

GUIDANCE

“Collected Thoughts”

Compiled by Dan Augsburg
(authors listed alphabetically)

INTRODUCTION

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord...”

Learning how to determine God’s will is one of the most important lessons of the Christian life. The following Scriptures and thoughts should be helpful in seeking to understand this subject.

HUDSON TAYLOR’S EXPERIENCE FAMOUS MISSIONARY TO CHINA

“Not many months after my conversion, having a leisure afternoon, I retired to my own chamber to spend it largely in communion with God. Well do I remember that occasion. How in the gladness of my heart I poured out my soul before God; and again and again confessing my grateful love to Him who had done everything for me—who had saved me when I had given up all hope and even desire for salvation—I besought Him to give me some work to do for Him, as an outlet for love and gratitude; some self-denying service, no matter what it might be, however trying or however trivial; something with which He would be pleased, and that I might do for Him who had done so much for me. Well do I remember, as in unreserved consecration I put myself, my life, my friends, my all, upon the altar, the deep solemnity that came over my soul with the assurance that my offering was accepted. The presence of God became unutterably real and blessed; and though but a child under sixteen, I remember stretching myself on the ground, and lying there silent before Him with unspeakable awe and unspeakable joy.

“For what service I was accepted I knew not; but a deep consciousness that I was no longer my own took possession of me, which has never since been effaced. It has been a very practical consciousness. Two or three years later propositions of an unusually favorable nature were made to me with regard to medical study, on the condition of my becoming apprenticed to the medical man who was my friend and teacher. But I felt I dared not accept any binding engagement such as was suggested. I was not my own to give myself away; for I knew not when or how He whose alone I was, and for whose disposal I felt I must ever keep myself free, might call for service.

38

39 “Within a few months of this time of consecration the impression was wrought
40 into my soul that it was in China the Lord wanted me. It seemed to me highly
41 probable that the work to which I was thus called might cost my life; for
42 China was not then open as it is now. But few missionary societies had at that
43 time workers in China, and but few books on the subject of China missions
44 were accessible to me. I learned, however, that the Congregational minister of
45 my native town possessed a copy of Medhurst’s China, and I called upon him
46 to ask a loan of the book. This he kindly granted, asking me why I wished
47 to read it. I told him that God had called me to spend my life in
48 missionary service in that land. "And how do you propose to go there?" he
49 inquired. I answered that I did not at all know; that it seemed to me probable
50 that I should need to do as the Twelve and the Seventy had done in Judea—
51 go without purse or script, relying on Him who had called me to supply all
52 my need. Kindly placing his hand upon my shoulder, the minister
53 replied, "Ah, my boy, as you grow older you will get wiser than that. Such an
54 idea would do very well in the days when Christ Himself was on earth, but
55 not now.

56

57 “I have grown older since then, but not wiser. I am more than ever
58 convinced that if we were to take the directions of our Master and the
59 assurances He gave to His first disciples more fully as our guide, we should
60 find them to be just as suited to our times as to those in which they were
61 originally given.”—Hudson Taylor, *Retrospect*

62

63

64 WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

65

66 1. God wants His will to be perfectly done in our lives:

67

68 Colossians 4:12 “That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will
69 of God.”

70

71 2. Jesus always sought to do His Father’s will:

72

73 Luke 22:42 “Nevertheless, not my will, but Thy will be done....”

74

75 Psalms 40:8 “I delight to do thy will.”

76

77 John 4:34 “My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me.”

78

79 John 5:30 “I seek not my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.”

80

81 3. God is willing to give wisdom:

82

83 James 1:5 “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to
84 all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”

85

86 Psalm 32: 8: “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should
87 go.”

88

89 4. Accepting God’s direction brings true and enduring happiness.

90

91 Prov. 16:20 “He who heeds the word wisely will find good, and whoever
92 trusts in the LORD, happy is he.”

93

94 John 13:17 “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

95

96 Ps. 34:8 “Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the
97 man who trusts in Him!”

98

99 Ps. 119:1,2 “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law
100 of the LORD! Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek
101 Him with the whole heart!”

102

103 Ps. 128:1 “Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks in His
104 ways.”

105

106 Rev. 22:14 “Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they
107 may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates
108 into the city.”

109

110 5. We must be completely open to whatever God wants. To do so, it is best to
111 have no will of our own on the matter:

112

113 Luke 9:23 "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up
114 his cross daily, and follow Me."

115

116 6. God will never lead contrary to what is taught in the Bible:

117

118 Isaiah 8:20: “To the law and to the testimony! If they do not
119 speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

120

121 7. God will providentially direct us by opening and closing doors:

122

123 Proverbs 3:6: “In all you ways acknowledge Him, and He will
124 direct your paths.”

125

126 8. We may not understand all the steps, but God will both prepare and guide
127 us for whatever He has in mind—like He did for Daniel who didn't always
128 understand what was going on:

129

130 Psalms 18:32: “It is God that girdeth me with strength and maketh my
131 way perfect.”

132

133 2 Sam. 22:33 “God is my strength and power, and He makes my way
134 perfect.”

135

136 Heb. 13:20-21 “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord
137 Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood
138 of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work
139 to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through
140 Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

141

142 9. When God is leading, His peace will rule in our hearts. Lack of peace is an
143 important indicator that what we are pursuing may not be God's will:

144

145 Col. 3:15: “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also
146 you were called in one body; and be thankful.”

147

148 10. It is often wise to seek out a mature Christian to share with, to ascertain
149 that we have correctly understood God's leading:

150

151 Proverbs 11:14 “In the multitude of counselors there is safety.”

152

153 11. As God leads us forward He often only shows us one step at a time.

154

155 Isa. 30:21 “Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the
156 way, walk in it, whenever you turn to the right hand whenever you turn
157 to the left.’”

158

159 12. Confirmation—NOT direction—is sometimes gained in seeking a fleece.

160

161 “Look, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew
162 on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that
163 You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said.” Judges 6:37

164

165

166

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

167

Arranged alphabetically

168

169

Amy Carmichael

170

Missionary to India

171

172

173

174

175

God Speaks Three Ways

“The devil sometimes speaks, and tries to deceive us into thinking it is the
voice of God. He tries to get us, who long to walk in the light, to
follow instead the will-o-wisp into the marsh.

176

177 In the matter of guidance there are three important points:

178

179 1 The Word of the Lord in the Bible.

180

181 2. The Word of the Spirit in our heart.

182

183 3. The circumstances of our lives, which have been arranged by God.

184

185 All three must point one way. It is never enough for any two of them to be
186 taken as showing God's will. If the voice is God's all three will agree."—

187 Quoted by Elizabeth Elliot in *Amy Carmichael, Chance to Die*, p. 350,351

188

189 Wilbur Chapman

190 Famous Revivalist

191

192 *Accept God's Plan*

193 "It is not a good thing for one to make plans for his own life. God has a
194 plan for every life. Happy the man who finds that plan and adapts himself
195 in everything to it."—Wilbur Chapman, *The Surrendered Life*, pp., 17,18

196

197 James McConkey

198 Author Speaker

199

200 Quoting Eph. 2:10 "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath
201 before ordained, that we should walk in them," He goes on to share important
202 principles for finding and living in the center of God's will:

203

204 1. Believe God has a specific plan for every person's life.

205 2. Believe that no other person can fulfill the plan he has for your life.

206 3. Realize it is possible to not enter into God's plan for your life.

207 4. Realize that the easiest way to miss God's calling, is to choose your own
208 calling.

209 5. Believe that God will communicate His plan for your life.

210 6. Pray for wisdom.

211 7. Follow as God opens the way before you.

212 8. Stay where you are while you are waiting for God's wisdom.

213 9. Believe that God will clearly tell you where you are to go if He wants
214 you to go somewhere else.—James Mcconkey, Adapted from *Life Talks*,
215 pp. 49-67.

