

Receiving Divine Guidance

By Dr. Dan Cheatham, www.devotional.net

The Bible calls Jesus our "WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR"¹ When it comes to DIVINE GUIDANCE, especially for major decisions such as career choices, college selections, geographical moves, the gifts and callings of God, choosing a lifetime marriage partner, major surgery, business propositions, and the like; it is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to understand how God reveals His will for our lives. When a person receives Jesus Christ as his Lord, he surrenders his own life to God. The believer is to have no life of his own. The true disciple of Jesus Christ keeps selfishness out of his life through daily prayer and Bible devotions. The disciple experiences the "sweet release" of "sweet surrender" every day. ALL THAT SHOULD MATTER TO THE DISCIPLE IS TO KNOW GOD, KNOW GOD'S WILL, BE IN GOD'S WILL AND TO DO GOD'S WILL. DIVINE GUIDANCE for every decision is available to the believer who is serious with God. I am going to share with you THREE STRANDS OF GUIDANCE and THREE WITNESSES that will guarantee you clear direction from your Heavenly Father.

I am assuming that you already understand that Bible promises and principles only work for those Christians who have no unconfessed sin in their lives and no unforgiveness toward others in their hearts. This teaching also assumes you are a faithful participant and tither in a local church.

THE THREE STRANDS OF GUIDANCE

Ecclesiastes 4:12 KJV - "A THREEFOLD CORD IS NOT EASILY BROKEN."

Ropemakers almost always use three strands to twist ropes together. The reason for this is because the maximum number of strands that can be wrapped together and still all touch each other is THREE. When you draw perfect circles of the same size and put them together, you can only get three to all touch each other. A ROPE OF THREE STRANDS CANNOT EASILY BE BROKEN. IT IS STRONG. IT IS SAFE. And when it comes to divine guidance, SAFETY is what we're pursuing.

The Bible says "IN THE MULTITUDE OF COUNSELLORS THERE IS SAFETY"² Just like there are three arms of the government for the United States, there are three divine counsellors for the believer. The American republic has three arms of government: the Executive Branch, the Legislative Branch, and the Judicial Branch. Those three arms of government were designed by our founding forefathers to keep America safe from the error of monarchy on one hand and from the error of democracy on the other. America was designed to be a safe republic with checks and balances on both the leaders and the latest popular public opinion. God has THREE STRANDS OF PROTECTION that insure you hang on to the right ropes in your life, following the right leads - THREE W's.

THE WORD OF GOD³

The first strand is the WORD OF GOD. You should ask yourself these questions: "How does this direction that I am considering line up with God's Word? Is what I am doing within the scriptural bounds of permission or commission?" For example, if you were considering marrying a person who was not "sold-out, no hold-out" to Jesus, you could know that it was not God's will, because the Bible says "Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers."⁴ Here is another example: Let's say you were considering answering what you felt was a call to the preaching ministry. So you go to the Bible and you see that PREACHING AND THE MINISTRY is within the commission and permission of the scripture. SO YOUR GUIDANCE HAS PASSED THE FIRST TEST. But remember there are THREE TESTS TO PASS.

WIDE OPEN OPPORTUNITIES ⁵

The second strand on your rope is wide open opportunities. One of the ways God leads us, is to place opportunities before us. God "opens doors which no man can close."⁶ God "closes doors which no man can open"⁷ Doors of opportunity are a means by which God guides us. Yet, just because there is an opportunity, doesn't BY ITSELF mean that it is God's chosen direction for us. **WE MUST ALL REALIZE THESE TRUTHS:** There are **GOD-MADE OPPORTUNITIES**. There are **MAN-MADE OPPORTUNITIES**. There are **SELF-MADE OPPORTUNITIES**. And there are **SATAN-MADE OPPORTUNITIES**. There are hidden dangers that can't be seen in **MAN-MADE, SELF-MADE, or SATAN-MADE OPPORTUNITIES**. There are hidden blessings and happiness in **GOD-MADE OPPORTUNITIES**.

Behind every decision lies either buried treasure or hidden danger; only God knows for sure.

This doesn't mean we should be afraid to make a decision, however. Failure to make a decision is a bad decision itself. Time with God is required to beat out the shape of opportunity on the **ANVIL OF PRAYER**. As we shape and form that opportunity on the anvil of prayer and in the refiner's fire, God gives us **WITNESSES**. This is the third test that must be interwoven into our rope of God's will.

THREE WITNESSES

Matthew 18:16 and Deuteronomy 17:6 "**IN THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED.**" I will paraphrase this verse. "Every decision may be proved as God's perfect will if it passes three **TESTimonies.**" The first of the **THREE WITNESSES** is the **WITNESS OF YOUR OWN SPIRIT**.

