



the TIE THAT BINDS

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How To Know God's Will *by Pastor Doug Jordan*

God does guide and direct His people, this should make our ears perk up because we all want and need guidance in life. Life is full of decisions. Often our days feel like one "fork in the road" after another and we all need help in knowing which way we should go. When we're younger, we want to know where to go to college and what to major in when we get there. We want to know what career is best for us. We want guidance as to marry. We want direction when it comes to raising children. I could go on and on but you know what I mean. We all need guidance in life. God's guidance is especially important to us since we live in a fallen world where morals are blurred which makes it harder and harder to know what is right and what is wrong. The fact that God leads and directs His people down the road of life is good news for us. In so many ways, we are all lost sheep in need of a Shepherd. The question is: how do we access the omniscient guidance that our Good Shepherd offers? How do we discern God's will when it comes to life's decisions? In order to discern God's leading one must use the guidance tools that He has given us, and He has given us several tools.

First there is the Bible. The principles and precepts of God's Word will never steer you wrong. Hear this: the most effective way to receive God's guidance is to study His written Word! I imagine most of us would prefer something flashier. We want clouds to part. We want a visit from an angel or two. We want to hear God's booming voice in the night. Those things may or may not happen to you but the fact is: the surest and most effective way to receive God's guidance

is from the Bible. As Psalm 119 says, **"His Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path!"** and it is! The simple truth is about 95% of God's will for our lives is contained within the pages of God's Book and so the more you read it, the better you will know God's will for your life. In the Bible, God has already told us how He wants us to live, love, talk, take care of our bodies, handle our money, pray, function as a family member or employee, and many other things. Many of the decisions we face in life are no-brainers, because the best course of action is clearly spelled out in Scripture. If someone were to wonder if they should sell their house, take all the money, and buy lottery tickets we could tell them with absolute confidence that according to the Bible, "God would say NO!" His written Word is clear about "get rich quick" schemes or attempting to earn our livelihood through games of chance. Should we tell the truth? The Bible says yes. Should we marry a non-Christian. II Corinthians 6:14 says that is not best for us. Should we consider marriage a life-time commitment? The Bible says 'yes'. The fact is, the clearest and most direct route to the guidance of God is through His revealed Word, the Bible. We ignore it at our own peril.

The second tool God has given us is common sense. Many times to be in the center of God's will simply requires our using the brains that God gave us. This reminds me of the story of a man who lived in a very low-lying area near a river - a man who didn't use the common sense God gave him. One day a man in a jeep drove up and said, "This area is about to be flooded. You need to get

out of here." The man replied, "I'll just stay here and trust the Lord to take care of me." And very soon the water was swirling around his front porch as he sat in his rocking chair. Soon after that, a man came by in a boat, saying, "You need to get out of here. The water is getting higher and higher." The man replied, "I'll be okay. I'm just going to trust the Lord." Finally, the man ended up on his roof because of the rising water. It had already flooded his house. Suddenly a helicopter appeared overhead and lowered a chair so he could be taken to safety. He shouted back, "It's okay. I'll stay here. I'm trusting the Lord to take care of me." The man drowned and when he got to heaven he complained to the Lord that He hadn't taken care of him. And the Lord said, "I sent you a jeep, a boat and a helicopter. What else did you want me to do?"

The third "guidance tool" God has given us is the wise counsel of others, in other words - wisdom. Prov. 12:15 says, **"he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise."** This tool still works for us. God often uses other people to guide us to the center of His will. When you face a decision, follow the example of all those people who played "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?" Use a "lifeline" and call on someone whom you know to be a mature, experienced disciple. But be careful...every church has its share of "self-proclaimed counselors," those people who are unrecognized by the leaders of the church but who love to inflict their opinion on others. Such counsel is often worth approximately what it costs....nothing.

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How To Know God's Will *continued from page 1*

The healthy approach is to talk to several people who we know are wise and godly, people we admire because we know they have been around the "spiritual block" so to speak and ask them for input. Prov. 24:6 says, **"In MULTITUDE of counselors there is safety."** Think of the church as a smorgasbord of wise people...whom you can go to and get qualified counsel on a given matter. We can learn from other people's mistakes and other people's experience.

The final tool I want to mention is the tool of PROVIDENCE.

Providence is simply God opening the doors for us to do His

will and closing the doors that lead to things that are not His will. It's the kind of guidance Jesus was talking about in Revelation 3 when He said, **"I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut..."** (Revelation 3:8b). In 1892, Martin Wells Knapp wrote a book entitled, *Impressions* and in it he said, "If the Lord goes before us, He will open all doors before us and we shall not need ourselves to hammer them down." And he was right. It is never a sign of divine leading when a Christian insists on opening his or her own way and riding roughshod over all opposing things. If God

is calling us to do something, He will open the doors for us to do it. We must remember that when our Heavenly Father closes a door, He merely has His sights on something better, something around the bend we can't see yet. As parents we use the same guiding technique with our children. When they start to crawl and walk, we put up those child safety doors, to keep them from falling down the stairs. We put safety locks on the drawers where knives are kept and the cabinet doors where we store potentially dangerous chemicals or medicines. But we open other doors, doors where they can find safe

toys and other things that benefit them.

