

Training For Guys

Some more on Guidance

It's been good to read the discussion on the Facebook page on this.

I didn't mean to imply last week that God never guides with direct instructions, only that those are the unusual times not the norms.

When I was coming to the end of my time at University and began to look for a job, I was praying that God would guide me. I was trained as a maths teacher and wanted to be in the school that He wanted me in.

The only thing in my head constantly was 'go to Elthorne'. Now, Elthorne was the school I had been to myself and I kept dismissing this as simply the school I knew best. It was a silly idea, to go back to your own school.

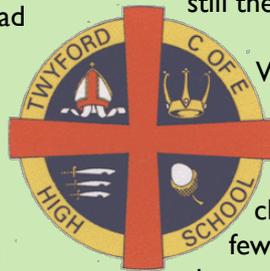
Besides, it wasn't advertising for maths teachers anyway.

One evening, walking home from a Home Group meeting I was praying about this and asking God where He wanted me to go. A voice behind me clearly said "You know where I want you to go, go to Elthorne". I turned, and there was no-one there.

So I waited. Pressure from university tutors to apply for jobs, pressure from parents to apply for jobs, and so forth. Then one morning in the middle of the school summer term I prayed "Lord, I have waited and there is nothing. If you really want me to go to Elthorne then I am asking specifically that they will

ring me up and offer me a job today, or I am looking in other places." I was just saying Amen as the phone began to ring. It was the Head of Maths at Elthorne....

But that was in 1979. Nothing like that has ever happened to me since. 6 years later Elthorne was closed by the local authority, and I was again praying that God would show me where to go. But there were no words or even impressions. I looked at several schools and chose one simply because I felt I respected the headteacher and would like to work for him. Purely human feelings and decisions. I got a job at Twyford Cof E High and 27 years later I am still there.



Why does God sometimes make it very clear and sometimes not? I learnt to teach at Elthorne, I saw students come to faith at Elthorne (at least 2 of whom now lead local churches) and then it was closed after just a few years. Twyford has enabled me to have a deeper impact on more lives...but it was, seemingly, left up to me to choose. Perhaps I would not have gone to Elthorne, as there were no jobs on offer, so God had to speak directly to make me wait. But the point of that story is just to say again that those 'voices behind you' are rare. God made you with passions and with a mind that can make decisions.

Walk on, trusting Him that if your heart is for Him you are going His way!

If you'd like your question featured in these pages email geoff.lumley@tfgministries.org.uk or private message me on Facebook. If you have answers to give to questions, use the FB page and get a discussion going.



TAN LINES

Expand $2(x + y)$

$$2(x+y)$$

$$2(x+y)$$

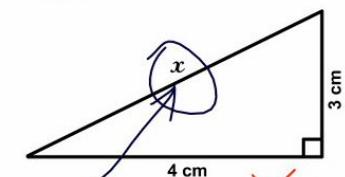
$$2(x+y)$$

$$2(x+y)$$

$$2(x+y)$$

Just incase there are others who appreciate maths reading this, I thought I'd fill this space with some wrong answers from maths exams.

3. Find x.



Here it is \times \circ

Two questions have been discussed on Facebook this week that are related.

How to deal with dominant or obstructive people in your group, and what to say to those who keep swearing or blaspheming in your presence, leaving you uncomfortable?

In both cases we are talking about the problem of living with other people around us. We're not looking for the extreme solution many have used in the past...to become hermits! Or the extreme solution used by the guy in the photo. What are the principles Jesus would want us to use?



You probably found yourself thinking the word Love after that question, and I'd like to add the word Respect too.

The person who is being difficult, offensive, unbearable or just plain hanging around you. That person needs to be treated with love and respect.

What does that mean in practice?

I think, to start with, it means stepping back from confrontation. The best place to start anything is with prayer. To pray for them. *For* them, not *against* them. Not "Lord, you know Mildred is a foul mouthed ogre who makes everyone's life tough...please make her move to Spain" but "Lord, you know Mildred. You know why she is like this, I don't. You love her, and want her to know your love.

Show me how to be part of how you do that (without her getting the wrong idea about what I am doing)".

If the person is doing something that really irritates you, pray that God will help you to focus on other things so that the irritation eases,

that there will be ointment applied to ease the pain...it might be as much you as the other person after all.

But also try to find things that make the other person know you value them. What are they interested in? Can you come alongside them in any activity, interest, or time?

When they know you value them, perhaps then you can bring up the issue that is difficult for you. Or maybe not.

Sometimes we are called to live with people who are difficult and simply reflect Christ back to them without saying anything. If that is the case, however, remember that you are not perfect. You will get pushed to react badly on occasions. Be supported by others. It's a fine line between gossiping "DO you

KNOW what Herman did TODAY?" and genuinely asking for prayer support. But the Holy Spirit will strengthen you for the places you are in.

Joseph's brothers in Genesis found him to be irritating and just got rid of him... that wasn't the right thing to do. Joseph spent his life with people who were against him...brothers, wrong accusation leading to prison, being forgotten by the guy he interpreted a dream for...but in the end he said "God was in this, I forgive you".

Philippians 4:19 says God will meet all your needs. This isn't just material (though that is the immediate context). It's a promise that God knows what we need, and if it is more grace for a situation then He will provide it (Ephesians 4:7). So go to the source of supply.

I've certainly found that if I pray for the difficult person I begin to see them in a different light. Sometimes, however (because I know that will happen), like Jonah I choose to do the opposite and run from what God wants. The greater victory comes when we run to God in prayer for the people around us, not away from Him to do it our way.

Podcast this week: Colossians 2:13 to 19

It's not about rules. Christ cancelled the written code (rules) and forgave all our sins. Instead it's about the fact that God has made us alive!

Podcast available now on www.tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts via web browser

There is currently a problem with this on iTunes which I am trying to get fixed. However, it is available for download via your browser and I will link it this week to Facebook.

The terrible murder of two police officers in Manchester this week reminds us of how easily life can go wrong for some people. It's a tragedy for the families of PCs Fiona Bone and Nicola Hughes, but it's also a tragedy for the family and friends of Dale Cregan...and him himself.

Sin, when it is full grown, is disastrous. The Bible says *each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.* (James 1:14,15). There may be all sorts of reasons along the path why Cregan ended up where he did. Calls for help maybe that weren't answered. But in the end, whatever the law of the UK says, the Law of the Kingdom says we are each responsible for our own sin.



Cregan gave himself up. Perhaps that is a sign that he is ready to repent, perhaps the Holy Spirit hasn't finished with him yet. We should pray for prison chaplains and others who might be able to speak with him. But also we need to pray for those who will conduct the funerals of his victims, that they might have the right words of comfort. That somehow they can show God to be a God of love even in a world that produced men who behave like Dale Cregan did this week.

At some point in the past Cregan sat next to his mates in school, maybe at university, or at work. Perhaps they thought he was a bit odd and kept away from him. The people around us need to know God's love, however weird they are. And that brings us back to the thoughts of the last page.



Training For Guys

If you want to make a stand against violence towards women, or general mistreatment of women, have a look at First Man Standing. A call to men to make a pledge to speak out against such things when they occur around them.

<http://www.restoredrelationships.org/firstmanstanding/pledge/>