216

217 "Not only are we to commit our lives to God, but we must also allow Him to
218 have His way with them. The committal of all things must be accompanied by
219 the submission in all things. When we yield our lives, we yield our plans
220 concerning our lives, and accept God's dealings with them. Not only "commit
221 your way unto the Lord," but "trust also in Him." Not only take your hands

222 off, but let Him put His hands on, however He may see fit.”—James
223 McConkey, *The Surrendered Life*

224

225

226

F B Meyer

227

Global Revivalist in the 1800s

228

229 *Determining God's Will*

230 “Many children of God are so deeply exercised on the matter of guidance that
231 it may be helpful to give a few suggestions as to knowing the way in which
232 our Father would have us walk, and the work He would have us do. The
233 importance of the subject cannot be exaggerated; so much of our power and
234 peace consists in knowing where God would have us be, and in being just
235 there.

236

237 The manna only falls where the cloudy pillar broods. If we are precisely where
238 our heavenly Father would have us be, we can be perfectly sure He will
239 provide food and raiment, and everything beside.

240

241 How much of our Christian work has been abortive because we have persisted
242 in initiating it for ourselves, instead of ascertaining what God was doing and
243 where He required of our presence? We dream bright dreams of success. We
244 try to command it. We call to our aid all kinds of expedients, questionable or
245 otherwise. At last we turn back, disheartened and ashamed, like children who
246 are torn and scratched by the brambles, and soiled by the quagmire. None of
247 this had come about if only we had been, from the first, under God's
248 unerring guidance. He might test us, but He could not allow us to mistake.

249

250 There are certain practical directions which we must attend in order that
251 we may be led into the mind of the Lord.

252

253 I.-Our Motives Must be Pure.

254

255 When thine eye is single, thy whole body is also full of light.” (Luke 11: 34)
256 So long as there is some thought of personal advantage, some idea
257 of acquiring the praise and commendation of men, some aim at self-
258 aggrandizement, it will be simply impossible to find out God's
259 purpose concerning us.

260

261 II.-Our Will Must be Surrendered.

262

263 My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of
264 the Father which hath sent me.” (John 5: 30) This was the secret which
265 Jesus not only practiced, but taught. In one form or another He was
266 constantly insisting on a surrendered will, as the key to perfect knowledge. “If
267 any man will do His will, he shall know.”

268

269 It is for the lack of this subordination that we so often miss the guidance we
270 seek. There is a secret controversy between our will and God's. And we shall
271 never be right till we have let Him take, and break, and make. Oh! Do seek for
272 that. If you cannot give, let Him take. If you are not willing, confess that you
273 are willing to be made willing.

274

275 III.-We Must Seek Information for our Mind.

276

277 It is of the greatest importance that we should feed our minds with facts, with
278 reliable information, with the results of human experience, and (above all)
279 with the teachings of the Word of God. Notice how full the Bible is of
280 biography and history, so that there is hardly a single crisis in our lives that
281 may not be matched from those wondrous pages. There is no book like the
282 Bible for casting a light on the dark landings of human life.

283

284 We have no need or right to run hither and thither to ask our friends what we
285 ought to do; but there is no harm in our taking pains to gather all reliable
286 information, on which the flame of holy thought and consecrated purpose may
287 feed and grow strong. For the most part God will speak in the results of
288 deliberate consideration, weighing and balancing the pros and cons.

289

290 IV.-We Must be Much in Prayer for Guidance.

291

292 The Psalms are full of earnest pleadings for clear direction: "Show me Thy
293 way, Oh Lord, lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies." It is the law
294 of our Father's house that His children shall ask for what they want. "If any
295 man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally,
296 and upbraideth not."

297

298 One good form of prayer at such a juncture is to ask that doors may be shut,
299 that the way be closed, and that all enterprises which are not according to
300 God's will may be arrested at their very beginning. Put the matter absolutely
301 into God's hands from the outset, and He will not fail to shatter the project and
302 defeat the aim which is not according to His holy will.

303

304 V.-We Must Wait for the Gradual Unfolding of God's Plan in Providence.

305

306 God's impressions within and His word without are always corroborated by
307 His Providence around, and we should quietly wait until these three focus into
308 one point.

309

310 Sometimes it looks as if we are bound to act. Everyone says we must
311 do something; and, indeed, things seem to have reached so desperate a
312 pitch that we must.. Behind are the Egyptians; right and left are inaccessible
313 precipices; before is the sea. It is not easy at such times to stand still and see
314 the salvation of God; but we must.

315

316 Sometimes men sigh for an angel to come to point them their way; that simply
317 indicates that as yet the time has not come for them to move. If you do not
318 know what you ought to do, stand still until you do. And when the time comes
319 for action, circumstances, like glowworms, will sparkle along your path; and
320 you will become so sure that you are right, when God's three witnesses
321 concur, that you could not be more sure though an angel beckoned you.

322

323 We often make a great mistake, thinking that God is not guiding us at all,
324 because we cannot see far in front. But this is not His method. He only
325 undertakes that the steps of a good man should be ordered by the Lord. Not
326 next year, but tomorrow. Not the next mile, but the next yard. Not the whole
327 pattern, but the next stitch in the canvas. If you expect more than this you will
328 be disappointed.”—Adapted from F B Meyer, *Secret of Guidance*, pp 5-18

329

330 *Danger of Trusting Your Own Judgment*

331 “Never trust your own judgment. When your common sense is most sure of
332 the rightness of a certain course of action, it will be best to make assurance
333 doubly sure by lifting up your soul to God, that it may dim with his No, or
334 glisten with his Yes. When voices within or without would hasten you to
335 decide on the strength of your own conclusions, then be careful to refer the
336 whole matter from the lower court of your own judgment to the supreme
337 tribunal of God's. If there is any doubt or hesitation left after such reference,
338 be sure that as yet the time has not come for you to understand all God's will.
339 Under such circumstances—wait. There the responsibility of the pause, and all
340 it may involve, is on God; and dare still to wait.... If you trust God
341 absolutely, it is for him to give you clear directions as to what you should
342 do. And when the time for action arrives, he will have given you
343 such unmistakable indications of his will that you will not be able to
344 mistake them or err therein. ‘None of them that wait on him shall be
345 ashamed.’

346

347 Before entering into any alliance-taking a partner in life, going into a business
348 with another, yielding assent to any proposition which involves confederation
349 with others—be sure to ask counsel at the mouth of the Lord. He will assuredly
350 answer by an irresistible impulse—by the voice of a friend; by a circumstance
351 strange and unexpected; by a passage of Scripture. He will choose his
352 own messenger; but he will send a message.”—F B Meyer, *Joshua*,
353 p. 118,119.

354

355

George Müller
Founder of Orphanages
Great Man of Prayer

356

357

358

359 *Ascertain the Will of God*

360 “How important it is to ascertain the will of God, before we undertake
361 anything, because we are then not only blessed in our own souls, but also the

362 work of our hands will prosper. Just in as many points as we are acting
363 according to the mind of God, in so many are we blessed and made a blessing.
364 Our manner of living is according to the mind of the Lord, for He delights in
365 seeing His children thus come to Him (Matt. 6); and therefore, though I am
366 weak and erring in many points, yet He blesses me in this particular.

367

368 First of all, to see well to it, that the work in which he desires to be engaged is
369 God's work; secondly, that he is the person to be engaged in this work;
370 thirdly, that God's time is come, when he should do this work; and then to be
371 assured, that, if he seeks God's help in His own appointed way, He will not
372 fail him. We have ever found it thus, and expect to find it thus, on the ground
373 of the promises of God, to the end of our course.

374

375 1. Be slow to take new steps in the Lord's service, or in your business, or in
376 your families. Weigh everything well; weigh all in the light of the
377 Holy Scriptures, and in the fear of God.

378

379 2. Seek to have no will of your own, in order to ascertain the mind of
380 God, regarding any steps you propose to take, so that you can honestly
381 say, you are willing to do the will of God, if He will only please to instruct
382 you.

