

GUIDANCE

Harry Foster

FRED came home from Crusaders one Sunday afternoon to find that Uncle Joe had come to tea. He was always glad to see his uncle, but on this occasion he was especially pleased because he was bursting to ask him a question which arose from their Bible study that afternoon. The particular point arose from the verse: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). They had been considering the subject of guidance and Mr. Wiseman, the class leader, had told the boys that there are two main ways in which a Christian can be guided. One is outward -- by the Word of God (Psalm 119:9). The other is inward -- by the Holy Spirit. Now Fred had no questions about the authority of the Scriptures, but his problem concerned inner guidance by the Holy Spirit, so he got his uncle on his own and asked if he had a story to illustrate and explain how this worked. He was not disappointed. Uncle Joe had been in Colombia as well as Brazil and this was his story.

"Every Sunday afternoon," said Uncle Joe, "I used to ride out on a hired horse to preach the gospel in a neighboring village in the Choco where we lived. Most of the narrow path was hilly and rough but about two miles out of our town there was a long stretch which was more level and not so overgrown, and when we came to that I always gave the horse his head and he used to break into a gallop. He seemed to enjoy this as much as I did, and it shortened the time of my journey.

"One Sunday -- a day I shall never forget -- I had reached this part of the path and had started off with a rush when suddenly I felt that I ought to pull up. It was not that I heard any voice but that inside me there was a feeling that it would be right to stop. At first I was inclined to take no notice, but the feeling inside became so strong that I decided to obey it and with some difficulty managed to restrain the horse and bring him to a slow walk. Just as I did so I looked ahead and my blood ran cold, for there just in front of me was a wire stretched right across the pathway. I rode slowly up to look at it and found that it had been fixed at exactly the right height to catch me just under the chin. At first I shivered to realize how deadly it would have been if I had been hurled against it, and then I lifted up my heart to the Lord in a great big

Thank You. That inner voice had saved my life.

“There were many enemies of the gospel in that area, and some of them must have fixed the wire from one tree to another to make a trap for me. When I returned home after the service I rode very gingerly along that part of the way, but the wire had disappeared. I had never suspected anything like this; I had no sense of danger when I reined in the horse; but the Holy Spirit had guided me to slow down. So that was one of my experiences of guidance by the inner voice. Does it make sense?”

Fred felt that it certainly did make sense. And he agreed with his uncle that while life is not full of such sensational dangers, it has many of Satan's traps, so that the Christian's only hope of being saved from them is to obey the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit. If we are sensitive enough, He will check us when we are in danger of rushing on in some direction which seems right enough to us but in which a spiritual trap has been set for us by the enemy of our souls. Uncle Joe told him that there was another story about a sudden prompting to action, which is just as important as being checked. But there was no time for another story that day.

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