**Decision Making**

What God Wills, What You Want, How To Decide

***10 May 2020***

## The decision-making we’re not covering

# Decision-making is largely a matter of the doctrine of God and our subsequent attitude

## God 🡪 Christ in us

## The Lord is wisdom

## The Lord’s wisdom revealed ‘vs’ the ‘Christians’ search for ‘God’s will’

## The attitude that matches this reality – also known as faith

# How this works (as in, it won’t fail)

# Thus, we see the shortcut summary expressions in the NT

# Obvious implications

## We must be praying for God to illuminate us in understanding Him deeper and in practice, in the Gospel as we study His Gospel

## Deep knowledge of God through His Son’s teaching in the Scriptures illuminated by the Spirit is the key to successful decision-making

## The wrong approaches are not just in error, they are ungodly

## Not having a church that has this attitude to the Word is going to be bad for everyone

## Some obvious decisions some of you should have made already

# Obvious signs you’re not making good decisions

## Your decisions are against God’s kingdom and your church’s service to Him

## A pietistic false or hyper spirituality that comes from a failure to understand God’s working through us

## A reluctance to commit and do what is right according to Scripture with some of these as reasons



References

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| Because we have confidence in God’s will of decree, we can radically commit ourselves to His will of desire, without fretting over a hidden will of direction.  In other words, God doesn’t take risks, so we can.  *DeYoung, Kevin, Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will (Moody Publishers, 2009)* |

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| **‘will of desire’**  God's revealed will which tells us what pleases Him as seen in His commands in Scripture. ‘When Scripture calls us to do the will of the Lord, it is this will that is in view.’  *Reference:* [*https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/will-god/*](https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/will-god/) |

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| **‘will of decree’**  Only known in retrospect. 'His will of decree establishes every event in history, every thought and intention of every person, everything that ever happens. This will extends even to the ordination of evil, for the Lord works out everything according to the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11).’  *Reference:* [*https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/will-god/*](https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/will-god/) |

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| That’s how we are to be with the Word of God. We must eat it and swallow it and digest it so regularly that over time we develop a taste for godliness.  That’s wisdom.  Wisdom is the difference between knowing a world-class biologist who can write your papers for you and studying under a world-class biologist so that you can write the kind of papers he would write.  Too many of us want God to be the world-class scholar who will write our papers and live our lives for us, when God wants us to sit at His feet and read His Word so that we can live a life in the image of His Son. God doesn’t tell us the future for this simple, yet profound reason: We become what we behold. God wants us to behold Him in His glory so that we can be transformed into His likeness (2 Corinthians 3:18).  If God figured everything out for us, we wouldn’t need to focus on Him and learn to delight in His glory. God says, “I’m not giving you a crystal ball. I’m giving you My Word. Meditate on it; see Me in it; and become like Me.”  *DeYoung, Kevin, Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will (Moody Publishers, 2009)* |

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| As a fellow undershepherd, I encourage all the pastors reading this book to preach to the young people in their congregation to start acting like eighteen is twenty-eight, instead of thinking thirty-eight is eighteen. Do not coddle them (or me!) with low expectations.  Next, I encourage older Christians to set a good example of steady, faithful responsibility; to model Christ-centered consistency and risky decision making for the glory of God; and to be honest with the rest of us about when you have failed and where you are struggling to live up to the good example you want to set.  I encourage the women to consider the long-term ramifications of their decisions when they are twenty-five and single, hoping to be thirty-five and married with children some day.  Finally, I exhort the men reading this book to pray for wisdom (James 1:5–6), get a job, and get married. And do it sooner rather than later. To do so would be good for your sanctification, good for your purity, good for the church, and good for some godly woman out there who would be your wife, though she’s probably already better than you deserve, just like my bride was for me.  Too many of us are chasing after the wind, looking for satisfaction in work, family, and success—all good things, yet all things that don’t ultimately satisfy. It would be bad enough if we were just restless, meandering through life, and a little cowardly. But we’ve spiritualized restless and meandering cowardice, making it feel like piety instead of passivity. We’re not only living lives of vanity; our passion for God is often nothing more than a passion to have God make our search for vanity a successful one.  We need to hear the conclusion of Ecclesiastes: “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (12:13). If you are going to be anxious about one thing, be anxious to keep His commandments. If we must fear something—and we all do—fear God, not the future.  The will of God isn’t a special direction here or a bit of secret knowledge there. God doesn’t put us in a maze, turn out the lights, and tell us, “Get out and good luck.” In one sense, we trust in the will of God as His sovereign plan for our future. In another sense, we obey the will of God as His good word for our lives. In no sense should we be scrambling around trying to turn to the right page in our personal choose-your-own-adventure novel.  God’s will for your life and my life is simpler, harder, and easier than that. Simpler, because there are no secrets we must discover. Harder, because denying ourselves, living for others, and obeying God is more difficult than taking a new job and moving to Fargo. Easier, because as Augustine said, God commands what He wills and grants what He commands.  In other words, God gives His children the will to walk in His ways—not by revealing a series of next steps cloaked in shadows, but by giving us a heart to delight in His law.  So the end of the matter is this: Live for God. Obey the Scriptures. Think of others before yourself. Be holy. Love Jesus. And as you do these things, do whatever else you like, with whomever you like, wherever you like, and you’ll be walking in the will of God.  *DeYoung, Kevin, Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will (Moody Publishers, 2009)* |

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| A while back I was on the phone with a nice Christian man asking me if I would be willing to do a small speaking gig sometime in the following year. I got some more information over the phone and checked out the dates as we were talking. Everything seemed to work. I would be away less than twenty-four hours, and I could speak on something I already had basically prepared. I told him that I would be willing to come. He told me I could have time to pray about it.  I noted again that the dates worked, it was still a long way off (so I could plan accordingly), the subject was fine, and I’d be happy to do it. But my yes didn’t stick. He politely insisted that I should pray about it. So I prayed about it and called back the next day saying yes again.  Now, the last thing I want to do is discourage people from praying. After all, prayer is the third key in seeking wisdom.  But isn’t it possible that if we are walking with God in daily prayer, and we have some sanctified common sense, that we should be able to make decisions on the spot once in a while? Certainly we have been spared poor decisions by waiting and thinking, but we can also miss good opportunities and waste valuable time by grinding the wheels of choice into a pseudo-spiritual halt before we pencil something in on the Day-Timer.  Study the Scriptures, listen to others, and pray continually—that’s the best course of action, not just at the moment of crisis, but as a way of life. And as you engage in these practices, don’t forget to make a decision—always with wisdom, always with freedom, and sometimes even with speed.  *DeYoung, Kevin, Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will (Moody Publishers, 2009)* |

**Discussion Questions:**

“Decision-making is largely a matter of the doctrine of God and our subsequent attitude”

1. How will you plan your life around the will of God?
2. Elaborate on the areas of your own life that will need radical change.