

Decision Making and the Will of God

Session 2

I. Introduction –The Bible plus something else ...

II. Review

Conventional view in a nutshell:

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Proof texts... don't

Dangers of these techniques

III. Hearing God's Voice

A. Basic Reasoning:

- We are in _____ with God
- Relationships entail two-way _____
- Therefore, we should all be having _____ with God.

Definitions:

§ Revelation—

§ Special Revelation—

(ref. 2 Tim 3:16)

B. Nature of our relationship with God

1. All interpersonal human relationships the same?

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2. Relationship with God— It is not one of _____

3. There is not a single example of _____ in the Bible.

4. Jesus taught us how (not what) to pray (Matt 6, Luke 11), and you find no instruction to “listen”

5. “listen to my voice” = _____ what you _____

6. Value in quiet meditation upon God's Word—

7. Conversational tone—

C. *Implication:* Every Christian is entitled to special, inerrant, personal revelation from God.

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D. *Implication:* God is trying to speak to us, but we are not hearing.

1. **Does God** _____?

2. There is not a single example in Scripture of people _____.

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E. Samuel and Eli (1 Sam 1-3)

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F. You do not need to learn to hear the voice of God. Two Reasons:

1. The Bible _____ (John 10)

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-
-

2. It's _____ to learn to hear the voice of God

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IV. "You're Limiting God!"

A. Which view is more "limiting" of God?

B. The issue is not one of limitations on God, but "**What does the _____ _____?**"

The Lesson of the Bugle (1 Cor 14:7-9)

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V. When God Speaks

Beware of our tendency to take the _____ and make it the _____!

A. It is _____

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B. It is an _____

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-

C. It is _____

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-

D. Acts 16:6-7 (forbidden by the Holy Spirit ...Spirit did not allow...)

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-

E. It was given to his servants _____ (Acts 16:6-7)

- "they went"
- "they attempted to go"

VI. What Bible Teaches About God's Will (Eph 5:15-18)

"As believers—people in God's family—if we don't know God's will, what are we? Uninformed? No. Searching? No. We are stupid."¹

¹ Found: God's Will, John MacArthur, David C. Cook Publications, 1977, p. 16

A. God's Sovereign Will –God's decrees or designs

1. It affirms God's _____ over the events of the universe.
2. God's sovereign will is secret other than where it is explicitly revealed.
3. God's sovereign will is revealed in two ways:
 - a. Predictive _____²
 - b. History –
4. Includes God's sovereign election³—
 - Romans 8:29-30
 - Ephesians 1:4-2
 - Peter 3:9⁴
5. *We do not _____ to God's unrevealed sovereign will*

"Simply because God has a plan does not mean that He necessarily has any intention of sharing it with you; as a matter of fact the message of Job is in part that the Lord in His sovereignty may allow terrible things to happen to you, and you may never know why."⁵

a. *divination*

- Deuteronomy 18:10-11
- Leviticus 19:26;20:27

b. God-allowed divination. Lots: (Josh. 7:13,16-19; Num. 26:55, 56; 1 Sam. 10:20, 21; Acts 1:26) ; Urim and Thummim (Num. 27:21)⁶. Two important things to understand about these methods:

- 1) There is no recorded use of them _____
- 2) There is no _____

c. Includes the identity of the _____.

B. God's Moral Will –His Commands, His Law, His Standard of Righteousness

1. Can be _____⁷.
 2. Is completely revealed in the _____.
 3. Applies _____.
- (Conspicuously absent from these verses is _____)

Nature of God's revealed will is ***not***

- a. ... whom to marry, but what kind of _____ you are

² Most prophecy is a "forth-telling" God's revealed Word. Here we mean God's foretelling of future events.

³ For my non-Calvinist friends, please don't get distracted at this point. We can disagree on "free will" issues and still have common ground on our view of biblical decision-making. Please hang in there!

⁴ This text is often erroneously cited to refute Reformed/Calvinist doctrine. Understood in context (hint: follow the pronoun "you"), it cannot be interpreted to demonstrate Christ as a savior who tries to save all, but fails most of the time. Also see "The Big Three" summary on objectivegospel.org on the "Reformed Faith" page.

⁵ Walke, Bruce K., *Finding the Will of God a pagan notion?* Eerdmans, 1995, p. 15.

⁶ For a thorough discussion of the use of these methods, see *Finding God's Will – a pagan notion?* by Bruce k. Waltke.

⁷ Remember, Scripture teaches both the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man. See the following note.

- b. ... what job to take, but what kind of _____ you are
 - c. ... where you live, but what kind of _____ you are
 - d. ... what ministry you're in, but _____
4. Two wills—A contradiction?
This generally just takes us back to the old argument of God's sovereignty and the responsibility of man. Scripture teaches both in tension⁸.
- a. Judas
 - b. The Jewish religious leaders... (Acts 4:27-28)
 - c. Israel asks God for a king... (1 Sam 8)
 - d. Assyria (Isaiah 10:5-7,12)
 - e. Joseph (Gen 50:20)

C. God's Individual Will –That I Am Supposed to Figure Out

- 1. Individual Will? That we are supposed to figure out?
- 2. Paul points us _____ (2 Tim 1:13-14; 2:2; 3:14-4:4)

VII. Wisdom

We'll start with some definitions.

- A. Defined
- B. Importance
- C. To be pursued and prayed for
- D. Of great value
- E. Essential as Witnesses, Ambassadors, Evangelists (agents of the Great Commission)
- F. Solomon—A Case Study (2 Chr 1:7-12)
- G. Sources
- H. Godly vs. Worldly Wisdom (1 Cor 1:17-24)
 - 1. Godly Wisdom
 - a. Built on the foundation of _____
 - b. Shares a common source with _____ (Jam 3:13-17; Gal 5:22)
 - 2. Worldly wisdom is folly because it lacks _____. (limited _____)
 - *Is it wise to ...*
 -
- I. Function of Wisdom
 - Role in the traditional model?
 - Result: Biblical _____

VIII. Conclusion

⁸ The theological concept of compatibilism clarifies this seeming paradox. See D.A. Carson's *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility* or the *Compatibilism* page at objectivegospel.org on the "Reformed Faith" page.