



Finding God's Will?

Who lost it? Who has a GPS?

How do you make a decision?



How do you determine God's direction in decision making?

- **Step #1 – Research:** Do all the proper research prior to making a decision.
- **Step #2 – Counsel:** Ask trustworthy individuals for assistance in the decision making process.
- **Step #3 – Patience:** Give God time to work toward a conclusion.
- **Step #4 – Prayer:** Be constant in prayer, resting in the promises of God's Word.

How do you determine God's direction in decision making?

- **Step #5 – Desire:** Determine what you want based upon the research, counsel, patience, and personal desire.
- **Step #6 – Choose:** Make a choice based upon all the facts that you have before you.
- **Step #7 – Confidence:** Regardless of “perceived” outcome, be confident that God is in control

Why the confusion over God's will?

1. Terminology of the past has not been accurate.

- God's perfect will vs. God's permissive will
- "Finding" or "fleecing" God's will

"Belief that divine guidance is real rests upon two foundation-facts: first, the reality of God's plan for us; second, the ability of God to communicate with us. On both these facts the Bible has much to say." (Packer)

Why the confusion over God's will?

2. Thinking has not been Biblically-centered

- Man-centered vs. God-centered
- Subjective (feelings) vs. Objective (facts)
- Fear of making a mistake vs. Faith in a loving God

“The consequences of this mistake among earnest Christians have been both comic and tragic. The idea of a life in which the inward voice of the Spirit decides and directs everything sounds most attractive, for it seems to exalt the Spirit’s ministry and to promise the closest intimacy with God; but in practice this quest for super-spirituality leads only to frantic bewilderment or lunacy.” (Packer)

Why the confusion over God's will?

Hannah Smith tells of the woman who each morning, having consecrated the day to the Lord as soon as she woke, “would then ask him whether she was to get up or not,” and would not stir till “the voice” told her to dress. “As she put on each article she asked the Lord whether she was to put it on, and very often the Lord would tell her to put on the right shoe and leave off the other; sometimes she was to put on both stockings and no shoes; and sometimes both shoes and no stockings; it was the same with all the articles of dress.” Then there was the invalid who, when her hostess, visiting her, left money by accident on the dressing table, had “an impression . . . that the Lord wanted her to take that money in order to illustrate the truth of the text that ‘all things are yours’” — which she did, and hid it under her pillow, and hid when her hostess came back for it, and was eventually thrown out as a thief.

Why the confusion over God's will?

What conduct of this sort shows is failure to grasp that the fundamental mode whereby our rational Creator guides his rational creatures is by rational understanding and application of his written Word.

Key Terms

- **God's Decreed Will: Sovereignty**
 - Everything that God ordains (decides, plans) to happen. (Secret will of God)
 - We can only know it after it happens.

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. (Isaiah 46:9-10)

Key Terms

- **God's Revealed Will: Morality**

- Everything that God specifically revealed to mankind through the Bible.
- We can know these ahead of time.

Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments. I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly. (Psalm 119:1-8)

Key Terms

- **God's Personal Will: Dependence & Obedience**
 - The combination of God's revealed will as it should be demonstrated within our lives, and God's secret will as it uncovered along our daily path.
 - We can know some of this before it happens; the remainder is evidenced through life choices.

Personal Direction

- **Psalm 37:23-24**

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholds him with his hand.

- **Psalm 73:22-24**

So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

- **Psalm 119:105**

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Key Terms

1. **Sovereignty:**

- The sum total of all of God's attributes that assures that God rules overall and controls all things with absolute perfection.
- This means that we know that God's decreed will happens. Nothing takes place that is a surprise to God.

2. **Providence:**

- The secret and purposeful working out of God's decreed will through the orchestrating of all events and people.

How not to “find” God’s will

1. **Live the way you want until a decision needs to be made and then beg for direction.**

Psalm 18:25-28

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks. For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

How not to “find” God’s will

2. **Fleece God through subjective means (Judges 6:36; 7:9-14).**
 - “as you have said” – once God speaks you need to act, not test.

3. **Ignore God (since He is in control) and hope for the best.**
 - Acting in sin is clearly outside of His revealed will.

4. **Wait for some sense of inner-peace.**

How to follow God's will.

“The fundamental guidance which God gives to shape our lives—the instilling, that is, of the basic convictions, attitudes, ideals and value judgments, in terms of which we are to live—is not a matter of inward promptings apart from the Word but of the pressure on our consciences of the portrayal of God’s character and will in the Word, which the Spirit enlightens us to understand and apply to ourselves.’ (Packer)

How to follow God's will.

1. **God's Guidance:** God guides through Scriptures (we know before the fact), and by providence (we know after the fact).
2. **God's Grace:** God graciously provides all of the information that we need to make every decision that is pleasing to Him.
3. **God's Gift:** The Holy Spirit abides within us to convict, teach, encourage, and guide in accordance with the Word of God.

How to follow God's will.

1. **Trust in God's providential leading in your life and development of your desires.**
 - **Your circumstances are under His control.**
 - **Your desires can be spiritually developed.**
 - **Your counselors can be spiritually insightful.**

How to follow God's will.

2. **Make a decision. Move forward based upon all of the facts available.**

Acts 16:6-10

And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.



PONTUS ↗

MACEDONIA
Thessalonica 12
Philippi 12
Neapolis 11
Amphipolis

BITHYNIA

15 13
Berea 16
Apollonia 14
10
Troas 9
MYSIA 8

GALATIA

ACHAIA
(18 months)
Corinth 18
Athens 17

Thyatira

ASIA PHYRGIA 6

19
Cenchrea

20
Ephesus

Iconium
5
Lystra
4
Derbe

Tarsus
3
CILICIA

2
SYRIA
1/23
Syrian Antioch

CRETE

CYPRUS

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Nazareth
21
Caesarea

Jerusalem + 22

0 | scale | 250 miles | 400 km



How to follow God's will.

3. **Adjust your decisions based upon God's daily guidance.**
4. **When no guidance is being given, then patiently wait on God until the next indication of direction is given.**
5. **Always remember that God is far more interested in your conformity to Christ's image than in location and vocation.**