Word there are a number of conditions, which we need to meet in order to enjoy what we might call “*the guided life.*” As I said last night, I'm not speaking fanatically at all. I know that God gives us great latitude of choice, but there are times when we simply do need help from God. That's where God has promised to grant such help.

In this particular case, one condition for guidance in the light of this chapter is “*unselfishness.*” That sounds strange doesn't it? But here it is, “*unselfishness.*” One could wonder, “*Why would selfishness be a hindrance to guidance?*” I don't know that I know!

Ha! But I'm inclined to think that *selfishness produces a hardness of spirit, which makes it difficult for God to get to us.* You can do with that what you like. That's more a suggestion than an actual teaching. *Selfishness produces a hardness in our hearts, which makes it difficult for God to get at us, and I suppose at the same time, when we are selfish, we incur the displeasure and the disfavor of God, for selfishness is the very opposite from the love of God. God has a particular concern for those who are unselfish toward others. After all, the love of God is a love, an emotion that gives. The more we love God, the more unselfish we will be toward our fellow beings.* So I would suggest, "If we want to enjoy the continuous leading of God, the guided life, we should have a heart for others."

Now I want to take you to Proverbs for a second suggestion. This ties in to some extent to what we said last night.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3:5-6

There are two things here:

"Lean not unto thine own understanding," and,

"In all thy ways acknowledge him."

We shouldn't be so sure as to place an undo reliance on our own understanding.

Some of you might recall when I went to South Africa a couple of years ago how I had expected to stop in the Belgium Congo. I had an open door there, had a fine opportunity there, had a warm invitation. There was no reason not to stop because originally God had asked me to, "*Go and teach all nations.*" The Congo is one of them. Yet there it was, a check from the Spirit. The Spirit gave me a chorus, "*Not what I wish to be, nor where I wish to go, for who am I that I should choose my way.*" And it puzzled me, yet that was singing inside. I knew it was the Lord speaking to my heart.

I said, "*But Lord, I'm not choosing my way. The Congo is on the route where you've asked me to go. I see no reason why I can't stop or why I shouldn't.*" But it kept coming and got stronger. So I said, "*All right Lord, if you don't want me to stop in the Congo, I'll just pass it by.*" And I did. Was I glad! The very time I was to be in the interior, this conflict broke loose. Only God knows how it would have affected me.

Our understanding simply is not adequate. We cannot foresee the future, so we should not place an undo reliance on our own understanding, but rather make our decisions where they are likely to affect us seriously with a certain reservation giving God the opportunity (shall I say) to recode us, or to redirect us because God knows what's ahead.

Then again, "**In all thy ways acknowledge him.**" Are we in a position to say, "*To the best of my knowledge, I'm here, moving in the ways of God?*" If we're mistaken with such

an attitude, God has promised he's going to give us direction. *Only we shouldn't hurry God too much because sometimes God just takes us on a step at a time.*

When I was in pastoral work some years ago, I had begun to feel God wanted me to move on. After some considerable hesitation, I did. I asked the Lord, "*Lord, I'm willing to move, but what am I supposed to do?*" I had one opening in some Bible teaching - just one opening, that's all. But for me, that wasn't enough, so I said, "*God, I want you to show me what is ahead of me before you can get me to move.*"

And I had a dream. Now please, I don't overemphasize dreams. That was in my earlier experience. I seldom get them now and don't look for them in fact. But I had a dream. In the dream I wanted to go to a far-off place and didn't know the way so I stopped at a gasoline station to get a map. The attendant came out with a very clear map (very clear) that showed me the road to my next stopping place.

He said, "*Now this is your road to the next stop, and when you arrive there you ask for a new map.*"

I said, "*Sir, I don't want that kind of a map. I want a map that will show me all the way to my ultimate destination.*"

He said, "*We carry no such maps. You'll get a map to your next place and there you'll get another one to the next place until you finally get to your last destination, but we have no maps of the kind you want.*"

Then I woke up. I knew what God meant. I didn't have to go to the Five and Dime to get a dream book, "*Maps, Roads, Gasoline Stations.*" Oh, my no! I knew just like that. It's obvious; it's self-evident; you know it already yourself. The Lord was saying to me, "*Son, I'll guide you clearly to the next stop, but you must arrive there before you get the next step.*"

I've learned this: *A step at a time.* We want to make it a mile at a time, and a year at a time. "*Lord, will you show me how many more years I have to live?*" Wouldn't God be foolish? And I'd be foolish for praying that way, if we're ever that foolish to do so. No, that's not the way. How nice it is to walk with the Lord.