#1 THE WITNESS IN MY OWN SPIRIT

Romans 8:14 says, "for as many as are **LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD**, they are the sons of God." This means that children of God have a right to be led by God's Spirit. It also means that it is perfectly natural for a believer to be Spirit-led. Exactly how does His Spirit lead us? The answer is found in the same breath of scripture: Romans 8:16. The Spirit itself beareth **WITNESS** with our spirit" If after repeatedly praying over an opportunity you have a witness to it being God's will, the opportunity is most likely God's will if it has passed the other tests described above. When you have the **SPIRIT'S WITNESS**, there is an abiding peace about the opportunity down inside you. See Colossians 3:15 in the Amplified Bible Version. When you have the **SPIRIT'S WITNESS**, it's more than a fickle emotion that may come or go. It is a velvety smooth spiritual sensation down in your belly. It is a "green light" in your heart. It is a "yes" in your spirit. It is a "**KNOWING**" IN YOUR "**KNOWER**". It is an inward tuition that "**THIS IS RIGHT.**" It is a "**GO AHEAD HUNCH**" in your "**HUNCHER.**" It is a "**RIGHT FEELING**" to your "**CONSCIENCE.**"

When you don't have the witness, there is a lack of abiding peace about it. Something "isn't quite right" down on the inside of you even if your emotions like it. There is a "check" in your spirit. There is something in your belly that "rubs you wrong" when you pray about it. There is a "yucky" sensation in your inner man. Something doesn't seem to "click" on the inside. There is no witness. **YOU WILL HAVE TO SPEND TIME IN HIS PRESENCE. YOU WILL HAVE TO GET QUIET BEFORE THE LORD. YOU MAY NEED TO PRAY MANY TIMES ABOUT YOUR DECISION TO ALLOW A CLEAR WITNESS OR CHECK TO FORM IN YOU. THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS AROUND PRAYER WHEN IT COMES TO DIVINE GUIDANCE.**

One warning here. Sometimes when we want something bad enough, even though God may know it's

not best for us, we may manufacture the voice of God or a false "peace" that we say is from God. Understand that to receive direction from God, you must first surrender your will, surrender your natural preferences, and through prayer shift your will into "neutral" long enough for God to really communicate with you.

#2 THE WITNESS OF MY SPOUSE ⁸

If you are married to a committed Christian spouse, God will always give your spouse a "witness" or a "check" if he or she prays also. Sometimes a "check" by your spouse may mean that the opportunity is not the will of God. Sometimes a "check" by your spouse can mean that the timing on the decision is not right. **GOD IS NOT DUMB.** He has put the two of you together as a team. He realizes that in order for the two of you to be a team, He must deal with both your hearts about a decision. Usually the husband will get the first witness from God and as the wife prays, she will get direction also. But not always. Sometimes the wife may pick-up on what God is saying and may suggest it to her husband and then let him pray and take the lead on it. Now, if both husband and wife have a **WITNESS** concerning a certain direction, they are getting close to the perfect will of God. If a single believer has godly, praying parents, often God will use them to confirm or warn their child.

#3 THE WITNESS OF MY PASTOR ⁹

The third witness is the witness or confirmation of your pastor. Or, if you belong to a large church where you don't have personal access to your pastor, God will use a member of the pastoral staff or maybe a home fellowship leader under that local church's authority. For major decisions, it is wise to come to that spiritual leader to share and pray together. If that leader has a "check" about your decision, **PRAY SOME MORE OVER YOUR DECISION.** My own personal experience as a pastor may be helpful here. Many members of my congregation have come to me and shared their plans for geographical moves. Usually, if it is God's will, the Lord gives me a real **WITNESS** to confirm their decision for them. And I have seen God bless every one of those families. When the move is not God's will, He always gives me a **STRONG CHECK** in my spirit for those families under my spiritual care. Every time I had this **CHECK**, and the people went ahead with their plans, the move proved to be disastrous financially, maritally, spiritually, or all three. Every time I had an abiding peace about that person or had no particular sense of warning in my heart, the move was successful. The Chief Shepherd gives His undershepherds confirmation and warnings for his sheep.

EXTRA CONFIRMATIONS

Many times God will go out of His way to confirm His direction or warn you of a bad decision by dreams, visions, or a prophetic word through your pastor or a prophet visiting your local church.

CONCLUSION

When all three strands of 1) The Word, 2) Wide Open Opportunities, and 3) The Witnesses come together, you can be sure that you have hold of God's rope of guidance.

The three witnesses are 1) The Witness Of Your Own Spirit, 2) The Witness Of Your Spouse, and 3) The Witness Of A Shepherd. You can never go wrong if you use the **THREE STRAND** and **THREE WITNESS** principles of guidance. You will live safely in the perfect will of God all the days of your life.

OTHER NUGGETS ON DIVINE GUIDANCE

Three Tests: 1) The Door Test, 2) The Word Test, and 3) The Time Test. The Word Test and the Door Test are already explained above.

The Time Test goes something like this. If something is really God's Will for your life, it will "stick" with you and "stay" with you the longer you wait. That which is from God lasts, that which is human whim fades over time. When something is God's Will, you can't shake it; it gets stronger. It lays hold of you. It develops into a passion.

That Which Is God's Will For Your Life Comes Into Your Heart, Stays In Your Heart, And Grows In Your Heart.

Sometimes the way I conclude that something is NOT God's Will for my life is when I notice I keep forgetting to pray over it as I once did.

Pr 19:21 KJV [There are] many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

Pr 19:21 NIV Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1. Isa 9:6
2. Prov 11:14
3. Psa 119:105
4. II Cor 6:14
5. Rev 3:8 (Amplified)
6. Rev 3:7
7. Rev 3:7
8. Amos 3:3
9. Jer 23:4