

Alpha: Session 7 – How does God guide us?

‘For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.’ (Ephesians 2:10, NLT)

Why involve God in the decisions we make?

- God promises to guide us - (Psalm 32:8)
- (John 10:3–4:27)
- God has a good plan for our lives - (Jeremiah 29:11)
- (Romans 12:2)
- (John 10:10,15)

How does God guide us?

1. COMMANDING SCRIPTURE

- General will
- General instruction for marriage, work, money, children, elderly relatives (2 Timothy 3:16; Psalm 119:105, 130 –133)
- Primary calling
- To love God
- To love others
- To become like Jesus

2. COMPELLING SPIRIT

- God speaks as you pray (Acts 13:1–3)
- Strong desire to do something
- ‘God works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose’ (Philippians 2:13)
- Sometimes he guides in more unusual ways
- Prophecy, eg Agabus (Acts 11:27–28; 21:10–11)
- Dreams (Matthew 1:20)
- Visions/pictures (Acts 16:10)
- Angels (Genesis 18; Matthew 2:19; Acts 12:7)
- Audible voice (1 Samuel 3:4–14)

3. COUNSEL OF THE SAINTS

- ‘... the wise listen to advice’ (Proverbs 12:15)
- ‘Make plans by seeking advice’ (Proverbs 20:18)
- Need for testing (1 John 4:1)
- Is it in line with the Bible?

- Is it loving? (1 John 4:16)
- Is it strengthening, encouraging and comforting? (1 Corinthians 14:3)
- Does it bring the peace of God? (Colossians 3:15)

Ultimately, we are responsible for our decisions, but it is a blessing to have others to talk to about the decisions we are making.

4. COMMON SENSE

- 'Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this' (2 Timothy 2:7)

'God's promises of guidance were not given to save us the problem of thinking' JOHN STOTT

5. CIRCUMSTANTIAL SIGNS

- 'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.' (Romans 8:28)
- 'In your heart you plan your course, but the Lord determines your steps' (Proverbs 16:9; Psalm 37:5)
- Sometimes God closes doors (Acts 16:7)
- Sometimes God opens doors (1 Corinthians 16:9)
- Sometimes we need to persevere despite the circumstances and trust God
- Be patient
- We all make mistakes – God forgives (Joel 2:25)

RECOMMENDED READING:

Chasing the Dragon
Jackie Pullinger

The Hiding Place
Corrie ten Boom