

GUIDANCE

“Collected Thoughts”

Compiled by Dan Augsburg

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

2 1 John 5:14,15 “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we
3 ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he
4 hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we
5 desired of him.”

6 1 John 3:22 “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep
7 his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”

8 *Introductory Thoughts*

9 Learning how to determine God’s will is one of the most important lessons
10 in obtaining answers to prayer and knowing God’s blessing in the Christian
11 life. Colossians 4:12 calls for us to stand perfect and complete in all the will
12 of God. The Lord’s prayer also calls for God’s will to be done in our lives
13 on earth to the same degree His will is done in heaven. Having God’s will
14 perfectly done in our lives is a very high standard, but God calls for it and
15 will apparently help us achieve it. The Scriptures and thoughts found in this
16 study guide should be helpful in seeking to understand this subject.

17 Over time I have come to realize that there are six important aspects to
18 consider when seeking to know and do God’s will:

19 (1) Choose to have no will of your own in seeking to determine God’s will
20 for your life. That means setting aside your preferences, preferring God’s
21 choices for your life. This is considered the hardest part of seeking God’s
22 will, but it is necessary. In this regard, Ellen White said: “We are to have no
23 will of our own, but are to seek the Lord, and follow where He leads the
24 way.” *Review and Herald*, August 11, 1903.

25 (2) Anything that is God’s will, will be in harmony with the teachings of the
26 Scriptures. If the guidance you are receiving would cause you to disobey the
27 teachings of the Bible, it cannot be God’s will.

28 We primarily discover God’s will in the Holy Scriptures. Accordingly, any
29 time we are seeking to know God’s will, we will want to study what the
30 Bible says on the subject. In doing such a study, it will be helpful to use a

31 concordance to find appropriate verses [*Strong's Concordance* is a good
32 example], study appropriate Bible Study Guides on the subject [Amazing
33 Facts has helpful online booklets on many subjects, or Bibleinfo.com.], the
34 *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge* [a topical concordance found on many
35 Bible apps], the writings of Ellen G. White, and the *Adventist Bible*
36 *Commentary*. If necessary you can write the White Estate or the Biblical
37 Research Institute of the SDA Church for further help. Ask your pastor as
38 well.

39 (3) God will open and close doors for whatever is His choice. That doesn't
40 mean the way will be opened immediately, or that it will be easy to go
41 forward, but God has a way of opening and closing doors in the process of
42 leading you forward. In going forward you will be able to do so without
43 compromising or dishonoring God. Not only do you want God's will done,
44 you will also want to go forward in God's way.

45 (4) God also uses the impressions of the Holy Spirit in providing direction.
46 These "lingering" impressions often come as the Scriptures are prayerfully
47 considered on the subject.

48 (5) Anything that is God's will, will be accompanied by God's peace.
49 Colossians 3:15 says to allow the peace of God to reign in your heart. If the
50 way seems to be opening before you, but you lack peace, at the very least it
51 is a call to pause and carefully consider if it is the right time or the right
52 direction.

53 (6) Anything that is God's will, will usually be affirmed by other mature
54 Christians. Proverbs 11:4 says there is safety in a multitude of counselors.
55 Accordingly you should check your impressions on God's direction with
56 mature Christians—actually, mature Christians who will give their honest
57 opinions even if those opinions are unwelcomed. It is especially needed for
58 those who are young in the faith. I would automatically add that your
59 parents, if *converted* Christians, are important counselors since they know
60 you best. I have seen poor decisions made by new Christians who did not
61 know enough to stay clear of directions they thought was coming from God.
62 At times there will not be affirmation from others. When that happens,
63 prayerfully ponder, fast, pray and give God time to clarify what is going on.
64 Make sure you are open to whatever God wants, clearly hearing God voice
65 in the Scriptures, recognizing God's opening providences and enjoying
66 God's peace. Many a believer has gone forward with limited support, but in
67 the end was vindicated in taking what initially appeared to be a mistaken
68 direction.

69 Here are a few other things you will discover:

70 Be aware that God answers in a variety of ways, including "Yes," "No" and
71 "Wait." Sometimes His "wait" can go on a long time. Be patient. Eventually
72 you usually understand God's wisdom in the delay. During the waiting
73 time, God is developing your character and spiritual stamina. Whatever you
74 do, do not rush to make decisions, especially in the area of relationships.

75 Ellen White strongly endorsed what she referred to as the principle of
76 “personal responsibility,” a principle that designates God’s primacy in
77 giving direction. It is easy to run here and there to get opinions from others
78 relative to what should be done, when God would rather instruct directly.
79 You will find quotations on the principle of individual responsibility in this
80 booklet. The principle does not advocate insubordination, rather speaks of
81 God’s desire to directly communicate with you as opposed to your being
82 guided by others who do not know you, or know little about you; have not
83 taken the time to study and pray in the process of seeking direction in your
84 life; do not know what the future holds; nor have heard from God His plan
85 for your life. Besides, God wants to have a close ongoing relationship with
86 you going into the future.

