

Lesson 6: Finding God's Will

Note: If the lesson were recorded again, I would include the leading of the Spirit through prayer and with His word.

Review:

Why is a vocation important?

Why do we work?

Ans. Provision, giving, and increasing independence.

Pursuing a Vocation: *What is God's will for my life?*

Theologians speak of "God's will" in two senses:

His secret will – His sovereign plan for all things (Ecclesiastes 3:1)—His will for *Him* to do

His revealed will – His word to us (Matthew 6:10; 7:21)—His will for *us* to do

Learn the "PCs" of God's will: *Do not rely on providence or prophecy, but on commands and counsel.*

How NOT to find God's will...

1. God's *providence*—i.e. circumstances.

Just because something happens in providence does not mean God delight in it, considered in and of itself.
e.g. God hates murder, but delighted in the Cross (Isaiah 53:10).

Why? God permits bad things to happen as part of a larger plan for good (e.g. Gen. 50:20 – Joseph).

Narrow Lens – as God looks at the thing in itself, He hates it (e.g. Ezekiel 33:11).

Wide Lens – as God looks at the thing within the big picture, He permits it (e.g. Gen. 50:20 – Joseph).

Illus. Table salt (NaCl) = sodium (explosive substance) + chlorine (poisonous gas)

Beware! Just because good came from your decision does not mean God was pleased with your decision.

Beware! Just because bad came from your decision does not mean God was displeased with your decision.

Neither smooth sailing nor rocky roads are necessarily indicating a wrong turn or a call to turn back.

Not every open door is God's will nor is every closed door a call to stop knocking.

Otherwise, what is the meaning of testing or temptation in our lives?!

Illus. Ohio lady: "If God did not want him in my life, why did He send him back to me after nine years?"

Illus. David's men told him that the Lord had given his enemy into his hand (1 Sam. 24:4).

Illus. Poor Job! He thought God was punishing Him, when really God was proud of him!

Who can discern God's ways? At best, we can say, "Perhaps" (Philemon 15).

2. God's *prophecy*—i.e. direct revelation.

Whether you believe prophecy is for today or not, prophecy must *never* replace the Bible (Jude 3).

Illus. Patrick of Ireland had at least six visions, but he was definitely a "man of one book" (Haykin).

Even if prophecy is for today, you cannot rely on it for guidance, because it is rare and comes sovereignly.

Moreover, God wants to give you maturity, in wrestling for wisdom, rather than to give you answers (Piper).

Illus. Like a math teacher, He does not want simply to give us the answers.

As for relying on prophecy for guidance, no one can predict when it would come—God is sovereign.

How TO find God's will...

Picture: Corral with a fence around a green pasture.

1. Stay within the FENCE of God's commands—and principles and promises.

His moral law is an absolute ground you are forbidden to trespass (cf. Ten Commandments).

Do not overlook the obvious boundaries of God's will in the NT:

Sexual purity (1 Th. 4:3), civil obedience (1 Pt. 3:15), and a good attitude (1 Th. 5:16-18).

2. Seek to use your FREEDOM wisely with lots of godly counsel—those who know God and know you.

Illus. The fence of marrying in the Lord (1 Cor. 7:39) will not tell you *who* to marry or even *if* to marry!

Rather than one "Mr. Right" or "Miss Right," there may be several compatible choices *within* God's will.

Therefore, seek counsel from "many" counselors (Pr. 11:14)—especially older ones (Heb. 5:14).

God bless you with wisdom in pursuing your calling in the Lord!