

Message for September 27, 2020

Forks. Not the kind you eat with, but what you often find in the road of life that you are traveling. You come to one and you stop, looking for signs of direction. Which way do I want to go? What lies ahead in either direction? You can't see quite that far in order to make an intelligent decision. So you wait and ponder what to do. Indecision can be paralyzing, whether it's concerning a career change, a purchase, a moral question, or a host of other issues requiring a choice. It's hard when you want to do the right thing, but you just don't know what that right thing is. And you fear making a mistake. So until you find out that right thing to do, you waver, racking your brain for answers. Perhaps you've even asked God for wisdom and guidance, but you still don't see any signs to go by. He knows the right way, so why doesn't He tell you so you can just move on? That's not the right question! The right one is "Why are you still at the fork?"

Yes, life would be so much simpler and easier if we had all the answers up front. Or if God would always give clear direction before we had to make any decision. But then we would be mere puppets, or robots responding to commands to our programming. Turn left, go there, do this, make that choice. No chance of making a mistake here. But that would rob us of our humanity and free will, precious gifts from God. No, that's not the way to live. There is a much better way; too many of us just don't see it. It's spiritual. As humans we rely too much on our own wisdom and understanding. And that leaves God out of the picture.

Do you trust God? Do you **really** trust God? Abraham did. He was at more than a fork in the road. As a matter of fact, he didn't even have a fork to look at. God simply told him to go to a land that He would show him. No map, no directions, nothing but to put one foot in front of the other. Abraham didn't know which way to go, but he trusted God enough to choose a direction and let God guide him **along the way!** That's faith. And that's the kind of faith that God wants to develop in each and every one of us. But it doesn't happen if you're frozen at the fork.

So just how does God guide us? One important way is this: make a choice when you are at the fork **after** earnestly committing that decision to God. Begin to act on that decision and then determine whether or not you have the peace of God in your heart. If so, then continue on. If you are unsettled and things just don't seem right, perhaps you need to backtrack and change course. Just make sure you are not responding to human emotions like fear and anxiety. It's amazing how this works, as long as you have truly committed this process to the Lord. He will always be faithful to those who put their trust in Him.

So, are you still at the fork?

Blessings of peace from the God of peace,
Pastor Joe

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths". – Proverbs 3:5-6

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus". – Philipians 4:6-7

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful." – Colossians 3:15

FOLLOW GOD'S LEAD

Have you ever watched a well-trained dog walk with its master? On or off a leash, the dog will slow or quicken its pace, turn left or right, or immediately stop at the soft command of his master's voice.

Such isn't the case with my pooch. Either he's straining ahead or lagging behind, darting after a bird or stubbornly lingering over an interesting scent. He isn't content to follow my lead.

Sometimes that latter scene resembles my own walk with God. At times, I rush ahead or lag behind, veer to the right or stumble to the left, oblivious of my Master's pace and direction. How much better to walk closely with God and let him lead!

"O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart" (1 Kings 8:23, NRSV).

FOOLISHNESS

"We are fools for Christ's sake," Paul says in the first letter to the Corinthians. God is foolish, too, Paul says. God is foolish to choose for his holy work in the world the kind of lamebrains and misfits and nit-pickers and odd ducks and stuffed shirts and egomaniacs and milquetoasts and closet sensualists as are vividly represented by us all.

