

I. Introduction and Review.

A. Review. Deut. 29:29 18:9-12

B. Your attitude in decision making is crucial. Ps. 37:4 Pr. 4:23 2:1-5 Mt. 22:37f 6:10
Luke 22:42 I Cor. 10:31 James 1:5

II. How does God guide you? Ps. 23 Prov. 3:5-6

A. God guides you through His Word. Ps. 119:24 II Tim. 3:16-17 II Pe. 1:3

Your testimonies are my delight. They are my counselors.

1. The Bible provides infallible and sufficient direction. II Tim. 3:16-17 II Pe. 1:3

2. How can you use the Bible to help you make decisions? Psalm. 1:2

3. Apply texts according to their meaning in context. II Tim. 2:15

B. God guides you through wise counsel. Prov. 15:22 12:15 19:20 *Without consultation plans are frustrated, but with many counselors, they succeed...*

1. Select your counselors carefully. Ps. 1:1 I Ki. 12:1f Col. 2:8 Heb. 13:17 Titus 2:3-5

2. Why is counsel necessary? Pr. 28:26 27:6

3. The job of a counselor is to help you to apply the Bible to your situation.

4. Counsel should to be weighted, not merely counted.

5. Good Christian books can provide useful counsel. *Resources for Changing Lives.*

C. God guides you through the Holy Spirit (The Counselor). Ro. 8:14 John 16:13 17:17
Eph. 1:13 *For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

1. Nowhere is the leading of the Holy Spirit referred to as a feeling.

2. The Spirit of Truth gives you understanding of God's Word: illumination.

John 14:26 16:13 17:17 I Co. 2:12-14 Rom. 12:2 Col. 1:9

3. The Spirit helps you to apply the Word to your life. Ezek. 36:27 Ro. 8:4,13

Js. 4:5 Gal. 5:16f Ps. 139:13-14 John 16:8

D. How does God guide you through prayer? James 1:5

1. Don't expect a mystical answer to prayer.

2. Don't use prayer as an excuse for an irresponsible or selfish decision.

3. Pray that God will give you wisdom to apply the Bible to your situation. Ps. 25:4-

5 119:12,26,33,66,73,125 Prov. 2:1-11 Phil. 1:9-10 Col. 1:9-10 James 1:5 II Tim.

2:7 Make me know your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths...

4. Pray that God will give you the desire and ability to do His moral will. Phil. 2:13

5. Pray that God will give you the grace to embrace His sovereign will. Js. 4:13f

E. Is there any sense in which God guides you through feelings? Rom. 5:1 II Cor. 2:13

1. Feelings of peace or a lack of peace have causes which need to be understood.

2. You may lack peace because deep down you know you are doing wrong.

3. You may lack peace because you are very cautious or anxious by nature.

4. Your desires may also influence your decisions. I Tim. 3:1 I Cor. 7:39 Ecc. 11:9

5. All feelings must be tested against the Word of God.

F. God guides you through providence (circumstances) which reveal His sovereign will.
James 4:13-17 Acts 18:21 Prov. 16:9 27:1 Ro. 1:13 I Cor. 4:19 Mt. 6:10

1. You make your plans and decisions, but the Lord controls the outcome. Pr. 16:9

The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps.

2. He opens and closes doors.

3. Be careful not to mystically interpret all open and closed doors as signs from God.

III. Will you always receive clear guidance from God on every decision?

A. Some decisions are based upon direct commands of Scripture. I Jo. 3:4 Js. 4:17

B. Many decisions are not as clear-cut, and must be made according to wisdom.

- 1. The Bible does not give you a specific answer for every situation. For example:**
 - a. Should I marry? Whom should I marry?**
 - b. At what standard of living should I live?**
 - c. How much should I give to the Lord's work? Through whom should I give?**
 - d. Where should I live?**
 - e. Which education should I pursue?**
 - f. What vocation should I select?**
 - g. Which church should I join?**
 - h. Am I called to full time ministry or missions work?**
 - i. How should I divide my time among church, family, and work?**
- 2. Search the Scriptures to find principles of wisdom which apply.**
 - a. Marriage. Genesis 2:18-25 Proverbs 31 Eph. 5:22f I Pet. 3:1-7 I Cor. 7:1f**
 - b. Finances and giving. Ro. 13:8 Pr. 22:7 I Ti. 6:9f Lu. 14:28-29**
 - c. Giving. II Cor. 8-9 I Cor. 16:1-2 I Tim. 6:17**
 - d. Location. Heb. 13:17 I Tim. 5:8**
 - e. Education and career. Pr. 22:29 12:11 I Cor. 15:33**
 - f. Church. Heb. 13:17 I Tim. 3:1-7**
 - g. Call to ministry. I Cor. 12:13 I Pet. 4:10-11 I Tim. 3:1f Titus 1:5f II Ti.**
 - h. Priorities. I Cor. 10:13**
- 3. Often there will be biblical principles which weigh on both sides of a decision.**
- 4. Questions to ask yourself.**
 - a. What will bring the most glory to God? I Cor. 10:31**
 - b. Are you motivated by a love of the world and the flesh, or by a love for God?
I John 2:15-17**
 - c. Are you being sinfully expedient? Luke 14:27**
 - d. What will show love to others? Phil. 2:3-4 I Cor. 10:33 Romans 15:1**
 - e. Would this cause others to stumble? Rom. 14:15**
 - f. What will contribute to your spiritual growth? I Cor. 6:12 *All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable.***
 - g. What will best fit your gifts and abilities? Acts 6:2-3**
 - h. What would Jesus do? I Pet. 2:21 Rom. 15:7-8 John 13:15**
- 5. Sometimes it helps to make lists to weigh pros and cons.**

**C. Once you have examined the biblical reasons, you are free to consider your desires.
I Cor. 7:39 I Tim. 3:1**

- 1. Sometimes multiple choices will be within the realm of your freedom. Ge. 2:16-17**
- 2. You may choose according to your desire. I Cor. 7:39**

D. Once you make your decision, trust God for the outcome. James 4:13-17 I Cor. 4:19

- 1. It is good to plan and to be decisive. Pr. 21:5**
- 2. But God directs your steps and determines the result. Pr. 16:9 27:1 Js. 4:13-17**
- 3. Submit to His sovereign will as it is revealed to you. Acts 18:21 Ro. 1:13**

E. Rejoice as you look back upon His wonderful providence (leading) as he works out His plan for your life. Rom 8:28 Ge. 50:20

IV. Concluding summary.

Discussion questions

- 1. In what ways does God guide you?**
 - a. How can you find answers to your questions in the Bible?**
 - b. What role do counselors play?**
 - c. What should you expect to receive when you pray about a decision?**
 - d. How does the Holy Spirit guide you?**
 - e. Should you ever pay attention to your feelings and desires?**
- 2. What are examples of decisions in which you have freedom?**
- 3. How should you expect God to guide these decisions?**
 - a. Whether to marry.**
 - b. Whom to marry.**
 - c. When to marry.**
 - d. What vocation to pursue.**
 - e. Where to study.**
 - f. Where to live.**
 - g. What lifestyle you should enjoy.**
 - h. What ministry opportunities you should pursue.**
 - i. How you should allocate your time.**
- 4. How does God's sovereign will guide your decisions?**

Give examples of how God has guided you in the past.