

Decision Making



"The Christian's work is too curious to be done well between sleeping and waking, and too important to be done ill, and slobbered over, no matter how."

WILLIAM GURNALL



PRAY FIRST: I am well pleased with thy will, whatever it is, or should be in all respects, and if thou bidst me decide for myself in any affair, I would choose to refer all to thee, for thou are infinitely wise and cannot do amiss, as I am in danger of doing.

Understanding the Truth

Discussion:

- How can you know if you're making the right decisions on issues the Bible does not specifically address? How can you know God's will for your life? Is there a difference between God's will and God's plan?

God's Will Discovered

- A. Read Ephesians 5:15-17. Why is it important to understand God's will for your life?
- B. The Bible portrays two aspects of God's will: His sovereign will and His commanded will. Let's consider the definition and distinctions of each one.

Sovereign Will

This involves the ultimate and complete control over everything. Nothing happens that is not in God's plan.

1. Secret—known only to God, except as revealed throughout history or revelation (*Jeremiah 29:11*)
2. Cannot be resisted or thwarted (*Isaiah 46:9-10*)
3. Encompasses both good and evil
4. Comprehensive—controls all aspects of life, time, and history
5. Believers are not commanded to know what God has not revealed.

Commanded Will

This is revealed throughout the Bible as laws or principles. It is this aspect of His will to which men are held accountable.

1. Revealed in the Bible
2. Can be resisted or disobeyed
3. Involves only that which is good or holy (*Romans 12:1-3*)
4. Specific—provides principles for living
5. Believers exhorted to know, understand, and obey all that God has revealed

God's Will Discerned

- A. There are five places in the Bible where we are specifically instructed on God's will for believers. Write down what God's will is, according to these verses:

- John 6:40: _____
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3: _____
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: _____
- 1 Peter 2:13-15: _____
- 1 Peter 4:19; 2:20-21: _____

How are you doing in these areas? God's will is difficult to discern when there is willful disobedience in our lives. Are there any areas that you need to examine?

- B. How do you discern general or specific issues that the Bible does not address? For example: job opportunities, purchases, school decisions, relationships, etc. Consider these questions as you think through your decisions:

1. Can this choice glorify God? (*1 Corinthians 10:31*)
2. Does this decision violate any principle of Scripture?
3. Could I regret this choice later? (*James 4:17*)
4. Will this choice build me up spiritually or tear me down?
5. Is this decision concerning others made with their best interests in mind, or mine? (*James 2:8*)
6. Am I personally anxious about this? (*Philippians 4:6-7*)
7. Can I be content without this item or decision? (*Philippians 4:10-13*)
8. Will this cause other believers to stumble? (*Romans 14:13, 21*)
9. Is this choice aligned with my spiritual priorities? (*Matthew 6:33*)



- Write down an issue that you are dealing with right now:

Is this issue a:

- Sovereign will issue?
- Commanded will issue?

What should you do if:

- It is a sovereign will issue? (*Matthew 6:33*)
- It is a commanded will issue? (*James 1:22*)
- You don't know? (*Proverbs 3:5-6*)

Read Romans 12:1-3 and close in prayer, thanking God for His provision of grace.

APPLICATION

Being a doer of the Word

1. What did I learn ("teaching")?
2. Where do I fall short ("reproof")?
3. What do I need to do about it ("correction")?
4. How can I make this a consistent part of my life ("training")?



ACCOUNTABILITY

Placing yourself in transparent and accountable relationships

How are you doing in the area of **MARRIAGE** and **FAMILY**?

- How is your family joy and harmony?
(Unstable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Stable)
- How well have you loved your wife or husband this past week?
(Unstable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Stable)
- How well have you loved your children this past week?
(Unstable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Stable)

Obeying the Truth—your mission this week

Engaging the lost through word and deed with the intention of imparting the Gospel



- When a friend, relative, or co-worker is confiding in you about a difficult situation, ask them some of the truth based questions from this study to guide them to the proper decision (Will this choice build me up spiritually or tear me down? Does this decision violate any principle of scripture?).



MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK: Ephesians 5:15-17

"Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."



EXTRA RESOURCES FOR THE VAULT

Friesen, Gary. *Decision Making and the Will of God*. Colorado Springs: Multnomah. 1982. Print.

Youngblood, Kirk. *Free to be Wise*. Bloomington: CrossBooks. 2012. Print.

God's Will Discovered

- A. so you don't waste your time or lead a foolish life

God's Will Discerned

A.

- John 6:40: everyone who beholds and believes in the Son will have eternal life
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3: abstain from sexual immorality
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: in everything give thanks
- 1 Peter 2:13-15: submit yourself to earthly authorities
- 1 Peter 4:19; 2:20-21: suffer for Christ's sake

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.