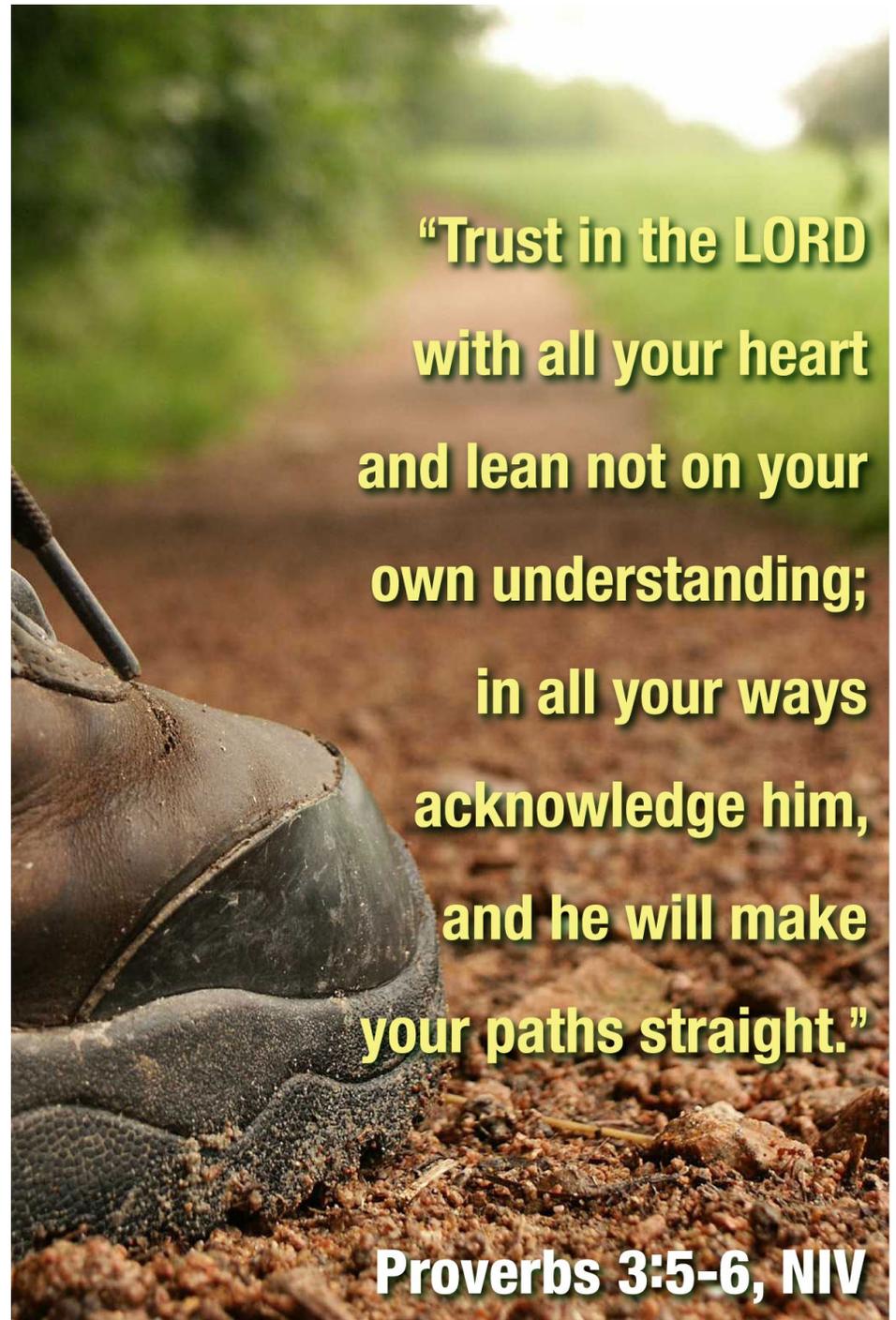
God is foolish to send us out to speak hope to a world that slogs along heart-deep in the conviction that things can only get worse He is foolish to have us speak of loving our enemies when we have a hard enough time just loving our friends God is foolish to have us proclaim eternal life to a world that is half in love with death....

God is foolish to send us out on a journey for which there are not maps, and to aim us in the direction of a goal we can never know until we get there. Such is the foolishness of God. And yet, and yet, Paul says, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men."

-Frederick Buechner

· If you're headed in the right direction, each step, no matter how small, is getting you closer to your goal.

—H. Jackson Brownie in P.S. I Love You



"The Little Church That Could"
"Believing is Seeing"