



FISHERS OF MEN

"And he said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." - Matthew 4:19

*Volume 18 – Issue 1
January/February 2009*

*Fishers of Men Ministries
Jesus Loves You!*

A Newsletter For and By Saints of Christ in Prison

“This God is our God to time indefinite, even forever.
He Himself will guide us until we die.” Ps. 48:14

Seeking God’s Guidance in All Things



When we consider things that are valueless or harmful, it is easy to deceive ourselves (Prov. 12:11) When we really don’t want to do something that is not appropriate for a Christian, our heart will often come up with persuasive reasons to do it (Jer. 17:5,9) Here the Psalmist demonstrates wisdom when he prayed to God. Send out your light and your truth, may these themselves lead me.” (Ps. 43:3) He trusted in God, not in his own limited wisdom and he could have looked to no better source for guidance.

Like the Psalmist, we as Christians will do well to look to God for direction. Why, though, should we trust God’s guidance above all others? When should we seek it? What attitudes should we cultivate so as to benefit from it? And how does God guide us today?

Why Trust God’s Guidance?

Our Heavenly Father has a thorough knowledge of each one of us and can read our very hearts. (1 Cor. 8:6) (1 Sam 16:7 and Prov 21:2) King David said to God: “You yourself have come to know my sitting down and my getting up. You have considered my thoughts from afar off, for there is not a word on my tongue but look! O God, you already know it all.” (Ps. 139:2,4) Since God knows us so well, how can we doubt that He knows what’s best for us? Besides, God is all wise. He sees everything, looks deeper than any human and knows the outcome of things from their beginning. (Is. 46:9-11; Rom. 11:33) He is God, wise alone. (Rom 16:27)

In addition, God loves us and always wants what is best for us. (John 3:16; I John 4:8) As a loving God, He is generous toward us. The disciple James wrote: “Every good gift and every perfect present is from above, for it comes down from the Father of the celestial lights.” (James 1:17) Those who allow themselves to be guided by God, benefit greatly from His divine generosity.

Finally, God is almighty. In this regard the Psalmist said, “Anyone dwelling in the secret place of the Most High will procure himself lodging under the very shadow of the Almighty One. I will say to God, ‘You are my refuge and my stronghold. My God in whom I will trust. (Ps 91:1,2) When we follow God’s guidance, we are seeking refuge with the God who cannot fail, even when we meet opposition. God supports us and He will not let us down. (Ps. 71:4-5)

Yes, God knows what is best for us, wants what is best for us, and has the power to provide what is best for us. How foolish it would be for us to ignore His guidance.

When Do We Need God’s Guidance?

Every Christian knows that we need. God’s guidance throughout our lives, from youth to old age...God is our God to time indefinite, even forever. He Himself will guide us until we die. (Ps. 48:14). Wise Christians should never cease to look to God for Guidance. There are of course other times we feel an especially urgent need for help, sometimes we find ourselves in a fix, perhaps facing uncertain persecution, severe illness or unemployment and the loss of family and loved ones. I am often reminded of Ps. 69:16, 17) where David cried out to God...Hear Me O Lord, for thy loving kindness is good, turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble. Hear me speedily...At such times it is comforting to turn to God, confident that He will strengthen us to endure and guide us to make good decisions. Ps. 102:17 says... He (God) will regard the prayers of the destitute and not despise their prayers.

However, we also need God's help on other occasions. For example, when we set out to witness to our Brothers and Sisters concerning the Kingdom of God, we need God's guidance if our witnessing is to be effective. Whenever we have a decision to make be it about what kind of parties a Christian should attend, how to dress, who we should associate with, what is appropriate employment and everything else, we act wisely only if we follow God's guidelines. In truth, there is no end of the situations in which we need God's guidance in our lives.

The Dangers of Not Seeking God's Guidance

Remember, we have to be willing to follow God's Guidance. But God will not force us to follow Him. The first human to choose not to follow God's guidance was Eve. And her example show how serious such a bad decision can be...we have to think of the implications. Eve ate of the forbidden fruit because she wanted to be like God, knowing good and evil. (Gen. 3:3) In doing so, she put herself in God's place, making her own decisions as to good and evil as to following God's guidance lines. Thus, she turned her back on God's sovereignty. She wanted to be her own master and her husband, Adam, pursued the same rebellious course (Rom. 5:12)

