

OBTAINING GOD'S GUIDANCE

Psalm 25:4-5 ... "Show me your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; on you I wait all the day."

When you need to make an important decision, you have several options. You can trust your instincts or seek the advice of friends, who may not care enough about you to give you sound advice. Some people look for answers in self-help books, while others study how people they idolize make decisions and pattern their own decisions after their idols. And, still more cross their fingers, close their eyes and take a chance that the decision they make is correct. These alternatives are the cause of broken hearts, unwed pregnancies, financial debt, and even death. However, as a believer you can invite God to guide you.

There are several reasons why you may forfeit your opportunity to obtain God's guidance. You may have tried in the past and heard nothing. Friends may discourage you by telling you they waited years for guidance. Another reason you may skip the God option, is that you feel your need to make a decision is immediate and that God may delay his guidance to teach you something. You are in no mood for another lesson. You do not have time to struggle through another trial. You feel you must have an answer now. Not next week, not tomorrow, but NOW.

I have some good news and some bad news. First, the bad news. If you are not a genuine, born-again follower of Christ, your prayers for guidance are going nowhere. James 5:16 reads: "...The effective, fervent prayer of a RIGHTEOUS man avails much." In Isaiah 59:2 we learn: "But your iniquities have SEPARATED you from your God; and your sins have hidden his face from you..." If you are not born-again, then you have not been declared righteous by Christ and your separation from God means your prayers cannot be answered. God is not deaf, but he will only respond to the prayers of unbelievers in which they repent, before he blesses them.

The good news is that believers – true and genuine followers of Christ who live in obedience to and serve him – have access to God's guidance. That is guaranteed throughout the Bible. If you slip back momentarily into a sinful state, as we all do, you have only to confess and repent to restore your relationship with God and once again enjoy his guidance through his Holy Spirit. So, why do many believers give up on God and make decisions without his help? In most instances, they receive but reject it. And, what about those uncomfortable delays when we desire to submit to God's guidance, but it does not come as quickly as we desire? That is usually because we and God disagree on the urgency of our need, compelling us to race ahead of God and make our own faulty decisions.

God's guidance is easy to obtain. But if you are too impatient for wait for it, or you do not agree with it, you might as well skip the God option and continue to make the same careless and dangerous decisions the way you always have. It is your choice.

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