

## Seeking God's Plan Knowing and Doing the Will of God The Will of God and Your Decisions

3 principles to help God's people make wise decisions:

### I. Be Able to Discern between the Different Aspects of God's Will

*Colossians 1:9 - ...we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will...*

#### A. Directive will

1. moral will
2. what He has already revealed to us
3. can only be found in the Bible
4. what He wants us to do

#### B. Decreed will

1. "sovereign" will
2. ultimate, eternal, determined will

*Ephesians 1:11 - also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will.*

3. Can only be determined after the fact, cannot be known in advance

*Psalm 40:8 - I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy Law is within my heart.*

*Mark 3:35 - For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother.*

*Ephesians 5:17 - So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*

*Romans 12:2 - And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

*James 4:15 - Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that."*

*1 Corinthians 4:19 - But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant, but their power.*

C. Why we sometimes want to know God's decreed will in advance

1. We think by doing so, we'll be guaranteed freedom from trouble
2. If God makes the decision, we're freed from responsibility for the consequences
3. If God makes the decision, the pressure is not on us to get all the facts necessary to make a good decision

## II. Understand the Primary Place of the Scriptures in Discerning God's Will Today

A. God has guided His people in a variety of ways throughout history

*Hebrews 1:1-2 - God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.*

B. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles in all truth

*John 14:26 - But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.*

C. There are no apostles today

*Ephesians 2:20 - having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,*

D. Special revelation ceased with the completion of the canon

*Revelation 22:18-19 - I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.*

1. Should prayer be part of our planning process?

*1 Thessalonians 5:17 - pray without ceasing;*

2. What about God leading us?

*Romans 8:14 - For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

*Galatians 5:18 - But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.*

3. What about peace?

*Colossians 3:15 - Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

E. God has given us all the guidance we need in His Word

*2 Peter 1:3 - seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.*

*2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

### **III. Be Committed to Following Careful Steps to Wise Decision Making**

A. Understand that the Bible gives us both direct statements and indirect principles

B. Gather all the facts relevant to the decision and list the pros and cons

C. Search out all principles, examples, etc. of Scripture that have a bearing on the decision

D. Apply these to the pros and cons to the various options

E. Pray and ask God to help you to apply His Word wisely

*Psalms 119:18 - Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law.*

F. May need to seek godly counsel

*Proverbs 19:20 - Listen to counsel and accept discipline, that you may be wise the rest of your days.*

G. If narrowed down to two equally good decisions (based on biblical principles), may decide on the basis of preference

H. Remember that God's will for you might be different than God's will for someone else

Cf. Romans 14

I. If question of possible sin is involved, use "holding" principle

*Romans 14:23 - Whatever is not of faith is sin.*