You see, I need that too. I mean I have to observe the same thing. Up at school, we're only in school a year at a time. It could be very trying. We never know whether we'll be asked to come back the next year. Now I've been in EBI (Eastern Bible Institute) for 21 years. It has worked that way all these years, but I'm finding the older I get the more concern I have. Maybe I shouldn't. This bungalow of mine is not quite as new as it used to be and I'm a little older than I look. Besides that, I have no home and have no finances to speak of. I have a big overseas program and have to make my commitments so far ahead. In EBI, if all of a sudden in January they would say, "*Now Brother Beuttler, we think it's about time you look for another job,*" I'd really be in a pickle. Whew! Sometimes it almost gets to me. What would I do? Take my family and sit out on the

road by the ditch. That's not a nice prospect! I have to fight that off sometimes and find the older I get, the more susceptible I become to that - haunted by a sense of insecurity. Do you know what I mean, some of you older ones - that sense of insecurity? Maybe you're all secure, but I'm not.

I do have eternal security! Now I've said it! I don't mean the doctrine. Ha Ha! I know there is a security in God, but here again I say to myself, "*Beuttler, a step at a time.*" If the day ever comes, God will be there with something else. That *keeps you on your knees, you know - a step at a time.* So **"In all thy ways acknowledge him...and lean not unto thine own understanding."**

In Jeremiah 42:20 we have something to observe by way of condition, and then I'd like to go on to some other things. To give you the context:

Certain men had come to Jeremiah asking him to ask the Lord whether they should go down into Egypt.

They said, "*Jeremiah, we want to be led of the Lord, and all that God says we're going to do. So will you please ask the Lord whether it's all right for us to go to Egypt?*"

"For ye dissembled in your hearts [You know what dissembled is: made a false pretense in your hearts], when ye sent me unto the Lord your God, saying, Pray for us unto the Lord our God; and according unto all that the Lord our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it." Jeremiah 42:20

They had already determined in their heart that if God told them not to go into Egypt, they were going to go anyhow. And they did, and they dragged the prophet Jeremiah with them.

I want to say something here, friends. I don't know if all of you will understand my thought, and the thought carries far beyond what I say, but I want to drop it in because it has been such a help to me. I cannot tell you in what manner it has helped me because that would involve giving away a certain situation which I must not give away. Let me give you the principle. It might be that you catch it and can use it sometime, but for me it's one of my big anchors.

Let me make a statement first. It might shock you, but I'll try to unshock you, okay?

Do you know that it's possible to be in the will of God, out of the will of God?

"Now Beuttler, I had the suspicion that you were goofy, but now I no longer have the suspicion. Now I know." Think what you like.

Again I ask, "*Do you know it's possible to be in the will of God, out of the will of God?*" Well, it is. That of course demands an explanation.

God did not want the Israelites to go to Egypt. God warned them, and warned them, and warned them over and over again. God didn't want Israel in Egypt; He didn't want Jeremiah in Egypt; He wanted none of them in Egypt, and said so.

Now the Israelites said, *“Pray to the Lord.”*

Jeremiah went to the Lord and the Lord told him, *“These men are just hypocrites. They are misrepresenting. They have already determined to go to Egypt.”*

When Jeremiah told them, *“The Lord said they should not go,”* they said, *“Jeremiah, we want you to know that we're going to Egypt and, you old boy, we're going to take you right with us.”* And they carried the prophet Jeremiah into Egypt so that *Jeremiah was in the will of God, out of the will of God.* Do you get it? They carried Jeremiah into Egypt, all of them *out of the will of God.* But as far as Jeremiah personally was concerned, inasmuch as they carried him there without him being responsible or having made the choice, *he was there by sheer force.*

In the providence of God, God allowed him to be carried to Egypt so that down there God would have a mouthpiece, a prophet to speak to Israel. *Nationally, the whole group was out of God's will including Jeremiah, but personally, he was in God's will, out of God's will under the circumstances.* Can you see through it? I don't know that I could make it any plainer. I wish I could apply it for you, but it's awfully risky. I don't think I can venture it.

It is possible for us to be carried along with a certain type knowing right well that this is not God's direction at all, yet in the providence of God you're in the type, you're helpless to do anything about it.

God will say, *“Son, now don't you worry. I know that this is none of your doing, but you just stay put. I'll use you right in this situation nevertheless.”*

Do with that what you like. If you cannot do anything with it, leave it alone. But *you can be in the will of God, out of the will of God like Jeremiah was.*

He that hath an ear let him hear and those who can't take it or don't get it, just put it to the side. I said it for those it might be a help to. Like Jesus once said, **“All of you cannot receive this saying save they to whom it is given.”** Sometimes in a public message, God says certain truths only for certain people. The rest don't understand it. If you don't, just leave it alone. Okay?