383

384 3. But when you have found out what the will of God is, seek for His
385 help, and seek it earnestly, perseveringly, patiently, believingly, and
386 expectingly: and you will surely, in His own time and way, obtain it.

387

388 We have not to rush forward in self-will and say, I will do the work, and I will
389 trust the Lord for means, this cannot be real trust, it is the counterfeit of faith,
390 it is presumption; and though God, in great pity and mercy, may even help us
391 finally out of debt; yet does this, on no account, prove that we were right in
392 going forward before His time was come. We ought, rather, under
393 such circumstances to say to ourselves: "Am I indeed doing the work of
394 God?" And if so, I may not be the person to do it; or if I am the person, His
395 time may not yet be come for me to go forward; it may be His good
396 pleasure to exercise my faith and patience. I ought, therefore, quietly to wait
397 His time; for when it is come, God will help. Acting on this principle
398 brings blessing. To ascertain the Lord's will we ought to use scriptural
399 means. Prayer, the word of God, and His Spirit should be united together.
400 We should go to the Lord repeatedly in prayer, and ask Him to teach us by His
401 Spirit through His word. I say by His Spirit through His word. For if
402 we should think that His Spirit led us to do so and so, because certain facts are
403 so and so, and yet His word is opposed to the step which we are going to take,
404 we should be deceiving ourselves. No situation, no business will be given to
405 me by God, in which I have not time enough to care about my soul. Therefore,
406 however outward circumstances may appear, it can only be considered as
407 permitted of God, to prove the genuineness of my love, faith, and obedience,
408 but by no means as the leading of His providence to induce me to act contrary

409 to His revealed will.”—George Müller, quoted in, A.T. Pierson, *George*
410 *Müller of Bristol*, p. 231,232.

411

412 “In reading about all these answers to prayer, the believing reader may be led
413 to think that I am spiritually minded above most of the children of God, and
414 that, therefore, the Lord favours us thus. The true reason is this. Just in as
415 many points as we are acting according to the mind of God, in so many are we
416 blessed and made a blessing. Our manner of living is according to the mind of
417 the Lord, for he delights in seeing his children thus come to him (Matt, vi.);
418 and therefore, though I am weak and erring in many points, yet he blesses me
419 in this particular, and, I doubt not, will bless me, as long as he shall enable me
420 to act according to his will in this matter.”—George Müller, *Narratives*, p. 64.

421

422 *Always Seek God’s Wisdom*

423 “Another fact that grows more conspicuous with the perusal of every new
424 page in his journal is that in things common and small, as well as uncommon
425 and great, he took no step without first asking counsel of the oracles of God
426 and seeking guidance from Him in believing prayer. It was his life-motto to
427 learn the will of God before undertaking anything, and to wait till it is
428 clear, because only so can one either be blessed in his own soul or
429 prospered in the work of his hands. [Vol. I.74]. Many disciples who are
430 comparatively bold to seek God’s help in great crises, fail to come to Him
431 with like boldness in matters that seem too trivial to occupy the thought of
432 God or invite the interposition of Him who numbers the very hairs of our
433 heads and suffers not one hair to perish. The writer of this journal escaped
434 this great snare and carried even the smallest matter to the Lord.”—
435 George Müller, quoted in, A.T. Pierson, *George Müller of Bristol*, p. 40.

436

437 *Get Your Heart Right*

438 “I seek at the beginning to get my heart in such a state that it has no will of its
439 own in regard to a given matter. Nine tenths of the trouble with
440 people generally is just here. Nine tenths of the difficulties are overcome
441 when our hearts are ready to do the Lord’s will, whatever it may be. When one
442 is truly in this state, it is usually but a little way to the knowledge of what
443 His will is.

444

445 Having done this, I do not leave the result to feeling or simple impression. If
446 so, I make myself liable to great delusions.

447

448 I seek the will of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of
449 God. The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone
450 without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusions also. If the Holy Spirit
451 guides us at all, He will do it according to the Scriptures and never contrary to
452 them.

453

454 Next I take into account providential circumstances. These often
455 plainly indicate God’s will in connection with His Word and Spirit.

456

457 I ask God in prayer to reveal His will to me aright.

458

459 This calmness of mind, this having no will of my own in the matter, this
460 only wishing to please my Heavenly Father in it, this only seeking His and not
461 my honor in it, this state of heart, I say is the fullest assurance to me that my
462 heart is not under a fleshly excitement, and that, if helped thus to go on, I shall
463 know the will of God to the full.”—Roger Steer, *The Spiritual Secrets of*
464 *George Müller* (OMF Books: Robesonia, PA, 1987), pp 40,42 (www.omf.org)

465

466 *On Making Decisions*

467 “This work of translation she partially accomplished, though
468 somewhat imperfectly; and the whole occurrence impressed Mr. Müller as an
469 indication that God was once more leading him in the direction of Germany,
470 for another season of labour in his native land. Much prayer deepened his
471 persuasion that he had not misread God’s signal, and that His time had now
472 fully come.

473

474 He records some of the motives which led to this conclusion.

475

476 1. First, he yearned to encourage believing brethren who for conscience’ sake
477 had felt constrained to separate themselves from the state churches, and meet
478 for worship in such conditions as would more accord with New
479 Testament principles, and secure greater edification.

480

481 2. Being a German himself, and therefore familiar with their
482 language, customs, and habits of thought, he saw that he was fitted to wield
483 a larger influence among his fellow countrymen than otherwise.

484

485 3. He was minded to publish his Narrative in his own tongue wherein he was
486 born, not so much in the form of a mere translation, as of an independent
487 record of his life’s experiences such as would be specially suited to its new
488 mission.

489

490 4. An effectual door was opened before him, and more widely than ever,
491 especially at Stuttgart; and although there were many adversaries, they only
492 made his help the more needful to those whose spiritual welfare was in peril.

493

494 5. A distinct burden was laid on his heart, as from the Lord, which
495 prayer, instead of relieving, increased - a burden which he felt without
496 being able to explain - so that the determination to visit his native land gave
497 him a certain peace which he did not have when he thought of remaining at
498 home.

499

500 To avoid mistake, with equal care he records the counter-arguments.

501

502 1. The new orphan house, No. 4, was about to be opened, and his presence

503 was desirable if not needful.

504

505 2. A few hundred pounds were needed, to be left with his helpers, for current
506 expenses in his absence.

507

508 3. Money was also required for traveling expenses of himself and his wife,
509 whose health called for a change.

510

511 4. Funds would be needful to publish four thousand copies of his
512 Narrative and avoid too high a market price.

513

514 5. A matron for the new orphan house was not yet found, suitable for the
515 position.

516

517 In this careful weighing of matters many sincere disciples fail, prone to be
518 impatient of delay in making decisions. Impulse too often sways, and self-
519 willed plans betray into false and even disastrous mistakes. Life is too
520 precious to risk one such failure. There is given us a promise of deep meaning:
521 "The meek will He guide in judgment; And the meek will He teach His
522 way."(Psalm 25:9.) Here is a double emphasis upon meekness as a condition
523 of such guidance and teaching. Meekness is a real preference for God's will.
524 Where this holy habit of mind exists, the whole being becomes so open
525 to impression that, without any outward sign or token, there is an
526 inward recognition and choice of the will of God. God guides, not by a
527 visible sign, but by swaying the judgment. To wait before Him, weighing
528 candidly in the scales every consideration for or against a proposed course,
529 and in readiness to see which way the preponderance lies, is a frame of mind
530 and heart in which one is fitted to be guided; and God touches the scales and
531 makes the balance to sway as He will. But our hands must be off the scales,
532 otherwise we need expect no interposition of His in our favour.

533

534 One sure sign of this spirit of meekness is the entire restfulness with which
535 apparent obstacles to any proposed plan or course are regarded. Then waiting
536 and wishing only to know and do God's will, hindrances will give no anxiety,
537 but a sort of pleasure, as affording a new opportunity for divine interposition.
538 If it is the Pillar of God we are following, the Red Sea will not dismay us, for
539 it will furnish but another scene for the display of the power of Him who
540 can make the waters to stand up as an heap, and to become a wall about us as
541 we go through the sea on dry ground.

