

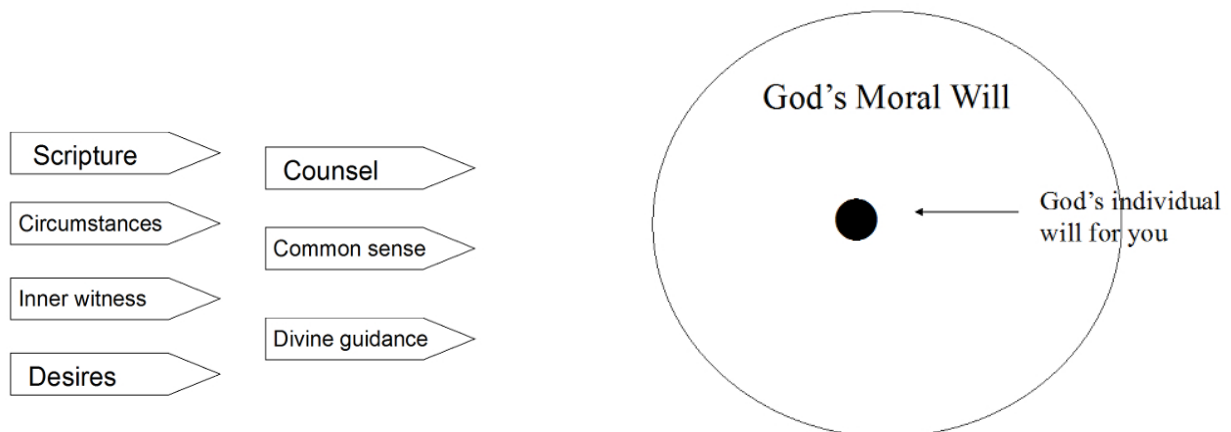
Understanding God's Will - For You

Popular View: Find the Dot

3 MEANINGS OF GOD'S WILL		
God's Sovereign Will	God's Moral Will	God's Individual Will
God's sovereign will is a detailed plan for all events in human history. Humans cannot fully understand it.	God's moral will is a set of general commands, principles and proverbs for living a successful life.	God's individual will is detailed plan for all decisions and events in a believer's earthly life.
We are not expected to find God's sovereign will. But we have confidence it will always come to pass.	Believers are expected to learn and obey these commands and principles. But believers can fail to learn and obey them.	Believer's are expected to find and follow it, but we can miss it by failure to learn and obey.
It includes both good and evil events and we understand it after it happens.	The commands are revealed by in Scripture through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.	It is revealed through a variety of means including Scripture and the inward impression of the Holy Spirit.
Though it includes evil and foolish decisions, ultimately God will bring good and glory out of it.	Its directives are general such that they apply to all believers (e.g. marry a believer).	It's directives are specific (e.g. marry the guy next door and move to Vermont).

Finding God's will for your life is finding the dot in center of God's moral will.

You know you've found God's will for your life when all the "road signs" point in the same direction.



Biblical view: The way of Wisdom

James 1:2-8

1:2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,

1:3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

1:4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

1:6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

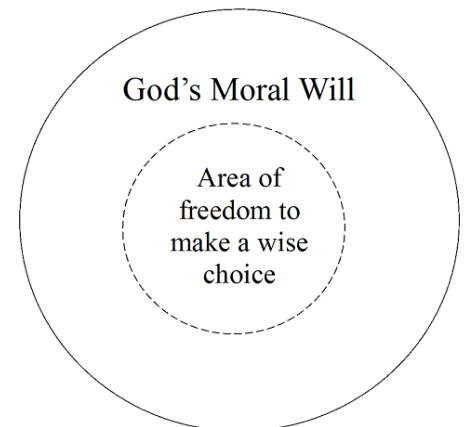
1:7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

1:8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Principles of Decision Making

adapted from *Decision Making and the Will of God* by Garry Friesen

- In those areas specifically addressed by the Bible, we should obey God's revealed commands and principles.
- In those areas where the Bible gives no command or principle, believers are free and responsible to choose their own course of action within a worldview saturated by Scripture.



Bruce Waltke's 6 steps to finding wisdom,

adapted from his book *Finding the Will of God: A Pagan Notion?*

The order is crucial. You must start at step 1 and progress through all steps. NO step can be skipped. The order cannot be changed. You cannot start in the middle.

1. Study the Bible.
2. Let what you learn from Bible study shape the desires of your heart.
3. Seek wise counsel.
4. Consider your circumstances.
5. Use your brain (which is now saturated in Bible study, prayer and wise counsel since you didn't skip any steps).
6. Make a decision and trust God.

If you follow Waltke's 6 steps in order without skipping any step, you are competent to choose.

Discuss these verses:

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 8:17 I (wisdom) love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently find me.

Proverbs 2:1 My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you,
2:2 making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding;
2:3 yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding,
2:4 if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures,
2:5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.
2:6 For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;
2:7 he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity,
2:8 guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints.
2:9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path;
2:10 for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;
2:11 discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you,
2:12 delivering you from the way of evil, from men of perverted speech,
2:13 who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness,
2:14 who rejoice in doing evil and delight in the perverseness of evil,
2:15 men whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways.

- What do these verses teach you about gaining wisdom?
- Compare and contrast "finding the dot" with "the way of wisdom." Which persuades you?
- How will you approach the next major life decision you have to make?

Understanding God's Will - in the Church

Miriam

Exodus 1:22-2:10 - Miriam as a child

Exodus 15:20-21 - Miriam as a prophetess

Numbers 12:1-16 - Miriam and her little brother

Discussion Questions:

- How can we encourage each other to find and fulfill our calling within our local church community? As an organization? As individuals and friends?
- If you have been in a situation where your calling was eclipsed by someone else's, what did God teach you through that experience?
- If God said "no" or "not yet" to a calling you wanted, how did/do you handle it? What did you learn from that experience?
- If someone asked you to help them find God's will in a situation, what would you tell them?

Understanding God's Will - in the world

Barnabus

Acts 4:32-37

Acts 9:26-31

Acts 11:19-30

Acts 12:25

Acts 13:1-5

Acts 14:8-28

Galatians 2:11-14

Acts 15:1-2

Acts 15:35-41

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever seen someone quietly change their world from behind the scenes? What did you learn?
- Do you find Barnabas a realistic example? Would you be satisfied with his calling? Why or why not?
- Should "changing the world" be a goal for believers? Should fame be a goal? Why or why not?