These men in Jeremiah, of course, were insincere. We can't expect God to answer, to guide us if we're not sincere.

When I was in Bible school we had a young fellow who was in love with a girl. I guess you think Bible school must be some place. It is, but not for that reason.

He prayed like this, *“Oh God, I want your will. I want the girl that you have chosen for me. But, Oh God, let it be her.”* He told the Lord he wanted His will, and then told the Lord that His will should be his girl. Did you ever tell the Lord? *It doesn’t pay to lean on our own understanding.* With it, we sure have to be sincere.

In my days in Bible school there was a fellow and a girl who were quite in love. God dealt with both of them not to go through with this deal. One morning I sat next to her at the breakfast table and she said to me, *“Brother Beuttler, if he doesn’t marry me there will be nothing to live for. I cannot live without him.”*

Well, they got married. I happened to be in a prayer meeting in school where God so dealt with that boy and with her, not to go through. But no, they couldn’t do without each other.

Years went by and one day I preached in a certain church, and to my amazement, there she sat. I supposed it was 20 or more years after. There she was. So I walked down and said, *“Well, how are you?”*

She said, *“Oh, fine.”* But I didn’t think her *“Oh, fine”* had the right ring, so I said, *“Really fine?”*

Then she bawled, *“No Brother Beuttler, if I only hadn’t married that man.”*

I said, *“What happened?”*

She said, *“He’s a drunk. He can’t go past the booze room. He comes home late at night and he’s so drunk, he can’t even put the key in the door lock.”* There he lies and she comes down and drags him upstairs and puts him to bed. She’s got some life with that man. Well, she knew better in Bible school. Now she knows that she didn’t know then, but it’s too late. *It sure pays, friends, to pay attention to God.*

Another hindrance to guidance is found in II Kings 6:33. I touched on this last night, but I want to refer to it once more.

“Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?” II Kings 6:33

Think of it! Here is a man waiting for the Lord. **“The Lord keeps him waiting”** so he says, **“Why should I wait for the Lord any longer.”**

We have a saying, but I’m afraid we shouldn’t put so much credence in it. The saying is: *Silence is consent.* Friends, *silence is not necessarily consent,* and you know that as well as I. *Silence may often be reproof. We cannot assume from the silence of God that the course of action we are deciding to take must necessarily be in the will of God. The silence of God does not hold any such thing. Sometimes God is silent because we know the will of God and have the audacity to ask God for His will when we already know it*

and think that God will change His mind. So God is insulted and says nothing as though saying, "You know what my mind is. You have no need to ask a second time."

God is not mocked. *People come to God for His will when they already have it, but they're trying to coax God into changing His mind. May I suggest, "God might do that very thing."*

You say, *"Oh, you mean He might let me have my way?"*

"He might. He might. It wouldn't be the first time."

Do you remember what is written? **"He gave them also the desires of their heart."** (Ps. 78:29-31; 106:15)

They said, *"We want flesh, we want fish, we want to eat, we want, we want."*

God says, *"All right, let's have it."* He gave them the desires of their heart, BUT sent leanness into their souls (Ps. 106:15).

Friends, *it is possible to so press God that God will finally acquiesce to that which is against His will, and let us have our own way to our own hurt so that the very consent of God will become the punishment for our persistence contrary to the will of God. It's dangerous to press God. You can press Him where He will say in effect, "All right, yes, go right ahead."*

"You mean I can go ahead, God?"

He says, *"Yes, go right ahead."* When you go ahead, you'll wish you hadn't. Remember Balaam?

I remember one day at home with my Mother. I had to do some French composition, and how I loved it. (ironically speaking) *"French composition!"* I tested my Mother because I wanted to go swimming.

She said, *"You can't go swimming. Your French composition has to be done first."*

"I want to go swimming. I'm going swimming."

"Go right ahead," she said, but I could see in the roll of her eyes what she meant. I decided it was better to do French composition. Ha Ha.

Didn't I have permission from her? No, what shall I say? What would you call it? *I could go, but there was something in the tone of her voice that persuaded me that it was much better to do my composition than go down to the river.*

"Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?" (II Kings 6:33)

I have a couple of big problems on my hands too friends - very big ones. I'm holding them before the Lord. In the natural, I know what I'd like to do. Um! I'd like to follow a certain course of action, and all the circumstances, except one, point in that direction. So *I spread my problem out before the Lord. I don't say much to Him; I just sit there on the floor. He knows what I mean.*

The other day I talked to Wife saying, "*Elizabeth, I'm afraid to go ahead without clearance from God.*"

She said, "*I feel the same way. Let's not make a move until we get a clear okay from God.*"

God hasn't said, "*Boo,*" one way or the other.

