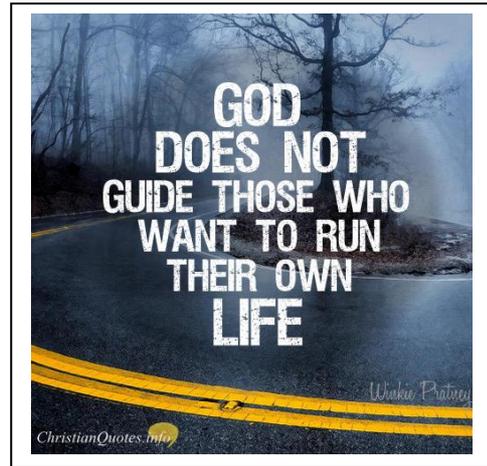


## NEWS YEARS EVE SERVICE

### Getting Guidance from God.

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:1-8

I wonder if any of you viewed my short introductory video for today's service. If you did, do you have one saying or proverb you learned as a child or heard a lot?



I remember growing up and my mum would have all sorts of sayings, many didn't make sense to me. One was "time to play the game and beat the Spaniards as well."

This wasn't one from Proverbs however many of the proverbs have found their way into everyday speech. "Pride comes before a fall." Spare the rod and spoil the child." "A gentle answer turns away wrath."

You may have read about King Solomon, the son of King David. Initially he was obedient to God but then went his own way, until he was repentant and came back to God. He wrote Proverbs when he was middle aged to ensure that his son would not commit the same mistakes as he had. Proverbs are part of the Wisdom literature contained in the Bible. There are 900 proverbs in all, some make points which are obvious to everyone, some seem more entertaining, and others could be classed as immoral.

Proverbs does not contain promises, they are only statements or a word for a situation with many of them generally true.

When you have an important decision to make, do you have a particular person you go to; a particular book or, as we are encouraged in Proverbs – do you go directly to God? He knows what is best for us and He is a better judge of what we want than we are.

Pondering a choice can be like driving in an unfamiliar area and suddenly you come upon a roundabout. The sign in the middle says – turn left for such and such freeway; turn right for this suburb or go straight ahead – but no destination is written.

If you are in heavy traffic, you must decide straight away as the traffic has been going at 60km behind you, and there are horns sounding.

I remember seeing on the news once where a car had crashed into the roundabout, in the centre of the signs. Thankfully they were okay, but I guess they could not decide which road to take.

Often hard decisions must be made. You may ask – how can I know that I am hearing from the Lord and doing the right thing?

Let me read our Scripture again but from the Message Bible.

***“Trust God from the bottom of your heart. Don’t figure out everything on your own. Listen for God’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go. He is the one who will keep you on track. Don’t assume that you know it all. Run to God. Run from evil. Your body will glow with health. Your very bones will vibrate with life.”***

What an awesome promise from the Lord – a promise of guidance and protection. Something we need everyday of our lives. What to

do when you come to a fork in the road and must make a major decision. Those are the times we especially need to know how to get guidance from the Lord.

Tomorrow is New Year's Day, and many continue to come up with resolutions that they would like to achieve. However, most never come to fruition.

### **How do we get guidance for our life?**

Learning from Proverbs will lead us to wisdom, and it tells us that the very first step in becoming wise is to “fear” God. This does not mean to be frightened, it means to stand in awe of Him. Proverbs affirms the truth that God is the All-wise God.

**Examine the motive of your heart.** Ask yourself – why do I want to go this way or why do I want to go that way? Why is more important than what, how, when, or where.

It may seem strange, but we need to have an attitude of “indifference”. Indifference to self – self-glorification, self-exaltation, selfish gratification, and ambition.

And we must have only one goal in mind – the will of God. The Lord's prayer describes an attitude of heart out of which we are to pray – not trying to coerce God into conforming to our will, but choosing to submit ourselves to His will and trusting Him to know what is best for us.

**Are you willing to humble yourself and ask the Lord to search your heart and reveal to you what motives are going on inside? This takes some serious soul-searching.**

**Apply the Principles of God's Word to the situation.**

*Psalm 119:105 says "Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my paths."*

Most decisions in life are not that clear cut, but there are all kinds of principles in the Word that can bring counsel into our decisions.

*Micah 6:8 says "what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."*

### **Listen to the Voice of the Lord in your spirit.**

*Isaiah 30:21 tells us: "your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "this is the way, walk in it. Whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left."*

It is the Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth. It is the Holy Spirit who makes application of God's word to our circumstances and lets us know which way to go.

To hear that still, small voice of the Lord means we sometimes must turn aside from the busyness of our daily activities and turn our spiritual ears toward heaven. God wants us to know His will so we can do it.

We don't have to persuade Him to speak. He is always speaking to us. We need to simply get quiet enough for long enough to hear what He is saying.

To know the answer is from the Holy Spirit, you need to test it with other sources of guidance, such as God's Inspired Word and from Godly counsel within the Body of Christ. Hearing God is something we do in community, not in isolation. Isolation can

quickly lead us into spiritual pride – and that leads to deception, which leads to destruction.

### **Co-operate with the Sovereignty of God.**

*Proverbs 16:9 says: “a man’s heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.”*

The choices we make have a profound influence on our lives. But God never relinquishes His sovereignty. He retains the right to ultimately direct our steps. He is interested in not only getting us to our destination, but in making us into who He has called us to be. Often our struggle is with the process God uses to get us to our destination.

Do you heard subjectively, God saying: “this is the way – walk in it.” Does it line up with the principles revealed in God’s Word? Do the circumstances yield an open door or has God closed the door, for now?

### **Move forward in Faith.**

Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Moving into our destiny always require faith and faith requires action.

We seldom know God’s whole plan when we step out in obedience. We know the direction He wants us to go, and we move in that direction, one step at a time. As we step out in obedience, more revelation comes so we can take the next step. The person who waits until they have the whole plan before taking a step, seldom gets anywhere. It is like trying to guide a parked car – it won’t go anywhere.

In Proverbs, Solomon is urging us to trust God completely in every choice we make. This does not mean we don't also use the God-given ability to reason, but we should not trust our own ideas to the exclusion of all others.

Solomon says: the person who has wisdom is kind, loyal and trusts in the Lord. They put God first and turn away from evil. They know right from wrong and listen and learn from God to always do what is right.