Today, if we do not follow God's guidance, we are likewise failing to acknowledge his sovereignty. Think, for example, of a person who over time develops a bad habit of watching pornography. Is this is associated with a Christian congregation. He/she knows God's guidelines concerning this matter. Unclean things should not even be mentioned, let alone gazed upon with lascivious enjoyment (Eph. 5:3) by rejecting God's guidelines, such a person is denying God's sovereignty and rejecting His headship (1 Cor 11:3) As Jeremiah said, "Oh Lord I know that the way of man is not in Himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. This is a very good example t hat we should always seek God's guidance and not our own. Some may even question Jeremiah's words, feeling that since God gave us free will, He can hardly punish us for using it. Still, do not forget that free will is a responsibility as well as a gift, we are to answer for the things that we do and say. (Rom 14:10) Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks...Our words and deeds reveals our heart's conditions. They show what we really are. Therefore, wise Christians seek God's guidance in everything. In that way, God finds us "Upright in His Heart and will do good to us. (Ps. 125:4)

We also must remember the history of Israel. When that nation made good choices, obeying God's commands, God protected them (Josh. 24:15, 21, 31). Frequently, though they misused their free will. In Jeremiah's day, God said to them. They did not listen, neither did they incline their ear, but they went walking in the counsels in the stubbornness of their bad heart, so they became backward in direction and not forward." (Jer. 7:24-26)

May we as Christians never because of stubbornness or self-indulgence, reject God's guidance and walk in our own counsels and thus become backward in direction and not forward.

Think about it: Every Christian must ask themselves, "What does it take to follow God?" Think about it, pray about it! The answer is between you and God!

Your Brother in Christ, Larry

DISCOURAGEMENT

The spirit of discouragement tried to take me! How could such a thing happen? I have so much to be thankful for. Yet in the private corner of the day, the unwanted feelings tried to creep in and steal what God gave me. I guess that underground mass thought it would be easy because I have been pricked with life incidents. I thought one more prick would be the straw that broke my back. But instead of the break, it dropped me to my knees. I began to thank God for what He has done. I went from despair to an attitude of gratitude. When I looked at what I didn't like, I began to encourage myself and say thank you Lord for this new opportunity. I didn't focus in on what I didn't get to my liking, but rather what I got out of it with His blessings.

Recently, I had some nieces and nephews visit. And shortly afterwards, I received a visit from my daughter. God is always making a way out of no way. I find it increasing important to tell the young ones how blessed I am and what God is doing for me. Just to let them know of my dreams and share those precious moments that I ad with them. I continue to look up to the hills and not give in to the spirit of discouragement. This fleshly spirit has tried to steal my dreams. Each dream has been amazing and a true blessing. God has a mansion of gifts for us. Each gift is promised for the obedient and asking. So whenever there is a setback or disappointment, I know it is a way for a comeback. My faith in God will fix it and bring me back stronger.



I have learned today to change the course from victim to victory. I stay close to the Word to encourage myself. The battle is not often seen from the outside, but is felt form the inside. I know that God will be my protector from the

unwanted spirits. I have felt that I should have been gone from this earth. My mind should be gone, yet God led me thought one step at a time and one day at a time. I turned from the “you hurt me channel” to the “God is Able” channel.

Being locked up away from my family and friends, I don’t often hear good things about self. The television media constantly reminds us of stories of people doing something bad. After some offenders are released into society, they commit offenses again and it makes the current inmates and the entire system look bad. Regardless of what others do, I pray for them and understand that it is not me. Thank you for your letters that I read form time to time, lifting my spirits and telling me to keep praying. When I am down (like now) I can look back and get a hug from your words, which lifts me up. Sometimes I reread my own letters and even go as far as writing to myself. There is nothing wrong with celebrating yourself. I also compliment myself on jobs well done. After all, God did it in Genesis. God created light and said, “That’s good.” God created water, sky, ground, and said, “That’s good.” God created all vegetation and when He saw it, He said, “That’s good.” Finally, God created man and I am sure he again said, “That’s good.”

I know that we don’t often think about complimenting ourselves, but when we do something right, we should say, “That’s good.” Yet, I also realize that you have to feel good about who you are to be all that God wants you to be.

Looking for the upside, I didn’t run the mile, but I saw some beautiful animals. I didn’t pass the math test, but I helped a friend write a letter home. I didn’t clean the room, but I did provide an ear to someone who needed to talk. There’s always something to encourage yourself about. So, it’s not hard to stay encouraged when we encourage ourselves. I just look at self and smile, even when no one else will. There is so much more to me than you know. I keep that tid-bid in the forefront.

A young high school girl was stressed about going to school on Valentines Day because the tradition allows people to send flowers to their friends. Being new to the school and not having any friends, she came up with the idea to send herself flowers. She used 20 different applications and sent herself flowers at a cost of \$5. When the other girls got 3-5 flowers, she kept getting flowers. Each time she would read the card, she would chuckle and say, “I have to write them back” or “I cannot wait to see them and thank them” The other girls asked who sent her the flowers and she responded by saying someone who loves me a lot. Even if no one else loves you, you must love yourself.