I have learned to *abide in the calling in which we're called until the call comes to go in a different direction. It's better to stay put than to move on your own.*

With the mountain climbers in Europe, of course they have their rules of safety. They have a rule there that goes something like this:

If you're in the mountains, and suddenly you're overtaken by a fog, sit down. Don't try to find your way through the fog, but sit down. Wait until the fog lifts—don't move.

Some of those mountaineers have settled down in the fog only feet from thousand-foot precipices that they have gone up, but *when they can no longer see the way they should, they just sit down.*

How about you? You want to get moving, but you get into the fog. You just don't know which way to go. *Don't go, sit down, wait for the fog to lift. It's safer. That's what I would. Don't say with this man, "Why should I wait for the Lord any longer." Do nothing with the silence of God for agreement for consent. Sometimes God wants to see whether we really want His will or whether we'll think on our own will and intend to carry it out with or without God's guidance. So He waits to see whether we fail to make that move without Him. I wouldn't take the silence of God to be equivalent to consent. Sometimes silence may be consent, but I'm not so sure that it's consent even half what we find. Certainly, many times it's not that at all.*

I want to take you yet to the Book of Psalms. Perhaps this will be the last thought for this evening. I see I've kept you about an hour. In about 10 minutes we should be finished. Is that an encouragement to you?

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee."

Psalms 32:8-9

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.” Notice two things, **“I will instruct thee and teach thee.”**

Obviously these are two different things. These aren't synonymous ideas.

“I will instruct thee and teach thee.” The writer makes a distinction here between instruction and teaching. *The instruction has to do with instruction by word of mouth.*

When my daughter was in high school, of course she wanted to drive. Now the next one's coming along. *“When will you let me drive? Will you let me drive to Long Island?”*

“Long Island! Well, there's plenty of time.”

“I haven't got the time.”

Whew! When those teenagers want to drive that's when you lose your sleep. I do anyhow. It's coming, you might as well be ready.

So I took her out in the car, although we let her take driver training. I'm sure it's much better, but she couldn't wait quite that long. I'd say, *“Now Myra, this is this, and this is that; you do this, and you do that.”*

She said, *“Oh yea, yea.”* Well you know. That's *“instruction.”*

“All right, now get behind the wheel. Now comes the practice.” That's the *“teaching.”*

First come the principles; I suppose what I do here is instructing.

But then we learn in the experience. God has to teach us experimentally.

Instruction here has to do with instruction, giving directions.

The teaching is more particularly a reference to teaching us divine guidance experimentally in actual experience. That's right. The Lord will take us through our problems, and in our problems teach us to discern His will.

“I will guide thee with mine eye.” Do you know this thought: *The Lord has promised to guide us.* If we didn't need it, why would it be promised? **“I will guide thee with mine eye.”** This is hard to explain - it's better felt than telt.

I'll put it this way, first in principle, then by illustration. To me, this is *guidance by intimation.* Do you know *sometimes the Lord intimates?* Divine guidance can become so delicate that there isn't much to it. This is what the Lord gave me one year.

There have been times when the Lord was dealing with me, waking me up at night quite *sensationally*. That's not the right word, *phenomenally* maybe. Well, I'll let it go. *But then it got to be so faint that it was hardly perceptible and I became concerned.* I thought I was backsliding and said, "*Lord, I'm worried. There was a time when you called me so clearly and now I can hardly notice you.*" I thought it should be the other way around, and the Lord gave me this:

"The farther you are away, the louder I have to speak."

I said, "*I get it Lord.*"

"The farther you are away, the louder I have to speak." There's a lot to that.

If my girl is a long way off playing ball, I'll shout, "*Norma.*" But if she's near, I might just give her a nudge to get her attention. *Do you know there's such a thing as the Lord simply giving you a nudge, guiding you by intimation?*

One day in Germany we had company for tea, coffee, and cake. Of course, Mother had trained us or tried to. The company was there and I was drinking my coffee the way I shouldn't. I'd take my spoon and loudly sip in the coffee. I do that a lot at home and you can hear me sipping. Mother was engaged in conversation and she broke off conversation right in the middle, but never said one additional word - nothing to me. But this is what she said with her eyes. Two eyes were looking daggers at me. *She guided me with her eye!* I finished my coffee and couldn't be heard anymore. I got the message. She didn't have to shout or hit me over the head. She just gave me those eyes. Now of course, that isn't exactly the way it works here, but *guidance by intimation is the principle in contrast to guidance which is more (shall I say) pronounced or caused.*

