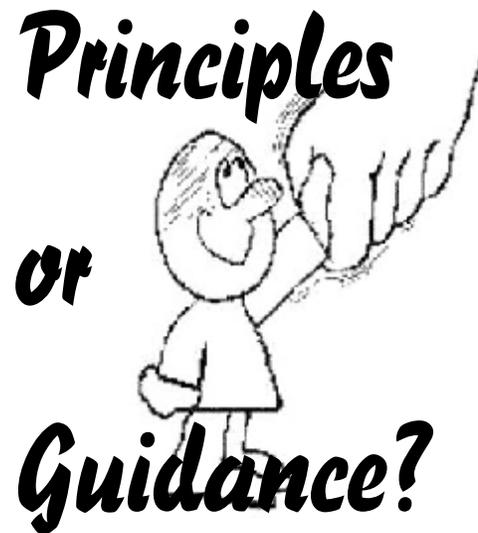


Over the years we have shared our encounter with the oyster farmer and the impact it has had on our lives, and so often, as was the case just a few weeks ago, a Christian brother told me how that simple message had made a major impact on his life.

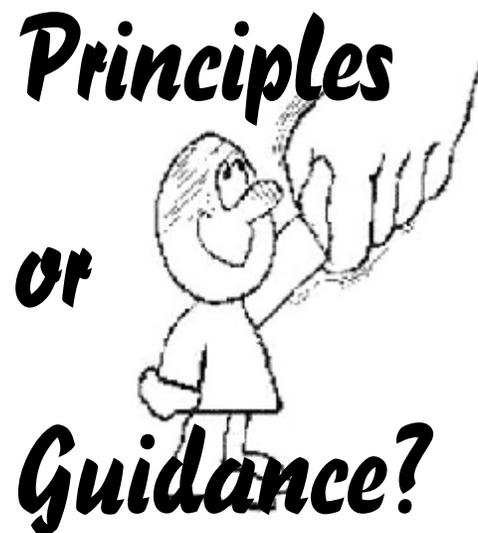
Our lives are not to be spent walking in a principal, a set of rules or the law. We are to walk in an intimate fellowship with our heavenly Father. He has a “next most needful thing” for each of us in our walk. Only He knows what that is, and only His specific guidance can take us there. If I had gone with the principal I would have missed the “next most needful thing” in my Christian Walk.



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Principal or Guidance?

Read: Rom 2:11, 8:28f, and Phil 3:8

Shortly after finishing with seminary, my wife and I found we had no visible means of support, only invisible means and were available to travel. We journeyed to a large city to attend a teaching conference hosted by some prominent Christian leaders. After about a week of attending, while walking to the meeting place one morning, the Lord said to me, "Now tomorrow you will be leaving." I asked, "Where will we be going, Lord?" He answered, "Declare your intentions to the leading brothers and then I will tell you."

When I arrived at the meeting place, I went to the leading brothers and told them I would be leaving the next day. Their response was, "Brother, you may not leave; the principle is, God is doing something here and you must be part of it." Over and over again that day we had this same conversation. The next morning; at 7:00 a.m. the leading brothers were at our door, with the same message. My response



was as always, "But my brothers, do you have a word from the Lord explicitly saying I must stay?" Their answer was always the same, "The principle is that God is doing something here and you must be part of it."

We had walked in obedience for several years by then, and knew the voice of God in our lives, and so we went on our way. It was important that we were obedient, God had a divine appointment with an oyster farmer on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington state. We stayed in the farmer's home, located way out on a wooden pier, for several days, eating oysters and sharing.

One morning the oyster farmer said, "Brother, have you ever given God irrevocable permission to do whatever

He needs to do to change you into His likeness? That is the eternal purpose of God in your life." I had not, and so we knelt down at the sofa in his study and I gave God permission to do whatever he needed to do to change me into His likeness. This was a very important defining moment in my Christian walk.

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