

You may be wondering about God's will for your life; here are some passages that lay out God's will for you in black and white: Read James 3:13–18; Ephesians 5:17–18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–6 and 5:16–18; and Matthew 28:18. What do they say?

*Thank the Lord today that He cares enough for you to reveal His specific will about important matters in the Bible! Tell God that you are yielded to His will in your life!*

## Friday

Do you ever struggle with the idea that God's will is a "dot" — that all the other options must be "Plan B"? What are some of the drawbacks to this approach?

How would you support from Scripture the idea that God's will involves our free choice within the framework of His moral standards and revealed will? (Refer to the sermon notes)

Read Matthew 7:7–11. What does Jesus say in these verses that relates to finding the will of God?

Does this alter any misconceptions you may have had?

*Thank God that He loves you like a perfect Father, and is willing to lavish everything we need upon us if we just seek!*

## Saturday

Read James 1:19. Is it easy or hard for you to be quick to listen and slow to speak? Why?

Why do you think people do not seek counsel when making decisions?

Read Psalm 1. What kind of counsel does the first verse of this Psalm warn against?

Do you ever listen to "unwise counsel" from people you hear on the radio or in magazines or in your office or family?

According to this Psalm, what are the benefits of being rooted in God and His Word?

*Ask God for strength from the Holy Spirit to live out these truths in your life! Please pray for the services this weekend, that God's presence would be sensed in a powerful way.*



# Making Wise Decisions

February 20 & 21, 2010 • René Schlaepfer  
James 1:5–8

"...a double-minded man [is] unstable in all his ways." James 1:8b (NIV)

## God's Solution: Guidelines for Decision-Making

### How can I make good decisions?

#### Ask \_\_\_\_\_

"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God..." James 1:5a

#### Believe \_\_\_\_\_

"...who gives generously to all **without finding fault**, and it will be given to him." James 1:5b

"But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as **unsettled as a wave of the sea** that is blown and tossed by the wind." James 1:6 (NLT)

#### Why do I get so stressed about decision making?

- I think God might \_\_\_\_\_  
"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who **does not change** like shifting shadows." James 1:17
- I think God's will \_\_\_\_\_  
"Every one must **make up his own mind** as to how much to give." 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)  
"If some unbeliever invites you to a meal **and you want to go**, eat whatever is put before you..." 1 Corinthians 10:27  
"If anyone thinks he is acting improperly toward the virgin he is engaged to... and he feels he ought to marry, **he should do as he wants.**" 1 Corinthians 7:36

#### Center \_\_\_\_\_

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. **Do what it says.**" James 1:22

Ask not "What is God's will **for me**"; ask "What is \_\_\_\_\_?"

"The **wisdom that comes from heaven** is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere." James 3:17

God's will always has more to do with \_\_\_\_\_  
than specific circumstances (See James 3:14–15)

## Determine \_\_\_\_\_

“You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak...” *James 1:19a*

- Get \_\_\_\_\_

“Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.” *Proverbs 19:20*

- Get \_\_\_\_\_

“Get the facts at any price, and hold on tightly to all the good sense you can get.” *Proverbs 23:23 (LB)*

## Expect \_\_\_\_\_ ...but move ahead!

“...you ought to say, ‘if it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’” *James 4:15*

“We should make our plans, counting on God to direct us.” *Proverbs 16:9 (LB)*

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” *Proverbs 3:5–6*

## The most important decision I can make: \_\_\_\_\_

### For further reading

*Decision Making and the Will of God*, Gary Friesen

*Decisions, Decisions*, Dave Swavely

*Finding the Will of God*, Bruce Walthe

*Knowing God’s Will (tape series)*, Rick Warren

### Sermon discussion groups

You can download discussion questions for sermon-based small groups at

[www.tlc.org/ministries/smallgroups/archive.php](http://www.tlc.org/ministries/smallgroups/archive.php)

You can join a sermon-based small group at

[www.tlc.org/ministries/smallgroups/search.php](http://www.tlc.org/ministries/smallgroups/search.php)

## Daily Meditations

Brief Bible readings based on this weekend’s topic

### Monday

Review the notes from last weekend. What point or points meant a lot to you?

Read James 1:5-8. Has indecision ever been a problem for you?

Do you ask for guidance specifically, with eager expectation that God will provide guidance? If not, why not?

Read Psalm 139:10. Many times God guides us in ways we only perceive when we look back years later. There are times when, even if we are running from Him, He opens and closes doors in order to guide us back to paths of righteousness. Looking back, how have you seen God guide you in dark times of your life?

*Thank God in specific ways for His guidance of you in times past.*

### Tuesday

Read James 1:5–8 again. How will you know if the guidance you sense you are receiving from God is truly from Him? Great question! The checklist at right may help:

*Today, bring God specific issues that you need guidance on — and ask expectantly!*

#### Four ways to test guidance

1. Does it agree with the Bible?
2. Does it make me more like Christ?  
“The wisdom that comes from God is pure, peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy.” *James 3:17*
3. Does my church family confirm it?
4. Does it concern my responsibility?  
“You — who are you to judge your neighbor?” *James 4:12*

### Wednesday

Read James 1:17–18 and Psalm 23. According to these verses, what is God like?

How can this help you when you are stressed out over decision-making?

What decisions are you anxious about as you face the week, the month, the year?

How can the truths in these verses help you in those decisions?

*Thank God that He is our Good Shepherd. Let him lead you beside “still waters” and quiet your soul today!*

### Thursday

Read James 1:22–25 and Psalm 119:105. According to these verses, what is a great way to understand the will of God?

What are some unbiblical ways people try to discern the will of God?

Have you ever fallen into any of these traps? What happened?

over 



“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”  
*James 1:5 (NIV)*