**Knowing and Doing God’s Will/Getting Spiritual Advice**

Colossians 1:9-14

Paul’s prayer: that we would have knowledge of God’s will (v. 9) and, of course, that we do that will (v. 10 “live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way)

Q: How can we know God’s will?

**1. By reading and applying his Scripture.** Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Sometimes our “path” needs a lamp and a light. God’s word is that lamp and that light.

Problem: You have to know his word and, more specifically, you have to be trained to use it in specific situations. That is why it is imperative that we learn how to use the scriptures in our discipling.

Practical example. Just Tuesday a certain brother shared that he had had a run-in with a brother which led to a quarrel. Q: What passage can we use for that situation and where is it in your Bible?

**2. By living a committed and righteous life.** Romans 12:1-2

Think about those you know whose spiritual wisdom you REALLY respect. They all have two things in common. A. They have been around a while. B. They are more devoted to God and to righteous living than most, even in the church.

Do you want to know what is God’s will? Do you want to be the wise person in the church? Here is how.

**3. By prayer.** James 1:5

Do you spend serious time in prayer when you have a decision to make?

**4. By seeking and accepting wise spiritual advice.**

Prov 15:22 Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

Q: How many of you have had plans fail because you did not seek advice?

Prov 11:14 For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure.

Prov 19:20 Listen to advice and accept instruction and in the end you will be wise.

Listening to and applying advice is a key to our own eventual wisdom.

Prov 12:15 The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man **listens to** advice.

Q: Can you relate?

Prov 13:10 Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who **take advice.**

The key to all of this is humility. Prov 11:2

Advice about seeking and giving advice.

Robert’s outline: four stages in our spiritual journey.

Chaos BC living in rebellion and out of control

Conformity Young Christian trying to figure it out. Need a lot of advice, even on some fairly “small” decisions. Bottom line, young Christians do not know the scriptures and their application to specific situations.

Questioning Adolescent Christian. Always asking why? Still need a fair amount of advice, but tempted to not seek it and always questioning that advice.

Conviction Mature and relatively independent Christian. Do not need a lot of advice, but have conviction and desire to seek it, especially for the big decisions.

This process involves moving from advice-based decisions to Bible-based and godly conviction-based decisions.

But…. If you think you can shortcut the system, you are a fool.

The three biggies:

Finances and Career

Relationships/Dating/Marriage

When we start falling in love, we almost literally go insane. It has been proved. Same chemicals as schizophrenics and manic/depressives. Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Parenting

The world says these are off-limits. Christians disagree with this!

Practicals:

1. Do not go advice-shopping. (trolling to hear what you wanted to hear)

2. Remember, it is good, better, best. We should be seeking the best.

3. Advice to advisers: Avoid unsolicited advice. This is not a rule, but it is a guideline. Ephesians 6:4 Fathers do not exasperate your children. It is ALWAYS better when we seek and listen to advice than when we are “advised” what to do. Unsolicited advice inevitable brings up issues of authority and freedom.

4. Remember: Advice is advice. Both the give and receiver of advice need to take this fully to heart. If you take the advice and it does not work out, it is YOUR fault. If you give the advice and they do not take it, that is their problem, perhaps, but it is not yours.

5. Remember the goal of all this: It is not to get all the disciples in line or to create a nice well-run machine. Colossians 1:9-10. It is so that we can please God.