



Understanding God's Will – Lesson 5

“The Information Sign: Wise Counsel”

I. How Counsel Can Help

a. Objectivity – counsel can provide a neutral and clear viewpoint on our decisions.

1. Objectivity is good for presenting alternative thoughts that we have not yet considered. Third party counsel ensures we do not make decisions clouded by emotions of fear, jealousy, doubt, over exuberance and others.
2. Proverbs 12:15 – “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkens unto counsel is wise.”
 - Our decisions often look sensible to us, but may be ill advised.
 - We should recognize our frailty and ability to deceive ourselves and be willing to listen.
3. Proverbs 15:22 – “ Without consultation, plans are frustrated. But with many counselors they succeed.”
 - This relates to the need for a broad spectrum of advisors.
 - Many professions give consultation:
 - Board of Directors advise corporation managers and staff on business objectives and strategies.
 - Professional Development Counselors consult with executives on the best career transitions.
 - Academic Advisors provide consultation on degree selection and completion paths.

“Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed.”

II. A Parallel Principle

- a. Proverbs 1:5 - "A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel."
- b. Proverbs 9:9 – "Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, Teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning" (NASB)

III. The Criteria for Counselors

- a. 2 Chronicles 10:1-8 – Rehoboam's faulty counsel
 1. Rehoboam rejected the counsel of the old men and accepted the advice of his contemporaries.
 2. The lesson demonstrates the danger in listening to only those who say what we desire to hear.
- b. 2 Chronicles 24:15-19 – Joash's reign
 1. The people steeped themselves in idol worship then refused to hear the prophets admonishment to repent.
 2. We often refuse wise counsel preferring our own desires instead.
- c. What to look for in a counselor:
 1. Spiritual and personal maturity – wisdom
 2. A commitment to the will of God
 3. Familiarity with the person to whom he or she is giving advice
 4. Objectivity – Seek advice from those who have nothing to gain or lose by your decision.
 5. Respectability – seek advice from people you respect
 6. A willingness to listen

IV. Barriers to Obeying This Sign

- a. Selecting the wrong counselors
 1. Selecting counselors who will tell us what we want to hear.
 2. 2 Timothy 4:1-3 – “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears;”
- b. Not listening to wise counsel
 1. Proverbs 1:24-33 – Extreme penalties are listed as a result of disobedience and refusal to listen.
 2. Calamity (v.26), dread (v.26), distress and anguish (v.27), lack of truth (v.28)
- c. Letting the majority rule
 1. Numbers 13:25-33 – The majority decide they would not inhabit the land God promised them because of Giants in the land.
 2. Because they listened to the majority report a generation died in the wilderness, and the nation was delayed from venturing forward.
- d. Leaning more on human counsel than God.
 1. Acts 4:13-20 – Peter and John refused to forsake their charge in God’s service.

Holy Spirit, faithful Guide,
Ever near the Christian’s side,
Gently lead us by the hand,
Pilgrims in a desert land;
Weary souls fore’er rejoice,
While they hear that sweetest voice,
Whisp’ring softly, Wanderer, come!
Follow me, I’ll guide thee home.

Ever present, trusted Friend,
Ever near thine aid to lend,
Leave us not to doubt and fear,
Groping on in darkness drear.
When the storms are raging sore,
Hearts grow faint, and hopes give o’er
Whisper softly, Wanderer, come!
Follow me, I’ll guide thee home!