

It's Decision Time – What's God's Will, and How Do You Know?

Ephesians 5:15-17

How does God factor into your decisions? Do you seek His will in all your decisions, just the big ones, at all? And just what is God's will, and how would you know? There are lots of ideas on what God's will is; some are mystical, some can be legalistic, and some can be bizarre. The more fundamental question in knowing God's will is, _____

I. Aspects of God's Will.

A. _____ – Also referred to as Moral or Directive Will. God's perfect will is what He has already revealed to us, and it can only be found in His Word, the Bible. It is in essence the "do's and the don'ts", or what God desires that we do and be (c.f. Romans 12:1-2). Is God's perfect will always accomplished? _____, and it's because of sin (c.f. Matt. 6:10).

Note: When God's perfect will is not accomplished, we would then look to God's "permissive will" or His "circumstantial will".

B. _____ – Also referred to as His decreed or ultimate will. While all other aspects of God's will are subject to change, His sovereign will is not. This aspect of His will is what God purposes and always brings to pass (c.f. Eph. 1:2-11).

There are two aspects of God's sovereign will that we should know:

1. There are _____ of God that are stated and will happen, though we typically will not know the "when"; e.g. It is God's Sovereign will that Jesus return (John 14:1-3).
2. Most aspects of God's sovereign will can only be _____; meaning they cannot be determined in advance. (C.f. 1 Cor. 4:19 & James 4:15).

II. The Bible's Place in Decision-Making.

The first and foremost principle in knowing God's will is and must be, what does God have to say in His Word, and am I willing to obey Him?

A. Three Principles of Biblical Guidance:

1. You cannot know or understand God's will and receive His guidance _____.
2. God's Word provides scriptural principles and practices for _____.
3. The Bible speaks _____ (e.g. "Ten Commandments) and _____. It enables us to make either/or, yes/no choices, or will give us a limited number of equally legitimate choices.

B. Steps for wise and biblical decision-making:

1. _____ – listing the pros and cons.
2. Search out _____, etc. from the Bible that have a bearing on your decision.
3. Apply these to the _____ and the various options.

4. You may need to seek _____.
5. Following this process, if you find that you have two, or a small number of equally good options, then decide on the basis _____.
6. CAUTION: If you have checks in your spirit, or questions of possible sin regarding your decision, then stop and _____ (Romans 14:23).

III. Examples of Biblical-Decision Making.

A. Marriage.

1. Take a biblical look at being single.
2. Examine the biblical standards for a marriage partner (e.g. 2 Cor. 6:14).
3. Evaluate your “prospective mate’s” sensitivity to biblical authority and influence. I.e. Are they genuinely Christian?
4. Look for evidence of spiritual growth and obedience to God’s Word.
5. Look carefully to see if they apply biblical decision-making and problem solving.
6. Seek the counsel of both sets of parents and your Pastor or spiritual authority (Prov. 11:14 & 15:22).
7. If, after going through the above process you have more than one “option” then choose your preference.

B. Buying a car.

1. Why do you need a “new” car? Desiring one isn’t necessarily a bad thing, but clarifying your motive is important. Note: Phil. 4:19.
2. Can you afford it? What can you afford? Do you have to “rob” something else to pay for it?
3. What does your wife/husband say? (1 Peter 3:7)
4. Are there still choices? Then pick the one you like!

Some principles of Scripture help you narrow options more than others, and there may in fact be more than one biblically legitimate option.

IV. Excuses People Offer for Not Using the Bible in Decision-Making.

A. Some examples:

1. “The Bible has nothing to say about everyday decision making.”
2. “God revealed to me...” Some claim that there is “additional” revelation, or that which goes above and beyond the Scriptures.

B. Why these excuses are wrong.

1. We must decide, is the Bible sufficient for faith and practice or not. (2 Peter 1:3)

2. (2 Tim. 3:16-17) We are not to add to or take away from God's Word.

Conclusion:

God has a marvelous plan for our lives (Jer. 29:11). Have you sought God's will for you in every area, every decision of your life? Who do *you* listen to? It's your choice. God's will is that you pay attention to Him; after all, He loves you so much He sent His Son to die for you!