"Be not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee." In other words, if we want guidance, we shouldn't be like the horse or as the mule. A horse is guided and a mule is guided, but you know, they're guided by the reins. *That's guidance by the force of circumstances.*

Some people refuse to pay their tithe until they get sick and lose two months pay. Then they cry, "*Oh God! If you help me get back to work, I'll sure pay my tithe.*" And so they tithe for three or four weeks and then forget about it. Until they lose their job crying, "*Oh God! If you help me find a job, I'll sure pay my tithe.*" *They got guidance by bit and bridle—the force of circumstances. That's right.*

But the Psalmist says, "*Don't be like that.*" **"Be not as the horse."** Really I know nothing about horses. I just about know what a horse is. If I err not, horses can be very wild. I've seen wild horses or runaway horses and it's a terrible thing.

When I was a youngster a couple of horses ran away with a wagon with a whole wagonload of people on it screaming, “*Something has scarred the horses.*” It was a horrifying sight. I can still hear the screams in my memory when I think of it.

Well, *God doesn't want us to run ahead in self-will.* I think that's the idea. *We've got to give up our self-will, not just tearing ahead and pushing ahead, insisting on our way. Otherwise God has to use tough circumstances to guide us. He doesn't want to do that. He wants to guide us more gently than that, not as the mule. You see, both of them lack understanding - “which have no understanding.” God doesn't want us to be horsish (that's a Beuttlerism) or mulish.*

I don't know that much more about mules than about horses. We had a boy in school, a foreigner, and he had a mule. He told me one day that he took his mule out to the farm and without any provocation of any kind that he could discern, the mule simply stood still and lay down in the middle of the road. There it was, in the road. He said that mule just wouldn't move. He said, “*I gave that mule some kick thinking he'd jump forward, but nope. Do you know why he didn't? He was a mule. So I went up front and pulled him, but do you think he'd move? Nope! Why not? It's a mule. I began to clap and try to coax him, but it didn't work, nothing helped. That mule wouldn't move simply because it was a stubborn mule.*”

Of course, there are no stubborn mules in the Full Gospel Church in Washington, but in some other states, they have mules. You can't do anything with them. There is no provocation. If they don't want to, they don't want to and that's it.

“*Suzy, will you teach Sunday School next Sunday for us?*”

“*No.*”

“*Now look here.*”

“*No.*”

“*Not just once?*”

“*No.*”

“*Why not?*”

“*I don't know. Because I don't want to.*”

“*Wouldn't you consider just once?*”

“*No.*”

Of course you don't have those people in Washington, but some places are full of them. *If we want guidance, we need to be pliable.*

You recall the statement by the Psalmist, **“The meek he will guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his ways.”** (Ps. 25:9)

What we have here in contrast to stubbornness is *meekness of spirit - a pliability in our spirit that enables God to guide us gently rather than by the force of circumstances.*

Now coming back to our original point in closing.

“Lean not on thine own understanding.”

If we eliminate the hindrances, these aren't all of them, but at least those that I have mentioned, and bring to God a submissiveness of will and a meekness of spirit, God has promised to guide us.

As we read in Proverbs, *we ought not put too much confidence in our own ability.*

Some years ago I arrived in the city of Halifax, Nova Scotia by boat from Europe. Upon entering the harbor, I couldn't help but notice a ship over to the right. The front of the ship stood out of the water and appeared to be a nice boat, the rest was submerged. For years I had wondered about that ship because somehow I had the impression that something must have gone wrong somewhere, obviously.

One day we had a student from Halifax and I said, *“Do you have any knowledge what that was?”*

He said, *“Oh yes, I know.”*

“Well, what was the trouble?”

He said, *“That was a British ship with a new captain. The ship came from England to Halifax and struck a very unusual heavy fog.”* Now we know of course, that all ships are guided into port by a special pilot that goes on board some distance out. *“While this ship was still a considerable distance at sea, the port wired him and asked him to stop; that they were sending a pilot out beyond the usual distance to bring his ship in.”*

The captain radioed back that he was going to proceed and affirmed that he would have no problem to bring the ship in. So he proceeded and his ship went on the rocks in the fog, it sank and he lost his commission.

So it is with life. *There are times when we get into what we'll call unusually heavy fogs, where we need a special pilot, special assistance. Friends, this is where we need to take it easy and recognize that we may not be able to rely upon our own ability, but better wait to let our heavenly pilot come on board and guide us on our way.*

Now we'll call that an evening and the Lord bless you.