

Guidance

The Principle of Having an Idol in your Heart

August 6, 2017

1Jn 5:21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.
Rom 8:14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
Gal 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

I. God has promised to give us guidance:

A. To Israel

Ex 15:13 "In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; In Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation. (Dt 32:9-13; Ps 107:7)

B. To His people

Ps 31:3 ... For Your name's sake You will lead me and guide me. (Ps32:8; 48:14; 73:24; 78:52)

C. Is promised in the New Covenant

Isa 42:16 "I will lead the blind by a way they do not know, In paths they do not know I will guide them. I will make darkness into light before them And rugged places into plains. These are the things I will do, And I will not leave them undone." (Isa 48:17; 57:18; 58:11; Lk 1:79)

D. Jesus promised to give us guidance

Jn 10:27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; (Jn 10:3-4)

E. The Holy Spirit gives guidance

Jn 16:12-13 "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.
(Jn 14:16-24; 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Co 13:14; Phil 2:1; 1Jn 1:3; 5:20)

II. How does God guide? 12 possible ways.

Heb 1:1-2 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, ...

1. Through the Scriptures

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (1Pt 1:11-121; 2Pt 1:19; 2Tim 3:16; Psa 19:8; 119:105, 133; Isa 8:19-20; Ac 17:11)

2. Directly to your spirit

Gal 4:6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" (Rev 3:20; 1Cor 6:17; 1Jn 5:10)

3. Through the blood of Jesus

Heb 12:22-25 But you have come to Mount Zion ... to God, the Judge of all, ... to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.
25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. ...
(Heb 12:18-25; Gen 4:10; Heb 3:7-8, 13-15; 4:7; 11:4;)

4. Through dreams and visions

Joel 2:28 "It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. (Nu 12:6; Job 33:14-15; Ac 9:10-11; 10:3-6; 11:5-9)

5. Through the gifts of the Spirit 1Cor 12:4-11 the charisma of the Spirit

6. Through your pastor (shepherd)

Isa 40:11 Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather the lambs And carry them in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes. (Isa 63:11-14; Jer 3:15; 23:3-4; Ezek 34:12-13; Ps 23:1-3; 78:52-54; Hos 11:3-4; Jn 10:3)

7. Through the elders and leaders in the church

Eph 4:11-13; 2Ti 2:24-26

8. Through your parents (Gen 18:19; Pr 4:11-13; 6:20-23; 13:1; 22:6; Eph 6:4)

9. Through other godly people

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (Phil 2:1-2; 1Jn 1:3; Job 31:18; Pr 16:23; Dan 5:12-17)

10. Sometimes God will use something like a fleece.

Gideon is led by a fleece (Jdg 6:36-40).
Eliezer (Abraham's servant) prays for God to confirm His will by ... (Gen 24:12-27).
Casting of lots (1Sam 14:36-42; Pr 60:33; Jonah 1:7; Ac 1:26)
The Urim and the Thummim (Ex 28:29-30; Nu 27:21; 1Sam 28:6)

11. Sometimes God will use angels (Ac 5:19; 8:26).

12. Circumstances "It came about," used 185X in NASU.

Abraham's example (Gen 11:31-32; 12:1-10; 11:2; 12:11-14; 14:1; 15:17; 19:29; 20:13; 21:22).
Nehemiah's example (Neh 1:1-11; 2:1-8)
Paul's example (the Macedonian call)

Ac 16:6-10 They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; 7 and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them; 8 and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. 9 A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

III. The principle of having an "Idol in your heart".

When I come to the Lord in prayer, I am to be a living sacrifice. I must have laid down my will and be totally sold out to God's will concerning the issue about which I am praying. If that is not my attitude, I am to pray for God to form that spirit within me before I begin praying about the issue at hand. If I pray about the issue while I still have a definite direction about it in my own heart, that "definite direction" of my own will interferes with the signals coming from the throne of God and causes me to believe that God is confirming the direction I felt, whether he actually is or not.

In other words, if I pray about an item and the item is more prominent in my vision or my consciousness and my vision of the Lord, the answer that comes back will be from the item rather than from the Lord. On the other hand, if my vision of the Lord is more prominent in my consciousness than my vision of the issue I am praying about, then the answer will come back from the Lord and will be pure revelation, not contaminated by my own desires.

The principle is that the intuitive flow comes out of the vision that I am holding before my eyes. That is why I am commanded to fix my eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith (Heb 12:1). Thus the vision will be pure. (from *Communing with God*; by Mark Virkler; pg 43)

This principle is found in Ezekiel 14.

