

Understanding God's Will – Lesson 13

The “Fork in the Road” Sign: The Sound Mind Principle

I. The Sound Mind Principle

a. Courage (2 Timothy 1:7)

1. God did not give us a spirit (pneuma) of fear and timidity.
2. The God breathed spirit which lies in us originates from God and is a part of Him and made in His image. Consequently, it cannot be fearful or timid.
3. God did provide a spirit characterized by power, strength, ability, love and self-discipline.
4. This is a part of our Spiritual DNA
 - Paul advocates that those who are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. (15) Being sons he tells us we are not given a spirit of bondage again to fear.

b. Conviction (1 Corinthians 2:14 – 3:3)

1. Paul contrasts spiritual minded people with babes in Christ.
 - One hallmark of spiritual people is their long-term thinking and others-centeredness.
 - One clear indication of carnal thinking is a preoccupation with the present and no regard for how our actions affect others.
2. Sanctified thinking and understanding is a byproduct of maturing in Christ.
3. This growth process is unavailable to the natural man.

II. The Mind's Place in Following God

- ❖ There is a danger in being too logical, resulting in overdependence on our intellect and conversely there is jeopardy in being overly spiritual and looking for signs in everything.

a. Directed (Psalm 16:7)

1. God created us with minds that have great capacity to thinking and reason. Consequently, he wants us to employ our God-given intellectual capacity.

2. The mind is like a computer; therefore, its effectiveness is derived from the information deposited. “Garbage in-garbage out”.
3. Being a Christian does not mean throwing away your mind.

b. Dependent (Proverbs 16:9)

1. God gives us the opportunity to consider the plan but he ultimately brings it to completion.
2. We cannot take full credit for our life’s successes, God is always in the background.
3. Proverbs 3:5-6 continues to admonish us to seek God in all our pursuits.

❖ To complete or use this sign post we have to go back to the previous eleven.

III. Putting the Pieces Together

- ❖ It is important to understand God progressively illuminates our minds to the truth; Consequently, we will keep an open mind even when we think we know the answer.
- ❖ God revealed His redemptive plan over 1,500 – 1,700 years using more than forty different writers.
- ❖ Matthew 22:37 – Jesus restates God’s original command for His people to love their God with all their heart, soul, and mind.
- ❖ We often try to separate the intellectual from the spiritual.

a. The Steps

1. Pray to the God for His direction.
2. Identify all options by identifying the pros and cons of each.
3. Quantify the evaluation by assigning levels of importance.
4. Justify the results to determine if there is a strong leading indicator.
5. Pray to God for His direction.

IV. Potential Problems

a. Fleshly Motives (Matthew 16:21-23)

1. Peter sounded spiritually fervent but Jesus rebuked him sharply.

2. Our challenge is to continually check our motives and mindset.

b. Feeble Mentality

1. This danger occurs when we are not operating with a spirit-filled mind.
2. Immaturity can cause us to make ill advised decisions void of a comprehensive viewpoint.
3. It is good to have an older and wiser voice of counsel.

c. Future Means (Romans 8:6)

1. “For the mind set on the flesh is death” – decisions made for temporal gratification brings on death.
2. “but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace” – decisions made with an outlook of the eternal consequences.