

“... The reliance on special signs from God is the mark of an immature person – someone who cannot simply believe in the truth as presented, but must have a special, miraculous sign as the symbol of authority from God.”
Finding the Will of God ~ A Pagan Notion? Bruce Waltke, p. 12

Acts 15:25, 28, 34

They made decisions using their sanctified minds that were being renewed by the Word of God, they prayed, and they stepped out trusting the Holy Spirit to guide them.

Romans 7:4, 6 “Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God... But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.”

A. God’s Guidance Today is Less Specific

God is more personal with us and less prescriptive.

B. God’s Guidance Today is Less Empirical (*perceptible to the physical senses*)

God expects Christians to rely on the Word of God... and the Spirit of God in you!

Galatians 4:1-7 “Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all,² but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.³ Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.⁴ But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

I Don’t Know What to Do!

Finding and Following the Will of God

Avoiding Some of the Most Common Abuses to Finding God’s Will

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / August 29, 2010

Four Ways to Avoid

The Most Common Abuses to Knowing God’s Will

I. Start Talking and Praying More about *Doing* God’s Will than Finding God’s Will for Your Life

“Christians cherish a mythology that, along with their theology, shapes and directs their lives. Perhaps no myth more strongly influences us than our understanding of how to know the will of God. We want to make right decisions, for we realize the decisions we make turn around and make us... Yet when we ask, ‘How can I know the will of God?’ we may be raising a pagan question. In the ancient world kings and generals consulted the oracles to gain guidance from the gods for their plans... The Scriptures do not command us to find God's will for most of life's choices nor do we have any passage instructing on how it can be determined. Equally significant, the Christian community has never agreed on how God provides us with such special revelation.” Forward to Gary Freisen's book, *Decision Making and the Will of God* (Portland, Or: Multnomah Press, 1980), p.13

Hebrews 10:36 “For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.”

Hebrews 10:36-39; 11:1, 6

Hebrews 13:20-21 “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, equip you in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

Ephesians 6:5-6 “Servants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.”

I Peter 2:13-15 “Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the

praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.”

“Don’t over-spiritualize. You can serve the Lord in a thousand different jobs. We need missionaries and we need pastors. But we also need entrepreneurs who create jobs so people can make money so they can support missionaries and pastors. And we need entrepreneurs because work is good. Please don’t ever think you are a second-class citizen in the kingdom of God if you aren’t in full-time ministry. You can honor the Lord as a teacher, mother, doctor, lawyer, loan officer, or social worker; you can work in retail, fast food, politics, or big businesses, you can be a butcher, a baker, or a candlestick maker, You can be just about anything you want as long as you aren’t lazy (Proverbs 6:6-11; 26:13-16), and whatever you do you perform to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).” *Just Do Something*, Kevin DeYoung, pp. 102-103

II. Step Out in Faith rather than Waiting for ‘Signs’ or Impressions to Confirm What God Wants You to Do

“Open doors, fleeces, random Bible verses, and impressions, if construed in the right way, have their place in the Christian’s life. But in my experience, these tools have been wielded for more harm than good. They are easily abused, manipulated, and lend themselves to superstition.

A far better approach is once again laid out by John Newton: ‘In general, God guides and directs his people by affording them, in answer to prayer, the light of his Holy Spirit, which enables them to understand and to love the Scripture. The Word of God is not to be used as a lottery; nor is it designed to instruct us by shreds and scraps, which, detached from their proper places, have no determinative import; but it is to furnish us with just principles, right apprehensions to regulate our judgments and affections, and thereby to influence and direct our conduct.’” *John Newton on Divine Guidance* *Guard Us, Guide Us: Divine Leading in Life’s Decisions* by J. I. Packer and Carolyn Nystrom (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 244, quoted in *Just Do Something*, Kevin DeYoung; pp. 85-86

Proverbs 4:5-9 “Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them. ⁶ Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. ⁷ Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. ⁸ Esteem her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will honor you. ⁹ She will set a garland of grace on your head and present you with a crown of splendor.”

You should never take instances of special revelation and make them normative for our Christian experience today unless God tells us to expect that.

“We can’t force God to talk, yet sometimes He completely surprises us and talks anyway.” *Finding the Will of God ~ A Pagan Notion?* Bruce Waltke, p. 10-11

III. Be Filled with the Holy Spirit and Immerse Yourself in the Word of God rather than Delving into the World of Supernatural Substitutes

God’s not all about information, He’s about transformation.

“When we talk of ‘finding God’s will’ we generally want divine guidance on specific choices, but it should be noted that this specific term is never used after the Holy Spirit came upon the church at Pentecost. The apostles, upon whom the church is founded, did not teach that we are to seek God’s will in this way. Instead the New Testament offers us a program of the Father’s guidance that is based upon having a close relationship with Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.” *Finding the Will of God ~ A Pagan Notion?* Bruce Waltke, p. 10-11

IV. Rejoice that while God’s Guidance Today Might be Less Specific or Empirical it’s Far More Personal and Transformational

I Thessalonians 4:3-4 “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable.”

I Thessalonians 5:16-18 “Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”

“God wants you to be a mature man or woman of God – *that is His will for your life!* He wants to see your character develop. He wants you to draw close to Him and be changed. We have the Holy Spirit in a fuller measure than the Old Testament saints, and He develops our character... Divination [looking for signs] is a shortcut to the future, and God offers Christians no shortcuts. Divination sounds pious, but it may actually be ungodly because it shortcuts the Spirit’s work in developing our character. It assumes you can know God’s mind without having His heart and His Spirit... He can work in your life through the Holy Spirit and His Word to foster virtue, and then you will have the mind of Christ.” *Finding the Will of God ~ A Pagan Notion?* Bruce Waltke, p. 62