God DOES guide and direct us through life: through the gentle leading of His Holy Spirit, through His written Word, through the common sense He has given us, through the counsel of other disciples, and through the doors of providence, peace and conscience. If you are at a crossroads I encourage you to seek the Lord's will in these ways. Claim His promise in Psalm 32:8 where He says, **"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."**

Single and Serving *By Jeanne Jordan*

Somewhere along the road a single lady has to face the fact that it is possible God never meant for her to marry and that she may have been selected to live without marrying for the rest of her life. Since there are 109 women to every 100 men, it stands to reason that some will not marry. Can God give a woman a rich life without marriage? Undoubtedly, yes. God is not a respecter of age, sex, or position. He is able to be all-sufficient for single as well as married women. All members of the female sex spend part of their lives as singles, some more than others. But the same instructions are given to all regardless of their married status: *"Let us also walk in the Spirit."* (Gal. 5:25) *"Be ye holy in all manner of conversation....Be ye holy, for I am holy."* (I Peter 3:16) *"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."* (Gal 5:16). I could go on and on. Nevertheless, you alone determine your relationship with Christ. Establishing this relationship must be done on an individual basis. A husband can-

not grow spiritually for his wife. (I think there are some instances where a woman could grow more spiritually if it wasn't for her husband's interference.) The love relationship between you and the Saviour is forever, not until you're married or until you die. If God calls you to a single life, He calls you to a special and beautiful relationship with Himself. You can really concentrate on serving the Lord and pleasing Him only. *"The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit; but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband."* (I Cor. 7:34) The church offers many areas of service to help enrich your life. The church also offers service opportunities that are more feasible for the single woman than for the married. The single life is what you make of it. It can be full, rich, and rewarding or it can be an existence of self-pity and misery. *"For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."* (Phil. 4:11)

Suggested Biographies to read of saved, single women:

- Gladys Aylward
- Amy Carmichael
- Evie (Granny) Brand (she was married for a short time before becoming a widow until her death at age 96.)
- Mary Slessor
- The Gobi sisters - Eva, Francesca, Mildred
- Ida Scudder
- Irene Ferrel
- Charlotte Bronte (married only one year before her death at age 47.)
- Viola Walden
- Jenny Lind



HIS BEST

God has His best things for the few
 Who dare to stand the test,
 God has His second choice for
 those who will not take His best.
 And others make the highest
 choice, But when by trials pressed,
 They shrink, they yield, they shun
 the Cross,
 And so they lose His best.

I want in this short life of mine
 As much as can be pressed
 Of service true for God and man
 Help me to be Thy best.
 I want among the victor throng
 To have my name confessed,
 And hear the Master say at last
 "Well done! You did your best."

Unknown

Thoughtless Temptation in My Dress *by Jeanne Jordan*

One thing every girl and woman should keep in mind is that her body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. II Cor. 6:16 says, "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk n them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people." You are not the owner of your body. You have been bought with a price; therefore you should glorify God with your body! (See I Cor. 6:19-20) This leads to the subject - how do we dress? There are three categories in dress: (1) the suggestive, sexy appeal that seduces. (2) the liberated style which neither seduces nor attracts and is usually not too becoming but which allows the woman to do her own thing

and to express her rebellion. Or (3) the modest feminine approach that is attractive and becoming to the wearer. The sexy appeal could be represented by short skirts, hot pants, skin-tight clothes, the no-bra look, and plunging necklines which leave little to the male imagination and result in being seductive rather than attractive. The liberated style can be anything from sloppy-casual to "Plain Jane" or masculine style clothing. Such styles may get frequent stares from passers-by but seldom looks of approval. The feminine appeal is represented by modest clothing that is stylish, attractive, and presents a feminine mystique that ennobles a man. We are to be modest, attrac-

tive, appealing, and feminine as God made us. Why do you dress the way you do? Seriously consider this and give yourself an honest answer. Is it because you feel you are only a sex object and that is all you have that can attract the man you want? Your appearance will certainly give that away. Or is it because you are glad to be feminine, proud to be a woman, and you want to represent the kind of person that belongs to God? In some cases I believe ladies are very innocent of the effect clothes have on a man. I was once that way when I was a new Christian. I got involved in church and was faithful to all the services. However, my choice of clothing began to

present a problem to some of the men in the church. A dear Christian lady took me aside and spoke to me privately about this matter. She prayed beforehand that I would not be offended but would accept what she said in the right spirit. I had no idea that I was causing a problem or that some of my outfits were offensive. My genuine desire was to please the Lord and be a testimony of Christ living inside me. I thanked my Christian sister for explaining this to me and determined to dress better. I was not offended in the least. Purchase a full length mirror and check all angles. Then ask yourself is this really what I want to wear?

