

Review: Will of God; Divine Guidance: Academic Basis, Mechanics, 1**D. Academic Basis of Divine Guidance**

The Scripture itself informs us that we find our way in God's plan through knowledge of His will.

Psalm 32:8 - I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go [Grace Apparatus for Perception]; I will counsel you [recall of doctrine] with My eye upon you [omnipresence].

Psalm 25:4 - Make me know Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your [dereck] paths.

One of the strange occurrences that in many cases tortured the pioneers was the phenomenon of the mirage, the apparent oasis of water and shade which appeared on the horizon but which vanished into sand as one approached.

The soul that understands the will of God is like a well-watered garden in the midst of a continuing drought. Such a person is like an oasis to others afflicted by it and does not prove to be a mirage.

Isaiah 58:11 - The Lord will continually guide you and satisfy your desire in scorched places [Divine Guidance], and give strength to your bones; and you will be like a watered garden [oasis] and like a spring of water whose waters do not deceive [i.e., mirage].

In order to be guided by God the believer must be very dependent upon God's leadership. He must learn to distinguish between divine viewpoint and his own human viewpoint.

Proverbs 3:1 - My son, do not forget my teaching. But let your heart keep my commandments;

Proverbs 3:5 - Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding.

Proverbs 3:6 - In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.

The paths spoken of here are wheel-tracks of righteousness, obtainable only through a transformation of the soul by means of the Holy Spirit's mentorship. (Romans 12:2)

E. Mechanics of Divine Guidance

Many of the processes and procedures used in the evaluation of a circumstance are found in Acts 11. In this context, Peter is the first Apostle who takes the Gospel to the Gentiles.

In a retrospective evaluation of his ministry to the Gentiles in the home of Cornelius, Peter points out several categories of divine guidance made available to him. The first is guidance through prayer.

Acts 11:5 - I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision ...
Prayer is designed to conform to the will of God.

To express the will of God in your prayers, you have to come to know what the will of God is or how to ask for the will of God instead of your own will.

Prayer is a vehicle for the use of certain problem-solving devices but prayer is not itself a problem-solving device. In Peter's case, his prayer was seeking divine guidance. Seeking guidance through prayer is legitimate only when you face a situation which is not covered by specific passages of Scripture.

An easy example to illustrate this point has to do with marriage. Do you pray for guidance on whether or not a certain unbeliever is right for you? If so, you are seeking your own will, not God's. If you somehow can get an emotional tingle while praying, you interpret this as a sign from God that this person is all right to marry.

"I just felt God's will was for me to marry Fred." "I know he's an unbeliever but he'll come around when he sees me submit like a good Christian wife." "He just needs a little time. I've asked God to make sure he gets saved after the honeymoon."

Horseradish! This is not the will of God. You are playing games with the God of the universe. Divine guidance on this very subject is found in Scripture therefore it is not a subject for prayer.

2 Corinthians 6:14 - Do not be bound together with unbelievers; what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, what fellowship has light with darkness?

However, prayer is a legitimate exercise in seeking guidance on which believer to marry. His name is not in Scripture. Therefore, seeking divine guidance in identifying who is the right man for you is not only recommended but encouraged. God provides guidance to the believer who seeks it through prayer.

Hebrews 4:16 - Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

Incidentally, Peter receives guidance from the Lord Jesus Christ in a vision, a legitimate means of divine communication prior to the completion of the canon.