

Could You, Would You, Will You Be A Guide Dog?

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It is very common in South Africa and Europe to see a blind man or woman walking the pavement with a guide dog. They are always watched with great interest by those passing by who are amazed at the team work and trust that is involved and displayed in this strange pairing. This gives thought to what analogy we could draw from this as saints and the lessons we might learn from this pair.

In the first instance, clearly the blind man has to have total trust and reliance upon his dog to lead him to safety, no matter what situation he may find himself in. Is this not similar to God's children? In Exodus 20:1-7, God laid down a foundation for us to have in faith. Clearly we cannot see God, but we believe through the eyes of faith, and in that, place our trust and reliance on our Creator. The guide dog can certainly teach us many truths as he epitomizes good and faithful service. He is very much a sought after commodity by those that are blind and he is highly appreciated. In Acts 8:30-34, we have the well-known account of the Ethiopian eunuch who needed someone to "guide" him in the scriptures. Phillip preached the Christ, and he was baptized and went away rejoicing as he could now "see". I am positive that there are many who are "blind" today that require guides, and we need to be available and ready to give an answer to them (2 Pet 3:15).

The guide dog has many admirable qualities which we could and should adorn ourselves with.

1. He *knows* where he is headed.
2. He is never distracted from his goal.
3. He is always alert to dangers in his walk.
4. He is specially trained and disciplined, eager to please and willing to work.

Without these attributes, the dog cannot be a guide. He has to want to work and please his handler. This is all very well, but what does this have to do with us as saints in Christ?

Firstly, we should know where we are heading, including the route and the goal. 1 Cor. 3:11-13 tells us the foundation upon which to build our convictions. 1 Tim. 6:12 encourages us to press on the path travelled, and 1 Thess. 4:15-17 tells us of and encourages us to reach my eventual goal.

We need to be mindful of all the distractions of life on the way. I think of worldly pleasures and how that can draw us away. We need to turn from any obstacle in our path that is going to trip us up, make us fall from grace, and damage and buffet our bodies. These are the things that will steer us away from our Handler, the Lord himself. The Book of 2 Tim. is full of advice on how to live our lives, not as "blind" but as seeing the "light". Chapter 4:7-8 speak of our just reward.

Our greatest danger is Satan, a cunning tempter who knows exactly our weaknesses. From the garden of Gethsemane, Christ continued to remind his disciples to "*pray, lest you enter into temptation*". Christ knew the pitfalls before us in our walk down the road. He knows the daily

problems we will face and see, and that the darkness of sin can often prevail against the light of righteousness.

As saints, we have to be dedicated to training and learning and knowledge in order that we can be equipped to fight the fight and not be the ‘blind’ leading the ‘blind’, built up in faith and standing firm for the truth. In this we can please our “handler”.

We need to be about our Lord’s business. Matt. 28:19-20 is clear. As we become those “guide dogs”, we have an obligation to assist the “blind”. How often do we let someone blindly walk across the street into the headlong rush of a speeding vehicle? We would never allow that to happen, would we? Brothers and sisters, why do we allow this to happen time and time again with our neighbor?

The guide dog is a good and faithful servant to his master. We need to be sure that we will one day hear that commendation, *“Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord.”*