542

543 Mr. Müller had learned this rare lesson, and in this case he says: "I had a
544 secret satisfaction in the greatness of the difficulties which were in the way. So
545 far from being cast down on account of them, they delighted my soul; for I
546 only desired to do the will of the Lord in this matter." Here is revealed
547 another secret of holy serving. To him who sets the Lord always before him,
548 and to whom the will of God is his delight, there pertains a habit of soul,
549 which in advance settles a thousand difficult and perplexing questions."—A.

550 T. Pierson, *George Müller of Bristol*, p. 91,92

551

552

553 *The Danger of Haste*

554 "I never remember, in all my Christian course, a period now (in March
555 1895) of sixty-nine years and four months, that I ever sincerely and
556 patiently sought to know the will of God by the teaching of the Holy Ghost,
557 through the instrumentality of the word of God, but I have been always
558 directed rightly. But if honesty of heart and uprightness before God were
559 lacking, or if I did not patiently wait upon God for instruction, or if I preferred
560 the counsel of my fellow men to the declarations of the word of the
561 living God, I made great mistakes."—George Müller, *Narratives*, Vol. 3

562

563 *Tips on Selecting a Marriage Partner*

564 "Let me here add a word of Christian counsel. To enter upon the
565 marriage union is one of the most deeply important events of life. It cannot
566 be too prayerfully treated. Our happiness, our usefulness, our living for God or
567 for ourselves afterwards, are often most intimately connected with our choice.
568 Therefore, in the most prayerful manner, this choice should be made. Neither
569 beauty, nor age, nor money, nor mental powers, should be that which prompt
570 the decision; but 1st, Much waiting upon God for guidance should be
571 used; 2nd, A hearty purpose, to be willing to be guided by Him should be
572 aimed after; 3rd, True godliness without a shadow of doubt, should be the
573 first and absolutely needful qualification, to a Christian, with regard to
574 a companion for life. In addition to this, however, it ought to be, at the
575 same time, calmly and patiently weighed, whether, in other respects, there is
576 a suitableness. For instance, for an educated man to choose an
577 entirely uneducated woman, is unwise; for however much on his part love
578 might be willing to cover the defect, it will work very unhappily with regard
579 to the children."—George Müller, *Narratives*, Vol. 3

580

581 *The Danger of Chance Methods*

582 George Müller used the lots three times to make decisions. Each time was a
583 disaster. Regarding the last two times:

584

585 "George Müller resorted to the lot only two more times: once at a literal
586 parting of the ways when he was led by it to take the wrong fork of the road,
587 and afterward in a far more important matter, but with a like result: in both
588 cases he found he had been misled, and henceforth abandoned all such chance
589 methods of determining the mind of God. He learned two lessons, which
590 new dealings of God more and more deeply impressed:

591

592 First, that the safe guide in every crisis is believing prayer in connection with
593 the word of God;

594

595 Secondly, that continued uncertainty as to one's course is a reason
596 for continued waiting.

598 These lessons should not be lightly passed over, for they are too valuable. The
 599 flesh is impatient of all delay, both in decision and action; hence all carnal
 600 choices are immature and premature, and all carnal courses are mistaken
 601 and unspiritual. God is often moved to delay that we may be led to pray,
 602 and even the answers to prayer are deferred that the natural and carnal spirit
 603 may be kept in check and self-will may bow before the will of God.”—George
 604 Müller, quoted in *George Müller of Bristol* by A. T. Pierson

605

606

607

Andrew Murray

608

Dutch Reformed Pastor/Author

609

610 *Assurance of God’s Wisdom*

611 “The man who lives only for God’s will may depend upon it that God
 612 takes Him for his reckoning. This surrender will lead us deeper into
 613 the consciousness of our utter impotence, but also deeper into the fellowship
 614 and the likeness of the beloved Son, and make us partakers of all the
 615 blessedness and love that the Son has prepared for us. There is nothing that
 616 will bring us closer to God in union with Christ than loving and keeping and
 617 doing the will of God.”—Andrew Murray, *Like Christ*

618

619 *Discovering God’s Will*

620 “This unreserved surrender to obey, as it is the first condition of
 621 entering Christ’s school, is the only fitness for receiving instruction as to the
 622 will of God for us.

623

624 There is a general will of God for all His children, which we can, in
 625 some measure, learn out of the Bible. But there is a special
 626 individual application of these commands-God’s will concerning each of us
 627 personally, which only the Holy Spirit can teach. And He will not teach it,
 628 except to those who have taken the vow of obedience.

629

630 This is the reason why there are so many unanswered prayers for God to make
 631 known His will. Jesus said, ‘If any man wills to do His Will, he shall know of
 632 the teaching, whether it be of God.’ If a man’s will is really set on doing
 633 God’s will, that is, if his heart is given up to do, and he as a consequence does
 634 it as far as he knows it, he shall know what God has further to teach him.

635

636 It is simply what is true of every scholar with the art he studies, of every
 637 apprentice with his trade, of every man in business doing is the one condition
 638 of truly knowing. And so obedience, the doing of God’s will as far as we
 639 know, and the will and the vow to do it all as He reveals it, is the spiritual
 640 organ, the capacity for receiving the true knowledge of what is God’s will for
 641 each of us.

642

643 In connection with this let me press upon you three things.

644

645 1. Seek to have a deep sense of your very great ignorance of God's will, and
646 of your impotence by any effort to know it aright.

647

648 The consciousness of ignorance lies at the root of true teachableness. 'The
649 meek will He guide in the way' -those who humbly confess their need of
650 teaching. Head-knowledge only gives human thoughts without power. God by
651 His Spirit gives a living knowledge that enters the love of the heart, and works
652 effectually.

653

654 2. Cultivate a strong faith that God will make you know wisdom in the
655 hidden part, in the heart.

656

657 You may have known so little of this in your Christian life hitherto that
658 the thought appears strange. Learn that God's working, the place where
659 He gives His life and light, is in the heart, deeper than all our thoughts.
660 Any uncertainty about God's will makes a joyful obedience impossible.
661 Believe most confidently that the Father is willing to make known what He
662 wants you to do. Count upon Him for this. Expect it certainly.

663

664 3. In view of the darkness and deceitfulness of the flesh and fleshly mind, ask
665 God very earnestly for the searching and convincing light of the Holy Spirit.

666

667 There may be many things which you have been accustomed to think
668 lawful or allowable, which your Father wants different. To consider it settled
669 that they are the will of God because others and you think so, may effectually
670 shut you out from knowing God's will in other things. Bring everything,
671 without reserve, to the judgment of the Word, explained and applied by the
672 Holy Spirit. Wait on God to lead you to know that everything you are and do
673 is pleasing in His sight."—Andrew Murray, *School of Obedience*, pp. 96-98.

674

675

676

A. T. Pierson

677

Author

678

679 *Take No Step Without God's Guidance*

680 "One great law for all who would be truly led by God's Pillar of cloud
681 and fire, is to take no step at the bidding of self-will or without the clear
682 moving of the heavenly Guide. Though the direction be new and the way
683 seem beset with difficulty, there is never any risk, provided we are only led
684 of God. Each new advance needs separate and special authority from Him, and
685 yesterday's guidance is not sufficient for today.

