

Last week I wrote of mulling over whether to try to make a scheduled flight or re-book for the next day, knowing a major snow storm was coming. That very moment a car pulled in front of me with the license, "Ott 2 go" leaving me still puzzled as to whether to take the flight or re-schedule it.

A great many people wrote to ask if I moved the flight! In light of the forecast, I did move the flight, and the week was a good one. Yet, there are times when we long for a simple "word" from the Lord to tell us what to do.

An old joke tells of a fellow who decided to do whatever his eye fell on when he opened the Bible and read, "He [Judas] went away and hanged himself." (Matthew 27:5). He didn't like that! Opening his Bible again he read, "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:37) Now really nervous, he decided on a final try, and opening his Bible read, "What you are about to do, do quickly." (John 13:28)

Of course that approach to reading the Bible interprets each phrase out of the context! Nevertheless you might ask, "Can God so enliven a word or an expression in the Bible or something else we read or hear in such a way as to offer guidance to us in our daily experience? Of course! God is God and can and will use any number of means of offering us guidance.

At the same time, the clearest expression of God's will for our lives is the message of the whole of the Bible interpreted in a straight forward manner while knowing the context in which it was written. For many of our decisions in life, God's will is clear, such as "do not steal" or "love one another." However, when we are not sure which way to go, we ask God for wisdom, take the courage to make the best decision we can in light of what we know, and trust God to be with us no matter how our decision plays out in life.

With joy – E. Stanley Ott, March 10, 2009 Vol. 8, No. 22, *GUIDANCE*

Prayer Suggestion

- ★ Affirming the message of the hymn, *Love Came Down at Christmas* by Christina Rossetti, 1883:

Love came down at Christmas,
love all lovely, love divine;
love was born at Christmas –
star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
love incarnate, love divine;
worship we our Jesus –
what shall be our sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,
love be yours and love be mine;
love to God and neighbor,
love for prayer and gift and sign.