This is the day the Lord has made. I am going to live it with expectation. God will perfect that which concerns you. Do not let the spirit of discouragement overshadow the voice of victory that says, “No weapon formed against you shall prosper.” Stay encouraged and thank you for being there for me.

Encouraging you by encouraging myself, Brother Gene

(Editor’s Note: I received this article from Gene a couple of weeks after his mother passed away. It is only through the relationship Gene has with our Savior that he has received the strength needed to endure the trials of this world.)

FREE FOR YOU

Free Bible Study and Bible
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Message from Momm



Yep! The ground hog saw his shadow, so we’re gonna have six more weeks of winter. Correct me if I’m wrong, aren’t we going to have six more weeks of winter anyway! Things aren’t always as they seem. Sometimes we get so wrapped up the trying to figure out the obvious, that we miss the whole point. Have you ever felt God urging you to share your experiences or minister to other inmates through this newsletter? Did you listen to Him? Follow your heart! If it comes from your heart and it points to God’s Word, then you just might have a blessing to share that will touch somebody’s soul. If you would like to share your testimony, please send it to me at the church address below and it will be posted on the FOM website.

If the newsletter has been given to you by someone else, write Fishers of Men Prison Ministries, c/o Bethany Church, 5403 North Second Street, Loves Park, IL 61111. Include your name, number and address, and you will be added to the FOM mailing list. Our request is that when you finish reading your newsletter, please pass it on to someone else for their enjoyment and spiritual food. Tell your family to visit the website at: www.fishersofmenprisonministries.com. to read stories of salvation and God’s saving grace happening in prisons around the United States today. Fishers of Men is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit ministry.

Love in Christ, Momm

IS SPEAKING IN TONGUES STILL USED TODAY? – I Corinthians 12



The question is, does God still give the gift of speaking in tongues? I looked up this word tongue and in the Greek, Strong's 1258, his word is "dialēktās" a (mode of) discourse, i.e. "dialect" – language (1x) tongue (5x).. In the text it is given that speaking in tongues is given by the Spirit (vs. 10). Some may say that the usage of this gift is babbling or unlearned languages. In verses 4-7, it talks about how there are different gifts, but the same Spirit, so meaning being lead by the Spirit. There also are different ministries, but one Lord. Turn to verse 7, "But His manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit the whole church." This is saying that everyone has a gift as stated in verses 8-11. This is to show that the Spirit is working in our lives.

Now Paul has given instruction that if you have this gift, you should not use it unless you have an interpreter with you or your just speaking in the air (I Cor 14:9). Paul also in verse 14 gives instruction that speaking in an unknown tongue isn't speaking to men, but to God (verse 2). So if we are speaking to God, why would we need an interpreter? Because if you don't understand the prayer or agree with it, how can you say amen?

So, to answer the question, of is the gift of speaking in tongues still used, we turn to the original text and look at verses 12-28. Each person in the church makes up a part of the body (verse 12) because we are the body and Christ is the head. Amen! Paul says in Verse 14, that "the body is not one member, but many. See verses 4-5. Paul continues to show that one part isn't any better than the other, but we need all to be complete. Also, in verse 23 where he says, "those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness." But, I will say yes, the gift is still given when used in God's time. In verses 15-21, it shows you can't have one without the other and in verse 21, one member cannot say to another, "I have no use for you."

We need each person and each gift in the body is given by the Spirit. We cannot grow and mature if we deny the gift or refuse to be used by the Spirit. We must cultivate the gift we are given, but not think that the Almighty God in Heaven cannot take us out of our comfort zone and use us with other diverse gifts. Be blessed and may God be given the glory.

Your Brother in Christ, Anthony

BE STRONG AND DON'T GIVE UP!

Remember...there is a deeper strength and an amazing abundance of peace available to you.

Draw from this well... call on your faith to uphold you. You will make it through this time and find joy in life again...

Life continues around us... even when our troubles seem to stop time. There is good in life, even today. Take a few minutes to distract yourself from your concerns long enough to draw strength from a tree or to find pleasure in a bird's song.

Return a smile... realize that life is a series of levels, cycles of ups and downs - some easy, some hard.. Through it all, we learn; we grow strong in faith; we mature in understanding. Difficult times are often the best teachers. There is good to be found in all situations.

Reach for the good. Be strong, and don't give up. I know you're going to make it, and my love and prayers are with you.

Pamela Owens Renfro -- Know that I am with You in Spirit and in Thought!

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**TO: Families/Friends/Chaplains and
All Who Minister to the Imprisoned**