686

687 It is important also to observe that, if one branch of the work is in straits, it is
688 not necessarily a reason for abandoning another form of service. The work of
689 God depends on Him alone. If the whole tree is His planting, we need not cut
690 off one limb to save another. The whole body is His, and, if one member is

691 weak, it is not necessary to cut off another to make it strong, for the strength
692 of the whole body is the dependence of every part. In our many-
693 branching service each must get vitality and vigour from the same source in
694 God. Nevertheless let us not forget that the stops, and the steps, of a good man
695 are ordered of the Lord. If the work is His work, let Him control it, and,
696 whether we expand or contract, let it be at His bidding, and a matter of equal
697 satisfaction to His servant.”—A. T. Pierson, *George Müller of Bristol*, p. 97

698

699

700

Hannah W. Smith

701

Author/Speaker

702

703 *God’s Direction Will be in Harmony*

704 “There is a way out of all these difficulties to the fully surrendered soul. I
705 would repeat fully surrendered, because, if there is any reserve of will upon
706 any point, it becomes almost impossible to find out the mind of God in
707 reference to that point; and therefore the first thing is to be sure that you really
708 do purpose to obey the Lord in every respect.

709

710 Settle this point then, first of all, and let no suggestion of doubt turn you from
711 a steadfast faith in regard to it, that Divine guidance has been promised, and
712 that, if you seek it, you are sure to receive it.

713

714 There are four ways in which He reveals His will to us,—through
715 the Scriptures, through providential circumstances, through the convictions of
716 our own higher judgment, and through the inward impressions of the Holy
717 Spirit on our minds. Where these four harmonize, it is safe to say that God
718 speaks. For I lay it down as a foundation principle, which no one can gainsay,
719 that of course the “voice” of His will shall always be in harmony with itself,
720 no matter in how many different ways He may speak. The voices may be
721 many, the message can be but one.

722

723 The Scriptures come first. If you are in doubt upon any subject, you must, first
724 of all, consult the Bible about it, and see whether there is any law there to
725 direct you. Until you have found and obeyed God’s will as it is there revealed,
726 you must not ask nor expect a separate, direct, personal revelation.

727

728 If, however, upon searching the Bible you do not find any principles that
729 will settle your especial point of difficulty, you must then seek guidance in
730 the other ways mentioned; and God will surely voice Himself to you, either
731 by a conviction of your judgment, or by providential circumstances, or by
732 a clear inward impression. In all true guidance these four voices will, as I have
733 said, necessarily harmonize, for God cannot say in one voice that which He
734 contradicts in another.

735

736 The third test to which our impressions must be brought is that of providential
737 circumstances. If a “leading” is of God, the way will always open for it. It is

738 never a sign of a Divine leading when the Christian insists on opening his own
739 way, and riding roughshod over all opposing things.

740

741 The fourth point I would make is this, that just as our impressions must
742 be tested, as I have shown, by the other three voices, so these other
743 voices must be tested by our inward impressions; and if we feel a “stop” in our
744 minds about anything, we must wait until that is removed before acting.

745

746 It sometimes happens, however, that in spite of all our efforts to discover the
747 truth, the divine sense of “oughtness” does not seem to come, and our doubts
748 and perplexities continue unenlightened. Our friends differ from us, and
749 would, we know, oppose our course. In such a case there is nothing to do but
750 to wait until the light comes. But we must wait in faith and in an attitude of
751 entire surrender, saying a continual “yes” to the will of our Lord, let it be what
752 it may. If the suggestion is from Him, it will continue and strengthen; if it
753 is not from Him, it will disappear, and we shall almost forget we ever had it. If
754 it continues, if every time we are brought into communion with the Lord it
755 seems to return, if it troubles us in our moments of prayer and disturbs all our
756 peace, and if finally it conforms to the test of the divine harmony of which I
757 have spoken, we may then feel sure it is from God, and we must yield to it, or
758 suffer an unspeakable loss.”—Adapted from Hannah Whital Smith’s *The*
759 *Secret of a Happy Christian’s Life*, pp 66-73.

760

761

C.T. Studd
Missionary

762

763

764

765 “What I would have you gather is that God does not deal with you until you
766 are wholly given up to Him, and then He will tell you what He would have
767 you do.”—Quoted in, John Pollock. *The Cambridge Seven*, 109.

768

769

Ellen White
Author/Speaker

770

771

772

773 *God Reveals His Will Three Ways*

774 “There are three ways in which the Lord reveals His will to us, to guide us,
775 and to fit us to guide others. How may we know His voice from that of a
776 stranger? How shall we distinguish it from the voice of a false shepherd? God
777 reveals His will to us in His word, the Holy Scriptures. His voice is also
778 revealed in His providential workings; and it will be recognized if we do not
779 separate our souls from Him by walking in our own ways, doing according to
780 our own wills, and following the promptings of an unsanctified heart, until the
781 senses have become so confused that eternal things are not discerned, and the
782 voice of Satan is so disguised that it is accepted as the voice of God.

783

784 Another way in which God's voice is heard is through the appeals of His Holy
785 Spirit, making impressions upon the heart, which will be wrought out in the
786 character. If you are in doubt upon any subject you must first consult the
787 Scriptures. If you have truly begun the life of faith you have given yourself to
788 the Lord to be wholly His, and He has taken you to mold and fashion
789 according to His purpose, that you may be a vessel unto honor. You should
790 have an earnest desire to be pliable in His hands and to follow whithersoever
791 He may lead you. You are then trusting Him to work out His designs, while at
792 the same time you are co-operating with Him by working out your own
793 salvation with fear and trembling. You, my brother, will find difficulty here
794 because you have not yet learned by experience to know the voice of the Good
795 Shepherd, and this places you in doubt and peril. You ought to be able to
796 distinguish His voice."—*Testimonies* Vol. 5, p. 512.1,2

797

798 *Unreserved Surrender is Required*

799 "When you give up your own will, your own wisdom, and learn of Christ as
800 he has invited you to do, then you shall find entrance into the kingdom of
801 God. Entire, unreserved surrender he requires. Give up your life for him to
802 order, mould, and fashion. Take upon your neck his yoke, submit to be led and
803 taught, as well as to lead and teach. Learn that unless you become as a little
804 child, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Abide in him, to be and do
805 only what he wills. These are the conditions of discipleship."—*Gospel*
806 *Herald*, April 23, 1902 par. 11

807

808 "Christ's call to sacrifice and unreserved surrender means the crucifixion of
809 self. In order to obey this call, we must have unquestioning faith in Him as the
810 perfect example, and we must have a clear realization that we are to represent
811 Him to the world. Those who work for Christ are to work in His lines. They
812 are to live His life. His call to unreserved surrender is to be to them supreme.
813 They are to allow no earthly tie or interest to prevent them from giving Him
814 the homage of their hearts and the service of their lives. Earnestly and
815 untiringly they are to labor with God to save souls from the power of the
816 tempter."—*Pamphlet* 164, p. 33.2

817

818 *Perfect Conformity To God's Will is Our Objective*

819 "Holiness is constant agreement with God."—*Review and Herald*, May 16,
820 1907 par. 4

821

822 "True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect conformity
823 to the will of God. We are to be sanctified to God through obedience to the
824 truth. Our conscience must be purged from dead works to serve the living
825 God. We are not yet perfect; but it is our privilege to cut away from the
826 entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection. Great possibilities,
827 high and holy attainments, are placed within the reach of all."—*Acts of the*
828 *Apostles*, p. 565.1

829

830 "Those who feel the constraining love of God, do not ask how little may be

831 given to meet the requirements of God; they do not ask for the lowest
832 standard, but aim at perfect conformity to the will of their Redeemer. With
833 earnest desire they yield all, and manifest an interest proportionate to the value
834 of the object which they seek.”—*My Life Today*, p. 7.5

835

836 “The only hope for us if we would overcome is to unite our will to God's will
837 and work in co-operation with Him, hour by hour and day by day. We cannot
838 retain self and yet enter the kingdom of God. If we ever attain unto holiness, it
839 will be through the renunciation of self and the reception of the mind of
840 Christ. Pride and self-sufficiency must be crucified. Are we willing to pay the
841 price required of us? Are we willing to have our will brought into perfect
842 conformity to the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming grace of
843 God cannot be manifest upon us.”—*Mount of Blessing*, p. 143.2

