

You Are the Will of God

by Bill Volkman

"But when He... called me... I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood" (Gal. 1:16).

How-to-do-it, gimmick-oriented Christians have a field day when it comes to determining the will of God as applied to specific life situations. My "Designer's Blueprint for Happiness" course had what I thought was the ultimate check-list for ascertaining God's will. The fifteen methods which I listed in that part of the course can be summarized as follows:

1. Through the concurrence of spouse or partner.
2. Through chain of counsel, or chain of command.
3. Through a multitude of counselors.
4. Through "fiscal breathing."
5. Through confirming fleece tests.
6. Through specific scriptures.
7. Through general scriptural guidance.
8. Through an analysis of your motivating gift and your life message.
9. Through careful analysis of the facts.
10. Through an attitude of submission to God's will.
11. Through common sense, circumstances and signs.
12. Through prayer.
13. Through fasting.
14. Through supernatural guidance by spiritual gifts
15. Through waiting on God for inner peace.

The illusion of independent self causes most of us to have an inordinate desire to *objectively* determine the will of God. To just be still and know that He is God seems like foolishness when we have a God-given mind and such a beautiful long list of things we can "do." Our attitude is that *"God helps those who help themselves."* We will do all we can for ourselves, and if we are still confused, *then* we will trust God to somehow lead us to do the "right" thing. The subjective approach (item 15 above) is resorted to only if the other fourteen objective steps leave us mentally uncertain.

How do you ascertain the leading of the Lord when you are confronted with major decisions? Why is it that we can spontaneously make thousands of smaller decisions each day with ease and naturalness, but insist on making a "big deal" out of other decisions? We do not find it necessary to call on God in beseeching prayer, or "figure out" the answers from objective will-of-God check lists for the smaller decisions; we just do what comes naturally. Why then do we not use the same relaxed spontaneity in "major" decisions?

My personal check-list has recently been reduced to only Item #15 – *"Through waiting on God for inner peace."* All I care about now is inner knowing. Though most men might see this as totally unreliable subjectivity, to me it is true objectivity, because it is eternal spirit-fact. Even the approach of waiting for a sense of inner peace is only used by me on rare occasions; for example, when a decision needs to be made concerning a public ministry which involves other people.

Since we have the mind of Christ in our union with Him, why would we need to *seek* for peace or for His will? If we agree with David that, *"He guides me in the paths of righteousness"* (Ps. 23:3), why not just live naturally doing the next thing which spontaneously "happens"? If we *"know all things"* (1 John. 2:20), what is it that we want to find out? In union we are the will of God. Because we now have a new name and a

new nature, our hearts are no longer “*desperately wicked*” (Jer. 17:9), and we need not be suspicious of ourselves. No, now we can trust ourselves and our spontaneous decisions, because we have an awareness that in oneness our decisions are His decisions.

Union is not conditional. It is not subject to how you feel, nor is it dependent on past performance, nor even on current attitude. Many who say, “*I have the witness of the Spirit,*” or “*I feel that the Lord is leading me in this matter,*” give away their inherent unbelief and immaturity by their very protestations of certainty. Don’t you always have the witness of the Spirit; isn’t He leading in all matters; don’t you believe that His will is always being done on earth as it is in heaven?

Then is there any point at all to the fourteen objective methods I listed for determining the will of God? Yes. They have the same purpose as teachers and teaching. Though you have no need of a teacher because you know all things, teachers do provide a *confirming witness* to truth already known within the inner being of the hearers. In the same way, the fourteen objective methods must be seen as nothing but confirmations of pre-existing truth. Whether it is the concurrence of the spouse, the advice of parents, the results of a fleece test, the words of a prophecy, or a specific or general statement from Scripture, each should be nothing more than an outer confirmation of a preexisting inner leading.

So away with all the fancy check-lists, until they are seen for what they are. We were meant to be spontaneous and free. That spontaneity and freedom might lead you in various situations to all types and methods of confirming witness. But all decisions must flow from a confident and peaceful inner awareness of His presence, not from facts, or mental approaches, or supernatural signs, or the dictates of others.

When God called Paul, the apostle checked with no one. He “*did not immediately consult with flesh and blood.*” He felt no need to be under submission or have a “covering.” Apparently he did consult with those in Jerusalem at a later date, but not initially. He was free to consult, or not to consult. At the time of the calling he inwardly knew what he was to do, and this allowed no alternative but to go directly to Arabia. We too can have total confidence in our decisions, knowing that we are the will of God, because He is our very life.

The prophet Agabus was sent to Caesarea to prophesy Paul’s imprisonment if he went to Jerusalem. If Paul had allowed the emotional feelings of his team and the local residents to deter him from going to Jerusalem, we would not have the prison epistles that we have today. Neither supernatural prophecy nor a multitude of counselors could deter Paul. And since he would not be persuaded we fell silent, remarking, “*The will of the Lord be done!*” (Acts 21:14). We too must trust God’s leading in our brothers.

Paul, in turn, trusted the inner witness of his co-workers. He did not demand submission of Apollos, even though Paul’s counsel was directly opposite to Apollos’ desire and action. “*But concerning Apollos our brother, I encouraged him greatly to come to you with the brethren, but it was not at all his desire*” (1 Cor. 16:12).

We must grant the same kind of freedom to others as we want for ourselves, for they too are God’s perfect expressions - they too are Christ in action. Though we never abdicate our freedom, nor demand that others relinquish theirs, it is understood that the advice, opinions and dictates of others will frequently be major factors in our subjective, spontaneous decisions and actions.