

Wednesday January 4th 2022

Greetings everyone,

Last Sunday I preached on “How does God guide us?” as we come into the New Year. A few people commented on how helpful this was. So I am going to give a brief summary if that is ok!?

The topic of guidance was prompted by the arrival of some Gentile wise men from the East to worship the new born King, which we noted was orchestrated sovereignly by God through at least 4 different ways. A Star that appeared from time to time; The Scriptures (Micah 5:2); A person (Herod) telling them where to go; and later they were warned in a dream to return home a different route. Like a ship that seeks the route into safe harbour relying on a number of lights and/or buoys, the wise men were given plenty of help from God to find Christ.

God’s guidance is promised in scripture to those who earnestly seek Him. The bible says “*He guides the humble*” Ps 25:9 and “*confides in those who fear / respect Him*” Ps 25:14.

I mentioned the 5 “C.S’s” of Gods guidance (from the Alpha Course teaching on guidance), and noted that in seeking God’s guidance for major decisions in life, God will never leave us in the dark and will encourage us with at least two or three of the below:

1. Commanding Scripture – the most common way of guiding our lives where we discover Gods general will for our lives; and sometimes in a more personal way as the scriptures come alive
2. Creative Spirit – As we pray; God gives us desires; God speaks in dreams, visions and audible voice
3. Counsel of the Saints – we need other Christian input from those we trust and respect. In the end though the decisions we make are our responsibility.
4. Circumstantial signs – God opens and closes doors
5. Common sense – using our God given minds ... John Wesley said that God usually guided him by presenting reasons to his mind in acting a certain way.

In our own life, Sue and I have had at least two occasions where God’s guidance was a combination of these factors, and though the times were very difficult in the natural, God opened doors and guided us in ways that we could never have dreamed of. The second of those occasions was coming here to Whangarei in 2010, for which we have been eternally grateful, as also by God’s love and providence, it moved us closer to our family.

As we begin 2023, let’s be more intentional in seeking God’s guidance in important decisions we make, having the same attitude that Mary had “*I am the Lord’s servant and I am willing to do whatever He wants*” Luke 1:38 TLB.

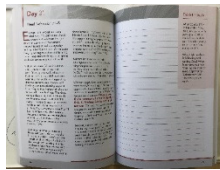
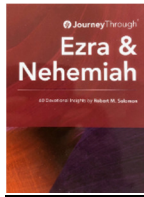
God bless

Lorne Campbell

Here are the notices...

1. **Please note ... the zooming of our services has ceased into the New Year ...** The Council will be reviewing this again in the future.
2. **Our services over the next two weeks are both **Combined Services** and held at Hope Central at 9:30am. Come and join us!**
 - **Sunday January 8th: 9:30am:** Lorne preaching from John 2:1-11 and Mark 2:18-20. Our Lord's first miracle, and its significance. (Tikipunga leading and hosting).
 - **Sunday January 15th: 9:30am.** Howard begins our series on Nehemiah "*trust your question and pray*". Nehemiah c 1. (Onerahi leading and hosting).

Devotional Insights through Nehemiah (and Ezra) - **Would you like a copy?**



On January 15th, the preaching team are starting to preach through the book of Nehemiah. Our Daily Bread have published a 60 day devotional Journal featuring both Ezra and Nehemiah (see above) There will be a supply of these at our Sunday gatherings over the next couple of weeks. If you would like one, please contact the office. We suggest a donation of \$5.00 per copy.

Church office and pastoral needs

The church office will be closed until Monday January 16th. Phones will be monitored over that time and our staff will be on leave at various times during that period. If you have urgent pastoral matters please contact:

Lorne Campbell 021 1356275 (December 23rd - January 10th)

Howard Carter 027 7508602 after January 10th

(Lorne is on holiday January 11th - 31st)

Anybody willing to share picking up and dropping off Stanley Sheehan once a month from Parahaki Court Rest Home Regent. Please phone Colleen (0276052897)

A Prayer for this New Year

Lord, You make all things new - You bring hope alive in our hearts

And cause our Spirits to be born again.

Thank you for this new year - For all the potential it holds.

Come and kindle in us a mighty flame of love and power

So that in our time, many will see the wonders of God

And live forever to praise Your glorious name. In Jesus' name. Amen