

GUIDELINES FOR RIGHT DECISIONS
EPHESIANS 5:17

Introduction

In the matter of understanding and doing the will of God, **it is paramount that we be committed to doing the will of God for our lives!**

We should not ask the question, “*What shall I do?*” unless we have first decided that we will do the will of God even before we know what that will is!

We must be willing to do God’s will whether we like it or not and whether or not it seems suitable or expedient in our eyes.

We must understand that **doing the right thing may be very costly, but doing anything else will ultimately have an even higher cost!** (temporal vs eternal)

Another thing to consider is that we must be doing the things that we know to be the will of God (The General Will Of God) if we expect God to reveal to us His will in areas that we do not know!

There are some things that God requires of us with regard to His will.
God requires that we actively yield our will to his!

God requires that we exercise faith and obedience in response to His leading through The Holy Spirit!

God requires that we follow through on the directions He reveals!
Once we know God’s will, He expects us to do it!
We must wholeheartedly respond to implement what is revealed to us!

God requires that we be honest with ourselves and with others!
God is not interested in playing games about His will!

So with all of that said, how can we determine what is God’s will for our lives? Are there any guidelines that we can use to determine God’s will?

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I. ARE THERE ANY CLEAR TEACHINGS ABOUT THIS IN THE BIBLE? (James 1:22-25)

A. The Word of God Commands Some Things And Forbids Others.

1. Examples Of Some Things Commanded.

a. Love Your Wives.

b. Love One Another.

c. Be A Witness.

2. Examples Of Some Things Forbidden.

a. Gossip, lying, cheating.

b. Fornication, adultery, homosexuality.

B. The Bottom Line Is This—Where There Is A Clear Teaching In The Bible Of What We Should Or Should Not Do, We Are Not To Question It Or Try To Get Around It, But Obey It!

II. ARE THERE ANY OTHER BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES THAT CAN BE OF HELP? What are some of these principles?:

A. ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, “*WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?*”

Ephesians 5:1-2; Philippians 2:5-8, 1 Peter 2:21

1. We Have A Clear Idea From Scripture Of The Kind Of Person Jesus Is.

a. **Jesus Put Others Ahead Of Himself.**
Do you have other’s best interest at heart?

b. **Jesus Was Humble And Not Self-Serving.**

c. **Jesus Came To Serve, Not To Be Served.**

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d. Jesus Sought The Kingdom Of God FIRST!

2. The Very Character Of Jesus, The Kind Of Person He Was, And The Life That He Lived Are Bound To Be Of Help To Us As We Decide What We Ought To Do! (Ephesians 5:1-2)

B. ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, “TO WHAT IS MY HEART ATTACHED?”

Matthew 22:37–“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38This is the first and great commandment.”

1. Does God Have First Place At All Times In Your Life?

The worldly person has a heart that is not totally committed to God, but rather is attached to something else first.

Matthew 6:21–“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Tell me where your treasure is, and I’ll tell you where your heart is.

a. To love something else more than God, no matter how good or laudable it may be, is worldliness.

b. The world is the way it is because it always puts something ahead of God.

Paul’s admonition for believers was for them to present their bodies as living sacrifices. (*Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20*)

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Our body is the temple of the living God.
Where we go, we take God with us.

The things that we are involved in as Christians are done with God inside of us!

In John 21:15 we find an example of the commitment that Christ desires.

“Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?”

These what? It doesn’t really matter. Is there anything or anyone that you love more than Jesus?

2. Commitment To The Person Of Jesus (Which Is Primary), Must Be Followed By The Outworking Of That Commitment In The Drama Of Everyday Life And Its Nitty-Gritty Decisions.

C. ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, “WHAT IS THE SPIRIT OR THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE THING?” (Ephesians 5:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:22)

1. There Are Places The Believer Should Not Go And Things He Should Not Do Because The Atmosphere Is Not Conducive To Maintaining A Christian Witness And/Or Our Personal Development As A Child Of God!

Romans 13:12–“Cast off the works of darkness.”

We need to look at things honestly through the eyes of the Holy Spirit!

2. To Avoid All Contact With Evil Is Impossible, But To Conform To Evil Or Be An Accomplice To Evil Is To Partake Of Its Spirit Or Atmosphere!

1 John 2:15–“Love not the world. . .”

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D. ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, “WILL THIS HELP OR HARM MY CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WALK?”

(Ephesians 4:22-23)

1. If It Will Harm Our Christian Life By Producing Wrong Thoughts Or Actions, We Should Avoid It!

- a. **Books To Read.**
- b. **T.V. Programs Or Movies To Watch.**
- c. **Recreation To Participate In. (Mixed Swimming)**

2. If It Will Draw Us Away From Christian Growth By Interfering With Church Attendance Or Christian Service, We Should Avoid It!

Example—Taking a job where there is no Church or taking a job that pulls you away from your commitment to Christ! (i.e. hurts your Christian walk)

Several Questions Related To This That We Should Consider:

- 1. Can We Ask God To Bless It?**
- 2. Can We Thank God For It?**
Colossians 3:17—“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.”
- 3. Can We Do It To The Glory Of God?**
1 Corinthians 10:31—“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

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4. Will This Be A Weight To My Christian Life?

Hebrews 12:1—“. . . let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. . . .”

E. ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, “HOW WILL MY DOING THIS INFLUENCE AND AFFECT OTHERS?”

Romans 14:7—“For none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself.”

1. All Of Life Is Interrelated.

Our choices affect not only ourselves, but our wives, our children, our parents, our friends, and our church.

Therefore, we must consider how our decisions might affect a variety of people.

If we fail to do so we can ruin our testimony.

2. There May Be Things That Though Not Harmful To Us May Be A Stumblingblock To Others Who Are Weaker.

1 Corinthians 8:9—“But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.”

We are to be an example and we cannot enjoy the luxury of doing only that which pleases self.

Philippians 2:4—“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

1 Corinthians 10:23—“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.”

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- F. ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, “*COULD THIS BECOME A HABIT OR COULD IT BE SOMETHING THAT TRIES TO TAKE CONTROL OF ME?*”**
1 Corinthians 6:12–“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.”
- G. ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, “*WHAT WOULD I THINK IF I FOUND OUT MY PASTOR AND/OR HIS FAMILY WERE DOING THIS?*”**
1 Thessalonians 5:22–“Abstain from all appearance of evil.”
- There are no double standards of righteousness. If it would be questionable for the pastor and his family, that means that it is for you too.
- H. ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, “*IS THIS SOMETHING I WOULD WANT TO BE DOING WHEN CHRIST COMES AGAIN?*”**
1 Thessalonians 5:6–“Let us watch and be sober.”
- I. ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, “*DO I HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT DOING THIS?*”–IF SO, DON’T DO IT.**
- 1. Giving God The Benefit Of Any Doubt Is A Good Principle To Follow.**
 - a. *Romans 14:23–“Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”*
 - b. *2 Corinthians 3:17–“Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.”*
 - 2. If There Is Constraint In The Conscience And A Sense Of Uneasiness In The Heart–Stop!**
 - a. A Good Conscience Is A Free Conscience.

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- b. After the Bible has been read, prayer offered, consultation given, and the soul is searched, and you still have no peace, you need to leave it alone.

Conclusion

These are just some guidelines, some principles if you will, that we can use to discern the will of God.

So, How are you doing in discerning the will of God in your life?

Can you see how absolutely vital studying God’s Word is?

Principles for right decisions come from the Word of God.

Are you in the Word like you should be? Are you learning God’s principles?

Are you applying God’s principles?