

Knowing God's Will

The God Who Leads

- The authority of God makes His leading sure and binding. (Rom. 9:20-21)
- The love of God makes His leading safe (Jeremiah 29:11)
- The purity of God makes His leading trustworthy (Genesis 18:25)

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But how does God reveal His will?

- Three meanings of God's will
 - God's Sovereign Will
 - God's Moral Will
 - God's Individual Will

See Handout

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Regaining our Balance –

■ Biblical Data

- Proverbs 3:5-6
- Colossians 1:9
- Ephesians 5:17

Which will: Sovereign? Moral? Individual?

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When the traditional view meets real life...

- How do we decide when and where it applies?
 - “Presidential” Issues?
 - “Common Issues”?

See Handout on Life Issues

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Application Difficulties for the Traditional View

- Ordinary decisions: The decision-making process must be abandoned in the minor decisions of life
- Equal options: Insisting on only one "correct" choice generates anxiety over missing the "center of God's will" rather than gratitude for more than one good opportunity

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Application Difficulties for the Traditional View (cont'd)

- In some cases, the traditional view promotes immaturity in decision making
 - Signs are valued over hard work of interpreting and applying scripture
 - "God told me to do it" is the trump card over wise counsel (even scripture!)
 - Anxiety and delays may result over simple decisions
 - Setting out fleeces

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What do we do with Impressions?

- Impressions are r_____

BUT

- Impressions are not a_____

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"In Summary, the problem with the traditional view is not that it recognizes the reality of inner impressions, but that it requires too much of them. Since it is impossible to define with certainty either their source or their meaning, it is also impossible to derive from them objective guidance pointing to the one "right" decision. God's word does not invest subjective sources of knowledge with divine authority. We must not either."

-Garry Friesen

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The Way of Wisdom

- Free to Choose
- Competent to Choose

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Free to Choose-Apostolic Examples

- I Thessalonians 3: 1-2
- Philippians 2:25-26
- I Corinthians 16: 3-4
- Acts 15: 28-29
- Romans 1: 8-13 (planning)

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Free to choose- Freedom within Boundaries

- The Garden of Eden (Genesis 2: 16-17)
- Giving to those in need (II Cor. 9:7)
- Matters of conscience (I Cor. 10: 23-33)

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- Psalm 27
- Joshua 1:8
- Psalm 119:105
- Proverbs 2

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Traditional View

Should I marry? If so,
whom should I marry?

God has a detailed individual plan for my life that settles each of these questions. As such, He has a clear detailed will and I simply must discover what it is.

Way of Wisdom

God has revealed clear boundaries regarding marriage (His moral will). Within these boundaries I am free to choose to be married or remain single. If I choose to marry I am free to choose whom I marry. I must do so with wisdom that comes from His revealed truths in scripture.

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Implications of the traditional view

- In all the world there is either no person or only one person who is eligible to be my spouse
- If God wants me single, and I marry anyone, I am out of His will
- If God has a particular wife chosen, and I marry someone else, I am out of God's will
- If the spouse God has for me marries someone else, I will never know God's best

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Conclusions from I Corinthians 7

- The decision to marry or remain single is a matter of freedom for the believer. The scripture commands neither singleness or marriage.
- Paul "wished" that all could be celibate, but he recognized that not all had the "gift."
- Freedom to choose is declared: V.25, 28,36,39

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Conclusions from I Corinthians 7 (cont'd)

- V25 Concerning the virgin (unmarried) I have no command (nor did the Lord)
- V28 But if you should marry, you have not sinned, and if a virgin should marry, she has not sinned
- V36 ...let him do **as he wishes**, he does not sin
- V39 ...but if her husband is dead, she is **free** to be married to **whom she wishes**, only in the Lord

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■ Paul Stresses singleness:

- To avoid unnecessary worry (v20-21)
- To avoid needless troubles (v28)
- To make better use of limited time (v29-31)
- To be free from concern (v32)
- To promote personal happiness (v40)

And this I say to your benefit, not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is seemly, and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord. V.35

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■ Within the Moral will of God:

- We are free to choose
- We are responsible to choose
- Are we competent to choose?

■ Proverbs Chapter 2

■ John 15

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- My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as hidden treasure

THEN...

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You will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom, and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding. He holds victory in store for the upright, He is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for He guards the course of the just and protects the way of is faithful ones.

Proverbs 2:1-8