The Gospel Tract *by Jeanne Jordan*

I was saved at age nineteen. Prior to this I had NEVER received a tract. I hadn't even come across one that was lying around somewhere. I know tracts existed back then because after I was saved I grabbed a few from my church and handed them out. The church that I was saved in used the old Oliver B. Green tracts that were printed in black and red. Shortly after I was saved, I gave one of these tracts to my brother. One night he called me under conviction about his soul and where he would spend eternity. I was a new Christian and didn't know how to lead him to the Lord. I said, "Remember that tract I gave you? Get it out and we'll read it together over the phone." It was that simple. He read it aloud with me and over the phone prayed the prayer that was offered at the end of the tract. My brother was gloriously saved and now pastors a

church in Dallas. I was so encouraged by this that I sent my other brother a tract titled "How to get to Heaven From California." He hasn't gotten saved yet, but he remembers that tract. Never underestimate the power of a tract. You never know when someone will pick it up after casting it aside. We've heard countless of testimonies, even from our own Pastor Fisher, how God used a tract to draw someone to Him. Nowadays there are many more opportunities for passing out tracts. It's easy to get out of the habit. Find one that you like in particular and fill your purse and your car with them. A few months ago I purchased some from our book store with a picture of a Lighthouse on it. The front title simply read *The Lighthouse*. I laid it on the counter of my son's store in Coronado. People just picked it up without my offering it and would say, "Is

this free?" You can guess my answer. Since I've been working in the store, one person has handed me a tract and another lady handed me a Gideon Bible that she passes out. I was encouraged by those Christians to do more of the same. I only wish someone would have given me one before age nineteen. I have unsaved family members around the country. Every time I hand out a tract I am hoping that some faithful Christian is doing their job and handing a gospel tract to one of my loved ones. Let's get back in the habit of handing out the Good News that offers a greater purpose for living.



WHERE TO PASS OUT TRACTS

- Retail stores where you shop.
- Drive-up windows of fast food joints.
- With your tip.
- In your bills.
- Use them as your business card.
- The gym.
- The front pocket of an airplane seat.
- Hospital waiting rooms.
- The bank.
- At work.

Always be polite and not pushy. When handing one to someone who's working don't take time away from their job. I usually say, "Here's something to read on your break or when you have a chance." Be a good testimony.

Fatherhood Statistics

- The founding of Father's Day is associated with Mrs. John B. Dodd of Washington State. Mrs. Dodd's mother died in childbirth, leaving her father, William Smart, to raise six children. As an adult Mrs. Dodd came to realize the difficulties her father must have faced as both a working farmer and single father. Thanks to her efforts the first Father's Day was celebrated in Spokane, WA, on June 19, 1910. The third Sunday of June was not designated as Father's Day until 1966 when President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the holiday.
- In 1993, about one in four fathers took care of their preschoolers during the time mothers were working. In fact, fathers provided care for their children during more of the mother's working hours than did any other single care provider. (The increase in care by fathers between 1988 and 1991 may have been a response to the economic recession that occurred during the same period – the recession began in July 1990 and reached its lowest point in March 1991.) Increases in the proportions of people who were not employed and working at part-time jobs may have meant that more fathers were available to serve as childcare providers. The increase in care by fathers may have also reflected the desire of parents to cut down on childcare costs by switching to more parental supervision of their children whenever possible.
- Fathers who live with their children are more likely to have a close, enduring relationship with their children than those who do not.
- The best predictor of father presence is marital status.
- Children with involved, loving fathers are significantly more likely to do well in school, have healthy self-esteem, exhibit empathy and pro-social behavior, and avoid high-risk behaviors such as drug use, truancy, and criminal activity compared to children who have uninvolved fathers.

The Tie That Binds

PARENTING TIPS

1. *Set aside some time to make a list of the values you want to pass on to your children.*
2. *Start a collection of good books about teaching values to your children.*
3. *Begin a prayer journal with each of your children.*
4. *Pray with your children and for your children every day.*
5. *Teach your children that they must stand for something or they'll fall for anything.*
6. *Have fun with your family, and watch for natural opportunities to talk about what's right and wrong.*
7. *Bring back family dinner time.*
8. *Get involved in a share group of parents with likeminded values.*
9. *Talk casually and consistently with your children.*
10. *Children are like sponges. They absorb our values and perceptions.*
11. *Realize that kids won't buy a do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do philosophy. Honestly examine your own life.*
12. *Turn off movies that offend your family values, and instruct your kids to do the same.*
13. *If you allow TV in your children's rooms, it's hard to monitor what they're watching.*
14. *One of the greatest things you can do for your children is to make sure your marriage keeps getting better and better.*

by Bill and Kathy Peel condensed from "Kindred Spirit" Magazine

- Studies on parent-child relationships and child well-being show that father love is an important factor in predicting the social, emotional, and cognitive development and functioning of children and young adults.
- 26.4 million: Number of fathers who are part of married-couple families with their own children under the age of 18. Among these fathers -22 percent are raising three or more of their own children under 18 years old (among married-couple family house-

holds only). 2 percent live in the home of a relative or a non-relative.

- 2.3 million: Number of single fathers, up from 400,000 in 1970. Currently, among single parents living with their children, 18 percent are men.

