

LESSON 8

AS A SHEEP

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"

(John 10:10)

LESSON 8. AS A SHEEP CONCEPT OF THE PICTURE

1. **Sheep in danger on rocks** Incorrectly receiving guidance will lead you to grave mistakes.
 - (1) **Sheep in fear** If you fear mistakes, you will make mistakes.
 - (2) **Sheep with a blindfold** If you are tenacious in keeping to your own plans, you will make mistakes.
 - (3) **Sheep wearing sunglasses** Those ignorant of guidance will make mistakes.

2. **Sheep walking on road** Those who walk according to the Will of God will be blessed.
 - (1) **Gate of Bible** Prompting by the Word
 - (2) **Gate of Prayer** Peace through prayer
 - (3) **Gate of Shepherd's Staff** Confirmation from the situation
 - (4) **Sheep on side of road** Advice from faithful friends

3. **Image displayed in sky and shadow on lake** Other general principles related to guidance
 - (1) **Jesus holding lamb** Trust in the Lord
 - (2) **Shadow on lake** Desire to do God's will
 - (3) **Lamp** The principle of step-by-step
 - (4) **Scales** Logical judgment

4. **Road split into 3** The principle of a free child

LESSON 8. AS A SHEEP

INTRODUCTION

The Bible compares our relationship with God to a shepherd and his flock of sheep. It makes sense once you consider some of the characteristics that sheep possess.

- Sheep are cowards
- Sheep are vulnerable to enemies.
- Sheep require a constant supply of food and water.
- Sheep tend to act as a group.
- When sheep are too fat, their lives are threatened.
- Sheep sometimes lack judgment.

These characteristics show that they are in need of a good shepherd. Jesus Christ understood that we are very much like sheep and spoke as follows:

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"

(John 10:10)

1. Incorrectly receiving guidance will lead you to grave mistakes.

God has a plan for the lives of each and every one of us, but not all people discover those plans and live blessed lives. To find and confirm God's guidance for you is a basic principle to living a blessed life, but you must scientifically learn the principles of guidance, and artistically apply those principles.

(1) If you fear mistakes, you will make mistakes.

Fear has just as much power as faith, and it works in negative ways. Fear binds people, and takes away their joy, and in most cases it is coming from Satan.

What we need to fear most is being prevented from accomplishing what you are meant to do because of the fear of failure.

(2) If you are tenacious in keeping to your own plans, you will make mistakes.

Have you seen a child crying because the parents don't give him what he wants? Human parents sometimes give in and respond to such demands, but God will not. You cannot approach God with your own plans and expect to find guidance.

(3) Those who are ignorant of guidance will make mistakes.

Those who do not study the principles of guidance are like people that drive without a license. There are dangers lurking everywhere.

2. Those who walk according to the Will of God will be blessed.

God has a path of blessing prepared for each and every one of us. In all problems and despair, there is certainly at least one path of blessing. This is the faith that we have in God. Let's study the 4 general principles of guidance:

(1) Prompting by the Word

The Bible describes itself as follows:

- The Bible is a lamp. (Psalms 119:105, Proverbs 6:23)
- The Bible is rain. (Isaiah 55:10-11)
- The Bible is food. (Jeremiah 15:16, 1 Peter 2:1-2, Hebrews 5:12-14)
- The Bible is fire. (Jeremiah 20:9, 23:29)
- The Bible is a seed. (1 Peter 1:23)
- The Bible is a sword. (Ephesians 6:17)

(2) Peace through prayer

Place importance on thoughts and ideas that arise during prayers. A newborn Christian's thoughts are a mirror that reflects God's Will.

"for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. Do everything without grumbling or arguing,"

(Philippians 2:13-14)

(3) Confirmation from the situation

You must confirm God's providence from the situation. Ruth 2:3 shows a classic example of confirmation through the situation:

"So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek."

(Ruth 2:3)

In this example, Naomi was assured of Boaz and Ruth's marriage through the situation.

(4) Advice from faithful friends

God may speak to you through other Brothers and Sisters. It's best to listen to others in order to crush selfish convictions and build a more solid foundation.

Let's look at the example of the Church of Antioch, which sent the first missionary to a foreign society:

"While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off."

(Acts 13:2-3)

3. Other general principles relating to guidance

Let's study the following four points as additional general principles:

(1) Trust in the Lord

The concept that opposes fear is trust. In Proverbs 23 David describes trust as follows:

- Prerequisite to trust "my shepherd" (verse 1)
- Taking care of daily needs "green pastures", "beside quiet waters" (verse 2)
- Protection in emergency "refreshes my soul" (verse 3)
- Victory over death "the darkest valley" (verse 4)

(2) Desire to do God's will

"Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them."

(John 14:21)

(3) The principle of step-by-step

You cannot see the whole plan at once. Once you move to a certain point, you will be able to see what's next. Let's look at Acts 16—the vision of the man of Macedonia. They were not thinking about traveling to the European continent from the beginning. They went step-by-step to reach Troas, and when they didn't know where to move on from there, they had the vision.

(4) Logical judgment

God made even our logic. Aspire to collect information and make the correct judgment.

- Does this glorify of God?
- Does this bring people closer to Jesus?
- Does this build up my character?
- Is this something that's never been done by others?
- Can I do this better than others?

4. The principle of a free child

Finally, let's consider what we can do when the principles described above do not lead to a decision. When it seems that it doesn't matter whether you choose A or B, we, as free children, have a right and responsibility to choose. Pray like this:

"Dear God, I have prayed asking for your will, but it seems that in this situation it doesn't matter whether I choose A or B. As a free child, I will decide on my own. Please give me a sign if I am wrong."

"You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love."

(Galatians 5:13)