844

845 “We cannot retain self and yet be filled with the fullness of God. We must be
846 emptied of self. If heaven is gained by us at last, it will be only through the
847 renunciation of self, and the receiving of the mind of Christ. Pride and self-
848 sufficiency must be crucified, and the vacuum supplied with the Spirit and
849 power of God. Are we willing to pay the price required of us for eternal life?
850 Are we ready to sit down and count the cost, and conclude that heaven is
851 worth the sacrifice of dying to self, of having our will brought into perfect
852 conformity with the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming grace
853 of God will not be manifested upon us. When we present our emptied nature
854 to God, he will by his Holy Spirit supply the vacuum made by the
855 renunciation of self, and give us of his fullness.”—*Signs of the Times*,
856 November 21, 1892 par. 4

857

858 *Seek God's Will When Praying*

859 “He makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must
860 ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must be used
861 in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal.”—
862 *Education*, p. 257.7

863

864 “When we pray for earthly blessings, the answer to our prayer may be
865 delayed, or God may give us something other than we ask, but not so when we
866 ask for deliverance from sin. It is His will to cleanse us from sin, to make us
867 His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. Christ "gave Himself for our
868 sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the
869 will of God and our Father." Galatians 1:4.”—*Desire of Ages*, p. 266.2

870

871 *You Must Trust God*

872 “Many who profess to be Christ's followers have an anxious, troubled heart,
873 because they are afraid to trust themselves with God. They do not make a
874 complete surrender to Him; for they shrink from the consequences that such a
875 surrender may involve. Unless they do make this surrender, they cannot
876 find peace.... Worry is blind, and cannot discern the future; but Jesus sees
877 the end from the beginning. In every difficulty He has His way prepared

878 to bring relief. 'No good thing will He withhold from them that
879 walk uprightly.' Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us
880 of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the
881 service of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish, and a plain path before
882 their feet."—*Ministry of Healing*, pp 480, 481

883

884 "Let students seek heavenly direction much more than they have
885 done hitherto, and let them make no move, even though it be advised by
886 their teachers, unless they have most humbly sought wisdom from God, and
887 have received his guidance and counsel."—*Special Testimonies on Education*,
888 p. 125

889

890 "Too many, in planning for a brilliant future, make an utter failure. Let
891 God plan for you. As a little child, trust to the guidance of Him who will
892 "keep the feet of His saints." God never leads His children otherwise than
893 they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning,
894 and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as
895 coworkers with Him."—*Ministry of Healing*, p 479

896

897 "Worry is blind, and cannot discern the future, but Jesus sees the end from the
898 beginning. In every difficulty He has His way prepared to bring relief. Our
899 heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know
900 nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service and honor
901 of God supreme will find perplexities vanish, and a plain path before their
902 feet." *Desire of Ages*, p 330

903

904 "He gives "to every man his work." Each has his place in the eternal plan of
905 heaven. Each is to work in co-operation with Christ for the salvation of souls.
906 Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions than is
907 the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God."—*Christ*
908 *Object Lessons*, p. 326

909

910 "As Christians, we ought not to engage in any employment upon which we
911 cannot conscientiously ask the blessing of the Lord."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p.
912 629.1

913

914 "I have been surprised at being asked by physicians if I did not think it would
915 be more pleasing to God for them to give up their medical practice and enter
916 the ministry. I am prepared to answer such an inquirer: If you are a Christian
917 and a competent physician, you are qualified to do tenfold more good as a
918 missionary for God than if you were to go forth merely as a preacher of the
919 word. I would advise young men and women to give heed to this matter.
920 Perilous times are before us. The whole world will be involved in perplexity
921 and distress, disease of every kind will be upon the human family, and such
922 ignorance as now prevails concerning the laws of health would result in great
923 suffering and the loss of many lives that might be saved."—*Counsels on*
924 *Health*, p. 503.3

925

926 *Casting Lots*

927 "To our people I will say, Let none be led from the sound, sensible principles
928 that God has laid down for the guidance of His people, to depend for direction
929 on any such device as the tossing up of a coin. Such a course is well pleasing
930 to the enemy of souls; for he works to control the coin, and through its agency
931 works out his plans. Let none be so easily deceived as to place confidence in
932 any such tests. Let none belittle their experience by resorting to cheap devices
933 for direction in important matters connected with the work of God."—*Selected*
934 *Messages*, Vol. 2, p. 326.

935

936 I have no faith in casting lots. We have in the Bible a plain "Thus saith the
937 Lord" in regard to all church duties. . . . Read your Bibles with much prayer.
938 Do not try to humble others, but humble yourselves before God, and deal
939 gently with one another. To cast lots for the officers of the church is not in
940 God's order (Letter 37, 1900)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1054

941

942 *Seek God's Leading*

943 "Each morning consecrate yourselves and your children to God for that day.
944 Make no calculation for months or years; these are not yours. One brief day is
945 given you. As if it were your last on earth, work during its hours for the
946 Master. Lay all your plans before God, to be carried out or given up, as His
947 providence shall indicate. Accept His plans instead of your own, even though
948 their acceptance requires the abandonment of cherished projects. Thus the life
949 will be molded more and more after the divine example; and 'the peace of
950 God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds
951 through Christ Jesus.'" —*Counsels to the Church*, p. 152.6

952

953 "All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ. And
954 if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims, so
955 blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when obeying
956 Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will, refined and
957 sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service. When we know
958 God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a life of continual
959 obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through
960 communion with God, sin will become hateful to us. As Christ lived the law in
961 humanity, so we may do if we will take hold of the Strong for strength. But we
962 are not to place the responsibility of our duty upon others, and wait for them to
963 tell us what to do. We cannot depend for counsel upon humanity. The Lord
964 will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else. If we
965 come to Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Our hearts
966 will often burn within us as One draws nigh to commune with us as He did
967 with Enoch. Those who decide to do nothing in any line that will displease
968 God, will know, after presenting their case before Him, just what course to
969 pursue. And they will receive not only wisdom, but strength. Power for
970 obedience, for service, will be imparted to them, as Christ has promised.
971 Whatever was given to Christ--the "all things" to supply the need of fallen

972 men--was given to Him as the head and representative of humanity. And
973 'whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments,
974 and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.'" 1 John 3:22."—*Desire of*
975 *Ages*, p. 668

976

977 “Those who turn away from the light which God has given, or who neglect to
978 seek it when it is within their reach, are left in darkness. But the Saviour
979 declares: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the
980 light of life." John 8:12. Whoever is with singleness of purpose seeking to do
981 God's will, earnestly heeding the light already given, will receive greater light;
982 to that soul some star of heavenly radiance will be sent to guide him into all
983 truth.”—*Great Controversy*, p. 312.3

984

985 “...like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God’s purposes
986 know no haste and no delay.”—*A Call To Stand Apart*, p. 5.2

987

988 *Cautions Regarding Employment Contracts*

989 “We are to ‘stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and
990 be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.’ No man or woman is to
991 bind himself or herself to serve for a certain number of years under the control
992 of a medical association. This is not God's plan, but a plan of human devising.
993 Human beings belong to the Lord, body, soul, and spirit, and they are to be
994 guided and controlled by him. He has bought us. We are under obligation to
995 be laborers together with him. No one should bind himself to serve for a
996 certain number of years in any institution.

