

# Winthrop Cross Impact Bible Study | Spring 2018

## *Knowing the Will of God<sup>1</sup>*

### Introduction

*Lots of ideas about the Will of God.*

Why do people have so many ideas about what God's will is?

How do you go about finding out what "God's will" is for your life?

Have you ever made a decision that you fully believed to be the will of God only to see it go terribly wrong?

Have you been fully convinced that something (or someone) was God's will only to find out *it/they obviously were not part of God's will for your life?*

What about people who claim that God was speaking to them? Does this happen? If not, why not?

*What are some excuses for not using the Bible in decisions?*

- "The Bible has nothing to say about everyday decision making."
- "Additional revelation is available in the form of visions, dreams, feelings, circumstances, fleeces (describe what this is — Gideon's story), etc."

*Why might they be wrong?*

"seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence."  
(2 Pet 1:3 NAS)

The Bible claims to have \_\_\_\_\_  
for "life and godliness."

**2 Timothy 3:16–17** teaches us that God inspired the Scripture. If this is the case, then it has great help for us and is perfectly suited for us.

"All **Scripture** is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."  
(2 Tim 3:16–17 NAS)

### Aspects of God's Will

*God's Directive Will (God's Moral Will)*

*God's Decreed Will (God's Sovereign Will)*

"but I have prayed for you [Peter], that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."  
(Luke 22:32 NAS95)

Can only be known \_\_\_\_\_ the fact, cannot be known in \_\_\_\_\_.

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to Steve Viars for much of this material.

*Implications?*

- Sometimes, people want to know the decreed will of God instead of the moral will of God. Knowing God's **decreed will** is impossible.
- I should never pretend that I know God's decreed will in advance. I don't have to. As long as I know he has one and He is good, that's all I need to know.

*Directive or Decreed?*

**Directive** —> Psalm 40:8; Eph 5:17; Rom 12:2

"I delight to do Your will, O my God;  
Your Law is within my heart."

(Psa 40:8 NAS95)

"So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

(Eph 5:17 NAS95)

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

(Rom 12:2 NAS95)

**Decreed** —> James 4:13–15; 1 Cor 4:19

"Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic."

(James 3:13–15 NAS95)

"But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power."

(1 Cor 4:19 NAS95)

*Why do we seem to always want to know the future?*

- By doing so, we might think we are guaranteed to be \_\_\_\_\_
- If God makes the decision, then we're free from the \_\_\_\_\_.
- The pressure is off to have any \_\_\_\_\_.

**The Place for the Scripture in Decision-Making**

*Understand the difference between the Bible speaking directly and indirectly.*

Descriptive does not mean prescriptive.

*Know Three "Propositions about Biblical Guidance."*

1. There is no way to know God's will and receive His guidance apart from the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. There are scriptural principles and practices to cover \_\_\_\_\_ areas of life.
3. The Scripture speaks directly and indirectly by implication. They help us make either/or choices or they give us a limited number of equally legitimate choices.

*Steps for good decision making*

1. Gather all the facts—list pros and cons.
2. Search out the principles, examples, etc., of Scripture that have a bearing on the decision.
3. Apply these to the pros and cons and the various options.
4. Seek Godly counsel.
5. If narrowed down to two equally good decisions (based on biblical principles), may decide on the basis of preference.
6. If question of possible sin is involved, use "holding" principle. (Romans 14:23).

If it's doubtful, don't do it.

### *Biblical Input*

- List the direct statements from Scripture. If it's directly outlawed or prohibited, you have your answer.
- List the *indirect information* from Scripture. Sometimes, the Bible gives us *indirect feedback* as to how we should solve a problem or make a decision.
- Try to see what is the most relevant Biblical information about your decision.
- Don't forget to ask for wisdom! (James 1:5–8)
- The answer might be to choose based on preference.

### *Misunderstandings*

- **Leading** (Romans 8:14; Gal 5:18). Think "\_\_\_\_\_," not a super-mystical God-spoke-to-me feeling.
- **Peace** (Col 3:15). Many choices, on the front end, you will not have peace. You will be blessed with peace on the back end, but probably not on the front end.
- **Circumstances**. Evaluate them. But be careful if you go through every open door.