

Knowing God's Will

How many times have we cried out to God, many times in desperation, seeking His will for our lives? Every day each of us is faced with making decisions that affect our lives and the lives of others. We want to do what is best, but sometimes it is difficult to know just what is pleasing to God.

Man's way is to determine with his mind what he should do, whereas God's way is to direct a man's heart. Proverbs 16:9 says, "The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps." We also read in Proverbs 21:1 "The King's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he wishes." And we have that promise in Proverbs 3:6 that if we acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, He will direct our paths. If we follow man's way and determine with our mind what to do, then we will miss God's will. However, if we let Him direct our hearts, then we will know His will for our lives.

Here are some simple steps in receiving guidance from the Lord. We must first ask God for wisdom. He has promised to give us the wisdom we need. "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." James 1:51 (NIV). The apostle John states, "and we receive from Him whatever we ask for, because we (watchfully) obey His orders -- observe His suggestions and injunctions, follow His plan for us -- and (habitually) practice what is pleasing to Him." I John 3:22 (AMP)

Just as we must listen to another person who gives us directions, so we must listen to God when He directs us. We can train our hearts to hear His quiet voice speaking, whether through His written word, through our circumstances, through godly counsel, or through a gentle leading of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Isaiah prophesied, "and your ears will hear a word behind you, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right or to the left." Isaiah 30:21

If we need help in making a particular decision, it is good to seek godly counsel. Even simply opening our heart to someone wiser than we, can turn us in the right direction to receive confirmation from the Lord. Solomon declared, "Where there is no guidance, the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory." Proverbs 11:14

We do not have to be anxious about God showing us His will, for He is the one who works in us "to will and to work for His good pleasure." Philippians 2:13