997

998 I know that some have thought it advisable for the workers in our sanitariums
999 to sign certain contracts. But I know also that it is not in accordance with
1000 God's plan for the workers to sign these contracts. They are pledged to God,
1001 and if he moves upon them to take the message to a certain place, shall they be
1002 bound by a pledge that hinders them from going? Never, never, We are not
1003 our own, and we are not to bind ourselves to human beings by signing
1004 contracts to do this or that. We are to work under our Master, Christ Jesus,
1005 looking to him for directions. We are to pray and work and believe, following
1006 always the course that he marks out.”—*Spaulding Magan Collection*, p. 307.4

1007

1008 *Be Exact In Following God’s Injunctions On Tithe*

1009 “You may say, I have not large means and can do but little with the little I
1010 have. All the Lord asks of you is to be a faithful steward, to render to God a
1011 tenth of all your increase without stopping to measure the matter to see how
1012 you are coming out. You have but little means, render back to him the portion
1013 belonging to him; for it is not yours. It is a serious matter to rob God. Thus
1014 you deprive yourself of the blessing he has promised to bestow if you exercise
1015 faithful stewardship. If you have been untrue to God, if you show that you will
1016 not do according to the agreement he has made with you, will he bless you
1017 with facilities of obtaining more means? You keep yourself under
1018 condemnation as unfaithful stewards by working contrary to a "Thus saith the

1019 Lord." You deprive the treasury of God of your proportion of his agreement
1020 with you, because you choose to walk in the light of the sparks of your own
1021 kindling. In your finite wisdom, you think you are making better terms with
1022 yourself than God has made with you. How then, if you are unfaithful steward
1023 with the least, can the Lord entrust to you larger responsibilities?
1024

1025 God wants all his stewards to be exact in following divine arrangements. They
1026 are not to offset the Lord's plans with some deed of charity, some gift, or some
1027 offering, done or given when and how, the human agents, shall see fit. God
1028 has made his plan known, and all who co-operate with him will carry out his
1029 plan, instead of daring to attempt to improve on it, by their own arrangements.
1030 Those who honor a "Thus saith the Lord," who accept exactly what the Lord
1031 has devised, will be according to God's plan. God will honor them, and work
1032 in their behalf: For we have his pledged word that he will open the windows
1033 of heaven and pour us out a blessing, such as there will not be room enough to
1034 receive.

1035
1036 It is a very poor policy for men to seek to improve on God's plan, and invent a
1037 makeshift, averaging up their good impulses in this and that instance, and
1038 offsetting them against all that is required of God. God calls upon you to give
1039 every jot of influence to his own arrangement and ordinances. We are to strike
1040 true and faithful figures in tithing and then say to the Lord, I have done as
1041 thou hast commanded me. If you will honor me by trusting me with thy goods
1042 to trade upon, I will be thy faithful steward, doing all in my power to bring
1043 meat to thy house, and I will seek to instruct others how to work in the same
1044 lines."—*Kress Collection*, p. 156.1,2

1045
1046 *Tips on Selecting a Marriage Partner*

1047 "If men and women are in the habit of praying twice a day before
1048 they contemplate marriage, they should pray four times a day when such
1049 a step is anticipated. Marriage is something that will influence and affect your
1050 life, both in this world and in the world to come. A sincere Christian will not
1051 advance his plans in this direction without the knowledge that God approves
1052 his course. He will not want to choose for himself, but will feel that God must
1053 choose for him. We are not to please ourselves, for Christ pleased not
1054 Himself. I would not be understood to mean that anyone is to marry one
1055 whom he does not love. This would be sin. But fancy and the emotional nature
1056 must not be allowed to lead on to ruin. God requires the whole heart,
1057 the supreme affections."—*Messages to Young People*, p. 460

1058
1059 "If you are blessed with God-fearing parents, seek counsel of them. Open to
1060 them your hopes and plans; learn the lessons which their life experiences have
1061 taught. If children would be more familiar with their parents, if they would
1062 confide in them and unburden to them their joys and sorrows, they would save
1063 themselves many a future heartache. When perplexed to know what course is
1064 right, let them lay the matter just as they view it before their parents, and ask
1065 advice of them. Who are so well calculated to point out their dangers as godly

1066 parents? Who can understand their peculiar temperaments so well as they?
1067 Children who are Christians will esteem above every earthly blessing the love
1068 and approbation of their God-fearing parents. The parents can sympathize
1069 with the children and pray for and with them that God will shield and guide
1070 them. Above everything else they will point them to their never-failing Friend
1071 and Counselor.”—*Adventist Home*, p. 73.3

1072

1073 *The Principle of Personal Responsibility*

1074 "In all our dealings with one another, God desires us carefully to guard the
1075 principle of personal responsibility to and dependence upon Him."—*Loma
1076 Linda Messages*, p. 258.1

1077

1078 "If we are to be co-laborers with God, we must hold direct communion with
1079 Him: we must ask His guidance in everything we undertake. We cannot
1080 commit to another the explanation, or ask them to direct us. But how few
1081 know what it is to hold intercourse with God. How readily some place the
1082 responsibility of their duty on others, and ask them to tell them what to do. We
1083 say to all such, You must know your duty from God. Many have depended on
1084 their fellow-men until they have no individual experience. They are towed
1085 along as a barge by a steamer.

1086 All must see and understand their duty for themselves, after seeking wisdom
1087 from God. He is the only one to whom you may commit your soul for safe-
1088 keeping. If you come to Him in faith, he will speak His mysteries to you
1089 personally. You may sit together in heavenly places with Christ. We may
1090 individually understand God's will; we may know for ourselves what He
1091 would have us do; for He will direct us if we will consent to be consecrated
1092 and humble in heart before him. Our hearts will oft burn within us as One
1093 draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. "Who is this that
1094 darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge." We need Him who is the
1095 true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."—*Manuscript
1096 Releases*, Vol. 6, p. 381.,23

1097

1098 "God desires to bring men into direct relation with Himself. In all His dealing
1099 with human beings, He recognizes the principles of personal responsibility. He
1100 seeks to encourage a sense of personal dependence, and to increase the need
1101 of personal guidance. His gifts are committed to men as individuals. Every
1102 man has been made a steward of sacred trusts; each is to discharge his trust,
1103 according to the direction of the Giver; and by each an account of his
1104 stewardship must be rendered to God."—*Loma Linda Messages*, p. 257.5

1105

1106 "I am bidden to say that the work of following the guidance and direction of
1107 men is a mistake, from beginning to end. God now calls for genuine
1108 conversion on the part of those who have taken up the work of telling other
1109 men just where they shall go and how they shall labor. No man has been
1110 delegated by God to act as a dictator to his fellow-laborers, telling them what
1111 is their duty; for this is assuming by weak and erring man that which belongs
1112 to God alone. Our brethren should refuse to accept such responsibility; for by

1113 taking such a course they are teaching men to seek the direction and guidance
1114 of man instead of the control and guidance of God. ... One great object in the
1115 mission of Christ was to establish in every believer a sense of the guiding and
1116 controlling power of God. This lesson is to be repeated again and again. No
1117 greater injury can be done to our churches than for members to be taught to
1118 look to their fellowmen for guidance. And there is no man so humble in heart
1119 and so respectful of his brethren that he can safely take upon himself this
1120 work.”—*Loma Linda Messages*, p. 212 (italics supplied)

1121

1122 “Never should a worker encourage one who is in need of instruction and help
1123 to go first to human agencies for an understanding of his duty. It is our
1124 privilege as laborers to pray together and to counsel together; but we are
1125 individually to seek God to know what he would have us do. When the Lord
1126 impresses the mind of one of his servants that he is to go to a certain place to
1127 labor, that man is not under obligation to go to a human being to know if it is
1128 right for him to do this. It is a wrong education to teach our people to lean on
1129 human aids, instead of going to the Lord in prayer. The enemy of souls has
1130 been the instigator of this, that minds might become obscured. The people are
1131 not to be instructed differently. God's people are to meet together in counsel,
1132 but no leader or worker is to take the position that God's children are to make
1133 no move until he is first consulted. Those who bear responsibilities in the
1134 work are to co-operate with heavenly angels in teaching men and women to
1135 look to God as the source of their strength.”—*Spaulding and Magan*
1136 *Collection*, p. 415

1137

1138 “God would have you united in pleasant cords of companionship. As the
1139 Lord's workmen, you are to open your plans one to another. These plans must
1140 be carefully and prayerfully considered, for the Lord will leave those who do
1141 not do this to stumble in their own supposed wisdom and superior greatness.
1142 [John 15:16, 17, quoted.]

1143 One person must not suppose that his wisdom is beyond making any mistake.
1144 God would have the greatest cherish that humility that will lead him to be the
1145 servant of all if duty thus orders it.

