

(Galatians 6:7-9). We need to ask for advice from experts who specialize in the field of consideration.

It helps to talk with godly leaders - a pastor, elder, parent, or simply a mature believer can often contribute important insight, answer questions, remove doubts and confirm inclinations. Make sure to choose individuals who will offer sound biblical advice and not just say what you want to hear. It will also mean using what I call - 'sanctified common sense'. The Bible instructs us to *"Make plans by seeking advice"* (Proverbs 20:18). Again we are told - *"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed"* (Proverbs 15:22).

8. Make a list

First write down the priorities you believe **God would have** in your situation. These are not the things that are important to **you**, but rather the things that are most important to **God** in this decision. Will the outcome of your decision draw you closer to God? Will it glorify him in your life? How will it impact those around you? *"Remind yourself of them. Write them down and in your heart"* (Proverbs 7:3).

9. Weigh the Decision Carefully

Make a list of the pros and cons connected with the decision. You may find that something on your list clearly violates the revealed will of God in his Word. If so, you have your answer. This is not his will. If not, then you now have a realistic picture of your options to help you make a responsible decision. *"Don't act thoughtlessly, but try to understand what the Lord wants you to do"* (Ephesians 5:17). (NLT)

10. Choose your spiritual priorities

By this time you should have enough information to establish your spiritual priorities as they relate to the decision. Ask yourself which decision best satisfies those priorities? If more than one option will fulfill your established priorities, then choose the one which is your strongest desire!

Sometimes you face a choice in which there is no **right** and **wrong** decision, but rather the God given freedom to make a choice based on your own preference. Both options may be within God's perfect will for your life and both will lead to the fulfillment of God's purpose for your life.

11. Act on your decision

If you have arrived at your decision with the sincere intention of pleasing the heart of God, incorporating biblical principles and wise counsel, you can proceed with confidence knowing that God will work out his purposes through your decision.

In everyday matters God allows us to choose as we see best and we learn His will by the outcome. This was Paul's experience - *"I'm torn between two desires / options"* (Philippians 1:23).

We can rest assured that if we are sensitive to the Word or mind of God, we will walk close to Him and do that which pleases Him.

God will help us do what is His will, as we seek His counsel at all times. The end result will be peace and security. *"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose"* (Romans 8:28). (NIV)

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So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. - John 8:36
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Decision Making and God's Will

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Steps for Biblical Decision Making

It is never easy to weigh up in our minds the correct steps to take to determine God's will for our lives. Biblical decision making begins with a willingness to submit your intentions to God's perfect will and humbly follow his direction. The problem is that most of us don't know how to figure out exactly what God's will *is* in every decision we face—especially the big, life-altering decisions. There is no quick simple way to do this. We need the Spirit of God to teach us the steps to take to get direction from God and do His will.

Here is a helpful step - by - step plan that lays out a spiritual road map for biblical decision making.

1. Begin by Knowing God Personally

You will not know the will of God without knowing God and His ultimate will. *"God is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance"* (2Peter 3:9). It is God's will that we be saved (1Timothy 2:3,4).

Only true believers desire to discover God's will for their lives. This whole question is based on the fact that a person is in a right relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We must accept Jesus into our lives and desire to please Him, by obedience to His word.

"If anyone loves me, (said Jesus) he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with (or in) him" (John 14:23).

With the Lord in our hearts by his Spirit, we are to seek to practice what God wants us to do in accordance with His will (Romans 12:1-2).

2. Start with prayer

Honestly and sincerely open up to God and talk to him about whatever is on your heart. Frame your

attitude into one of trust and obedience as you commit the decision to prayer. There's no reason to be fearful in decision making when you are secure in the knowledge that God has your best interest in mind. *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"* (Jeremiah 29:11). (NIV)

3. Define the decision

When thinking about the 'Will of God' we need to ask ourselves some serious questions, which will help us define the decision.

A. God's Revealed Will: Is the decision part of the revealed or **declared will of God** as clearly recorded in the Bible? To find this out we must be able to look up the Bible passages or verses about the subject needing a decision. The Bible addresses many of the issues of life. For example take a look at 'The Sermon on the Mount' by Jesus in Matthew chapters 5-7, or the practical sections of the N.T. letters such as Romans 12-15, 1Corinthians 1-16, Galatians 5-6, Ephesians 4-6, Colossians 2-3, James 1- 4, 1Peter 1-5. These Bible passages give clear cut guidelines as to what is God's will on many of the issues of life. The only response needed is acceptance, faith and obedience.

B. God's Implied Will: Is the decision in the area of the implied will of God as inferred in the Bible? Indirect expectations of God, based on our relationship to Him. This necessitates finding those Biblical principles to guide us. A modern symbol of this is WWJD. As Christians, we must seek to understand "What Would Jesus Do?" in this situation or facing this decision.

It will help if we ask ourselves if the decision involves a moral or non-moral area. It is actually a little easier to discern the will of God in moral areas, because most of the time you will find clear direction in God's Word. If God has already revealed his will in Scripture, our only response is to obey. Non-moral areas still require the application of biblical principles, however, sometimes the direction is harder to distinguish. *"Your word is a*

lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Psalm 119:105). (cp. Ephesians 5:6-33)

4. Be ready and willing to accept and obey God's answer

It's unlikely that God will reveal his plan if he knows already that you won't obey. It is absolutely essential that your will be completely submitted to God's. When your will is humbly and fully submitted to the Master, you can have confidence that he will illuminate your path. *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take"* (Proverbs 3:5-6). (NLT)

5. Exercise faith

Remember too, that decision making is a process that takes time. You may have to re-submit your will over and over again to God throughout the process. Then by faith, which pleases God, trust him wholeheartedly that he will reveal his will. *"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him"* (Hebrews 11:6). (NIV)

6. Seek concrete direction

Begin investigating, evaluating and gathering information. Do research in the field of the subject to gain wisdom and direction. All human knowledge and science originates from God. He has made mankind and inbuilt in scientists the ability to discover the best of life. (Proverbs 4) Then find out what the Bible says about the situation?

Gain practical and personal information that relates to the decision, and begin writing down what you learn. *"The mocker seeks wisdom and finds none, but knowledge comes easily to the discerning"* (Proverbs 14:6).

7. Obtain counsel

In difficult decisions it's wise to get spiritual and practical counsel from others. God expects us to be wise and do research into the pros and cons of a decision, because *"We will reap what we sow"*-