

Avoid Accidents: Obey The Traffic Lights

Part One

“And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.”
(Acts 16:9-10)

Paul, in obedience to his missionary call in Acts 13 established a number of churches in the faith and was seeking the will of God for his life. Finding the will of God seems to be one of the major areas where people struggle. Paul thought that he would go to Asia but he was “...forbidden of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 16:6) Then his team considered going to another place “...but the Spirit suffered them not.” (Acts 16:7) Finally Paul had a vision of a man who stood on a distant shore and called across the sea, “Come over into Macedonia, and help us!” (Acts 16:9)

“The dream gave Paul his map. We went to work at once getting things ready to cross over to Macedonia. All the pieces had come together. We knew now for sure that God had called us to preach the good news to the Europeans.” (Page 274, The Message.)

The purpose of this lesson is to assist you in knowing how to determine the will of God for your life. This lesson will show you how to make sure that what you feel is the will of God, is in harmony with the Word of God, and is God’s way for your life. Eugene Peterson suggests (and the King James Version seems to back up his thinking) that Paul and his team felt that all of the pieces had come together to the Will of God. There seems to be a process that they went through to determine this since they knew for sure that it was God’s will. Their assurance was not based on the vision alone. Christians often ask, “How can I be sure of God’s will for my life?” To many, this is a

difficult question and one that many Christians struggle with.

A story is told of a farmer who was working in his field one day and saw in the clouds the letters “P.C.” He thought to himself, “**God is calling me to Preach Christ.**” The man left farming and started preaching in the pulpit. He was not a good preacher and caused many of his members to fall asleep. One day a deacon asked him, “**Pastor, how did you ever get called into the ministry?**” The farmer told him about his experience in the field and the letters “P. C.” appearing in the sky. To this the deacon replied, “**Oh Pastor, you made a mistake. That meant, Plant Corn.**”

A story is told of a minister who was seeking for the will of God to be done in his life. As he was driving along and praying about God’s will his car broke down in front of the Nigeria High Commission. He took this as a sign that the Lord was calling him to Nigeria as a missionary. These illustrations reveal to us a faulty and risky way of determining the will of God. There is a safer way!

Dr. Bill Hamon in his book **Prophets and Personal Prophecy** suggests that there are three “**W’s**” in decision making when it comes to the will of God.

- ⇒ **God’s word** (on the matter.)
- ⇒ **God’s will** (about it.)
- ⇒ **God’s way** (to fulfill it.)

Traveling the Road of the Will of God

Dr. Hamon (whose book was very helpful in the preparation of this lesson) compares the three “**W’s**” to three sets of traffic lights. You must make sure that you have a green light on all three before proceeding. (Instructors may want to draw three different traffic lights to illustrate and label them as above.)

Three colors are normally used on traffic lights. They are: **Red** - which means to “**Stop.**” **Yellow** - which means to “**Yield, get ready to stop, or Caution.**” **Green** meaning “**Go.**”

<i>God's Word</i>

The Bible is God in print. It is the revelation of God in written form. The Greek word is “**Logos**”, which refers to the Word of God in general. Another Greek word is “**rhema**” which is a specific “**word from the Word.**” It is a personal word from the Lord giving us direction and a command. If you could summarize up the Bible in one word it would be “**submission.**” We need to submit to the will of God as revealed through His Word.

One story reveals that a deacon was considering studying for his Bachelor of Theology degree and become a pastor. He really wanted the degree but struggled with whether or not it was God’s will, and a sound investment of his time and money. One afternoon he found the answer he had been looking for in the Word of God. He felt that this Bible verse confirmed his desire. The verse said, “**For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree...**” (1 Timothy 3:13)

It is wrong to decide what you want to do and then make the Bible conform to it. People have the habit of doing this. They make their plans and then they expect God to go along with it. Doctrines have even been formed using and/or abusing one isolated Scripture. When determining the will of God the first traffic light that you drive up to is called “**God’s Word.**” What you feel is the will of God for your life must be measured up against the Word of God. The Word of God has been provided as a “**...lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.**” (Psalm 119: 105) Most of God’s will is revealed through His Word. We cannot base our decision on one Scripture alone.

“This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.” (2 Corinthians 13:1)

The Spirit will never speak to us; even through spiritual gifts, and tell us to do anything that would be contrary to the Word of God. God’s will for us conforms to the principles of His Word. The Spirit guides us in agreement with the Bible.

Is every portion of God’s Word for us to obey today? Some will quickly answer, “**Yes!**” It is true that the entire Word of God is for us and is relevant. All Scripture is written for a purpose. However, not all of the Word of God should be obeyed by us today. The personal prophecies directed at different men of God in the Bible may not be required for us to fulfill. (However, they do teach us to be obedient to the voice of the Lord.) God told Isaiah to “**go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.**” (Isaiah 20:2) This prophecy is part of the Word of God and has been fulfilled by Isaiah; it is not meant for us to do today. He was to do this in order to act out a parable of what would happen in that day.

Many today isolate Scriptures and take them as the will of God and make doctrines out of them. God spoke to Moses and said, “**...put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place wheron thou standest is holy ground.**” (Exodus 3:5) There are churches that even ask their people to remove their shoes at the door because they are entering into the presence of God and will be standing on holy ground.

If what you feel passes the “**Word Test**” then you have received a green light and can **proceed to the next set of traffic lights** on the road to discovering the will of God.