1146 But while you are to love as brethren, and think soul to soul, heart to heart, life
1147 to life, you are individually to lean your whole weight on God. He will be in
1148 your support. He is not pleased when you depend on each other for light and
1149 wisdom and direction. The Lord must be our wisdom. Individually we must
1150 know that He is our sanctification and our redemption. To Him we may look,
1151 in Him we may trust. He will be to us a present help in every time of need.”—
1152 *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 21, p. 337

1153

1154 “In the place of bearing your perplexities to a brother or a minister, take them
1155 to the Lord in prayer. Do not place the minister where God should be. The
1156 minister of Christ is like other men. True, he bears sacred responsibilities, but
1157 he is not infallible. He is compassed with infirmity, and needs grace and
1158 divine enlightenment. He needs the heavenly unction, in order to do his work
1159 with success. Those who know how to pray, who know what are the

1160 invitations of the gospel of Christ, show dishonor to God when they lay their
1161 burdens upon finite men. It is always right to counsel together; it is right to
1162 converse together; it is right to make the difficulties that present themselves in
1163 any enterprise plain before your brethren and your ministers. But do not
1164 depend upon man for wisdom. Seek God for the wisdom that comes from
1165 above. Ask your fellow laborers to pray with you; and the Lord will fulfill his
1166 word, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the
1167 midst." —*Youth Instructor*, February 15, 1900

1168

1169 *We Must Accept His Direction*

1170 "It is in neglecting to follow the exact directions of the word of God that many
1171 err. They turn away from God's plans, to follow their own ideas. Christ
1172 himself declared, "The Son of Man can do nothing of himself, but what he
1173 seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son
1174 likewise." So utterly was he emptied of self that he made no plans for himself.
1175 He accepted God's plan for him, and day by day the Father unfolded his plans.
1176 If Jesus was so wholly dependent, declaring, "I do nothing of myself," how
1177 much more should the human agents depend upon God for constant
1178 instruction, so that their lives might be the simple working out of God's will.
1179 Oh, that failing, erring mortals would be content to seek wisdom from God,
1180 and be entirely submissive in working out his directions, in exemplifying his
1181 character! . . . Only those will have a fitness for the mansions above who give
1182 to God full and implicit obedience. God knows that we would not appreciate
1183 his rarest gifts if we were not perfectly submissive to his will."—*Signs of the*
1184 *Times*, November 21, 1892 par. 2

1185

1186 "We must not study to have our own way, but God's way and God's will. . . .
1187 Human beings suffer much because they step out of the path that God has
1188 chosen for them to follow. They walk in the sparks of the fire they themselves
1189 have kindled, and the sure result is affliction, unrest, and sorrow, which they
1190 might have avoided if they had submitted their will to God. . . . Whatever path
1191 God chooses for us, whatever way He ordains for our feet, that is the only path
1192 of safety. . . . With the eye of faith, with childlike submission as obedient
1193 children, we must look to God, to follow His guidance, and difficulties will
1194 clear away. The promise is, "I will instruct thee and teach thee."—*Sons and*
1195 *Daughters of God*, p. 175.5

1196

1197 "When the students in our schools shall learn to like God's will, they will find
1198 it comparatively easy to do it."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p.
1199 293.2

1200

1201 "All who have determined to serve God will seek to know and to do his will,
1202 at whatever cost to themselves. The true servants of God will be made
1203 manifest by their willing obedience to all the commandments of their Master.
1204 They will not be murmuring and finding fault with the law, but will declare by
1205 word and action, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments;
1206 and his commandments are not grievous." In obeying the law, they are doing

1207 that which is well-pleasing in the sight of Heaven, and all the promises of the
1208 word of God are pledged to the support of the faithful and obedient. They may
1209 hope in his mercy, build on his immutable counsels, obtain the desires of their
1210 hearts, because their wills are placed on the side of God's will. It is their meat
1211 to do the will of God and to finish his work. The gates of the eternal city shall
1212 open for the nation that has kept the truth. The servants of God shall eat of the
1213 tree of life, and enjoy the unsearchable riches of eternity.”—*Signs of the*
1214 *Times*, January 6, 1888 par 5

1215

1216 *We Must Accept God's Training Experiences*

1217 “Christ has given to every man his work, and we are to acknowledge the
1218 wisdom of the plan He has made for us by a hearty cooperation with Him. It is
1219 in a life of service only that true happiness is found. He who lives a useless,
1220 selfish life is miserable. He is dissatisfied with himself and with everyone
1221 else.

1222 True, unselfish, consecrated workers gladly use their highest gifts in the
1223 lowliest service. They realize that true service means to see and to perform the
1224 duties that God points out.

1225 There are many who are not satisfied with the work that God has given them.
1226 They are not satisfied to serve Him pleasantly in the place that He has marked
1227 out for them, or to do uncomplainingly the work that He has placed in their
1228 hands.

1229 It is right for us to be dissatisfied with the way in which we perform duty, but
1230 we are not to be dissatisfied with the duty itself, because we would rather do
1231 something else. In His providence God places before human beings service
1232 that will be as medicine to their diseased minds. Thus He seeks to lead them to
1233 put aside the selfish preferences which, if cherished, would disqualify them
1234 for the work He has for them. If they accept and perform this service, their
1235 minds will be cured. But if they refuse it, they will be left at strife with
1236 themselves and with others.

1237 The Lord disciplines His workers, so that they will be prepared to fill the
1238 places appointed them. He desires to mold their minds in accordance with His
1239 will. For this purpose He brings to them test and trial. Some He places where
1240 relaxed discipline and over-indulgence will not become their snare, where
1241 they are taught to appreciate the value of time, and to make the best and wisest
1242 use of it.

1243 There are some who desire to be a ruling power, and who need the
1244 sanctification of submission. God brings about a change in their lives, and
1245 perhaps places before them duties that they would not choose. If they are
1246 willing to be guided by Him, He will give them grace and strength to perform
1247 the objectionable duties in a spirit of submission and helpfulness. They are
1248 being qualified to fill places where their disciplined abilities will make them
1249 of the greatest service.

1250 Some God trains by bringing to them disappointment and apparent failure. It
1251 is His purpose that they shall learn to master difficulty. He inspires them with
1252 a determination to make every apparent failure prove a success.

1253 Often men pray and weep because of the perplexities and obstacles that
1254 confront them. But if they will hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast
1255 unto the end, He will make their way clear. Success will come to them as they
1256 struggle against apparently insurmountable difficulties; and with success will
1257 come the greatest joy.

1258 Many are ignorant of how to work for God, not because they need to be
1259 ignorant, but because they are not willing to submit to His training process.
1260 Moab is spoken of as a failure because, the Word declares, he "hath been at
1261 ease from his youth, . . . and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel,
1262 therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed." (Jeremiah
1263 48:11.)

1264 Thus it is with those whose hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are
1265 not purged from them. Their hearts are not cleansed from defilement. They
1266 were given opportunity to do a work for God, but this work they did not
1267 choose to do, because they wished to carry out their own plans.

1268 The Christian is to be prepared for the doing of a work that reveals kindness,
1269 forbearance, longsuffering, gentleness, patience. The cultivation of these
1270 precious gifts is to come into the discipline-life of the Christian, that when
1271 called to service by the Master, he may be ready to exercise the energies of
1272 heart and mind in helping and blessing those who are ready to die.—Ms 79,
1273 1903, pp. 1-3. ("How God Trains His Workers," August 4, 1903.)—
1274 *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 8, 422.1-424.1

1275
1276

1277 GEORGE MÜLLER'S FIVE STEP PLAN

1278

- 1279 1. Chose to have no will of your own.
- 1280 2. God's direction will always be in harmony with His word.
- 1281 3. God's direction will often be accompanied by His opening providences.
- 1282 4. God's direction will always be accompanied by His peace.
- 1283 5. God's leading can always be explained to godly mature Christians.

1284

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