Ezk 14:1-7 Then some elders of Israel came to me and sat down before me. 2 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 3 "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts and have put right before their faces the stumbling block of their iniquity. Should I be consulted by them at all? 4 "Therefore speak to them and tell them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Any man of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart , puts right before his face the stumbling block of his iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, I the LORD will be brought to give him an answer in the matter in view of the multitude of his idols, 5 in order to lay hold of the hearts of the house of Israel who are estranged from Me through all their idols.'" 6 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, " Repent and turn away from your idols and turn your faces away from all your abominations. 7 "For anyone of the house of Israel or of the immigrants who stay in Israel who separates himself from Me, sets up his idols in his heart , puts right before his face the stumbling block of his iniquity, and then comes to the prophet to inquire of Me for himself, I the LORD will be brought to answer him in My own person.

Biblical Examples:

1. Story of Balaam (Num 22)

Num 22:1-7 Balak sends messengers to Balaam to come and curse Israel

Num 22:8-14 Balaam sought God about it; His answer was very clear:

"Do not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed." (v. 12)

Num 22:15-20 Balak offers more money and again Balaam prays for guidance.

God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "If the men have come to call you, rise up and go with them; but only the word which I speak to you shall you do." (v. 20)

Num 22:21-30 Balaam goes with them and his donkey 3 times avoids "the angel of the Lord"

2. Jehoshaphat and Ahab seek guidance to go to war (1Ki 22)

1Ki 22:1-4 Ahab and Jehoshaphat make an alliance to fight against Aram.

1Ki 22:5-12 they seek guidance from the prophets

7 Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not yet a prophet of the LORD here that we may inquire of him?"

12 All the prophets were prophesying thus, saying, "Go up and prosper, for the LORD will give it into the hand of the king."

1 Ki 22:13-18 word from Micaiah

15 ... "Go up and succeed, and the LORD will give it into the hand of the king." 16 Then the king said to him, "How many times must I adjure you to speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?" ...18 Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?"

1 Ki 22:19-28 Micaiah is imprisoned

1 Ki 22:29-40 their defeat in battle and death of Ahab

3. Jeremiah is sought out for guidance - to stay in the land or seek refuge in Egypt.

Jer 41:1-10 Gedaliah is murdered

Jer 41:11-16 they were going to Egypt out of fear

Jer 42:1-6 they ask Jeremiah for a word

Jer 42:7-22 God's blessing if they stay or His wrath if they go to Egypt.

Jer 43 they go to Egypt

Jer 43:1-3 But as soon as Jeremiah, whom the LORD their God had sent, had finished telling all the people all the words of the LORD their God--that is, all these words-- 2 Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie! The LORD our God has not sent you to say, 'You are not to enter Egypt to reside there'; 3 but Baruch the son of Neriah is inciting you against us to give us over into the hand of the Chaldeans, so they will put us to death or exile us to Babylon."

IV. Testing your guidance

It is possible to be misled, to receive something as guidance, believing that it is a "word from God", when in fact it isn't. Mark Virkler says that we are to - examine all revelation, to test and see whether it is something from Self, Satan or God. He says; "As the Bible tells us that we can test the spirit, the content and the fruit of Revelation to determine whether it is of God". (from *Communing with God*; by Mark Virkler; pg 161)

Test One: – test the spirit What is its origin?

1Jn 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Self = It is usually born out of meditation, and is a progressive building of ideas

Satan = It comes as a flashing mental thought. If so, ask yourself; Was my mind empty, idle? Does the thought seem obstructive?

God = It usually is sensed in your innermost being; then transformed into thoughts. Ask yourself; Was my mind focused on Jesus?

Test Two: – test the words. Examine its content

1 Jn 4:5-6 They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Self = Consider if this is coming from the wisdom of things that I have learned.

Satan = His words are negative, destructive, pushy, fearful, accusative. They often are contrasted to or in violation of the nature and Word of God; the thoughts oppose or are afraid of testing.

God = His words are instructive, encouraging, builds you up, comforting, etc.; they accept testing.

Test Three: – test the fruit. Inspect its fruit.

Mt 7:15-19 "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? 17 "So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.

Self = Can be variable.

Satan = Fear, compulsion, bondage, anxiety, confusion.

God = Quickens faith, power, peace, good fruit, enlightenment, knowledge.

Mark goes on to make the following comments; "God has given us one another, and together we are the Body of Christ. We find safety in our relationship to a Bible - believing fellowship. All *rhema* (words) involving major decisions should be submitted to your spiritual overseer. Ephesians 5:21 states, 'Submit yourselves one to another,' and goes on to delineate the various areas of covering God has placed in our lives. Each is to lay down his *rhema* (words) before his God ordained covering, who provide safety from our tendency to rush off to do something that is not truly God's will. 'In the multitude of counselors there is safety' (Prov 11:14). Elders are the covering over a church, and those within the fellowship are to submit their *rhema* (words) to them for confirmation or adjustment (Heb 13:17). In an age of lawlessness, order is to characterize God's people. To whom are you submitted?