87 Chance methods like tossing the coin are never to be followed. Ellen White
88 says Satan takes control of the coin and brings about the decision he
89 desires! God has given a variety of ways to correctly discover His will,
90 including studying the Scriptures, recognizing His opening and closing
91 providences, the impressions of the Holy Spirit, His peace and the safety of
92 counselors, to help you make good decisions. Chance methods short-circuit
93 God’s plan. You will learn more about chance methods in the paragraphs
94 that follow.

95 There is a section that speaks of avoiding employment contracts. In Ellen
96 White’s day young people were being pressed to sign employment contracts
97 that would keep them bound to various institutions, an act which precluded
98 their being available for God’s call to service elsewhere. Ellen White
99 wanted them to stay free to follow God’s leading, and accordingly
100 encouraged them avoid signing such documents. The freedom to obey God
101 is still desirable in our day.

102 Finally, discovering and pursuing God’s direction takes time and is pursued
103 in various ways, influenced by books read, examples of others, family
104 approaches, individual preferences and the direct leading of the Holy Spirit.
105 In all cases, taking time to carefully study and pray is key to success.
106 Because we live in a very busy world with lots of distractions, some
107 individuals choose to dedicate entire days to seeking God’s wisdom,
108 seeking out some quiet spot to read the Scriptures and commune with God.
109 Often they choose to fast or eat sparsely and do other things to minimize
110 distractions and thereby maximize their ability to hear God’s voice. Some
111 individuals choose to fast and pray for several days in a row. Regardless of
112 the approach followed, in all cases, taking quality time to ponder and pray is
113 necessary.

114 Needless to say, discovering and following God’s direction is the only
115 option for the converted Christian! It is also the best and wisest way.—*The*
116 *Compiler*

117

The Bible's Teaching On The Subject

118 1. God wants His will to be perfectly accomplished in our lives:

119 Colossians 4:12 "That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the
120 will of God."

121 2. Jesus always sought to do His Father's will:

122 John 4:34 "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me."

123 John 5:30 "I seek not my own will, but the will of Him who sent me."

124 3. God is willing to give wisdom:

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

127 Psalms 32: 8: "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should
128 go."

129 4. Accepting God's direction brings true and enduring happiness.

130 Proverbs 16:20 "He who heeds the word wisely will find good, and
131 whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he."

132 John 13:17 "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do
133 them."

134 Psalms 34:8 "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the
135 man who trusts in Him!"

136 Psalms 119:1,2 "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the
137 law of the LORD! Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who
138 seek Him with the whole heart!"

139 Psalms 128:1 "Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks
140 in His ways."

141 Revelation 22:14 "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that
142 they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the
143 gates into the city."

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

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

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

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

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

152 Proverbs 3:6: “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will
153 direct your paths.”

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

157 2 Samuel 22:33 “God is my strength and power, and He makes my
158 way perfect.

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

165 9. When God is leading, His peace will rule in our hearts. Lack of peace is
166 an important indicator that what we are pursuing may not be God's will, or
167 that it is not yet God's time:

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

170 10. It is often wise to share God's leadings with a mature and surrendered
171 Christian, to ascertain if we are correctly understanding God's leading:

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

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

174 Isaiah 30:21 “Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is
175 the way, walk in it, whenever you turn to the right hand whenever you
176 turn to the left.’”

177 12. Confirmation—NOT direction—is sometimes given in seeking a fleece.

178 “Look, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is
179 dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall
180 know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said.” Judges
181 6:37

182 13. Others, knowing the facts, will recognize God's leading.

183 "Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing comes from
184 the LORD; we cannot speak to you either bad or good." Genesis 24:50

185 *Instructive Quotations On Determining God's Will*

186 *God Reveals His Will Three Ways*

187 "There are three ways in which the Lord reveals His will to us, to guide us,
188 and to fit us to guide others. How may we know His voice from that of a
189 stranger? How shall we distinguish it from the voice of a false shepherd?
190 God reveals His will to us in His word, the Holy Scriptures. His voice is
191 also revealed in His providential workings; and it will be recognized if we
192 do not separate our souls from Him by walking in our own ways, doing
193 according to our own wills, and following the promptings of an unsanctified
194 heart, until the senses have become so confused that eternal things are not
195 discerned, and the voice of Satan is so disguised that it is accepted as the
196 voice of God." *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, 512.1.

197 Another way in which God's voice is heard is through the appeals of His
198 Holy Spirit, making impressions upon the heart, which will be wrought out
199 in the character. If you are in doubt upon any subject you must first consult
200 the Scriptures. If you have truly begun the life of faith you have given
201 yourself to the Lord to be wholly His, and He has taken you to mold and
202 fashion according to His purpose, that you may be a vessel unto honor. You
203 should have an earnest desire to be pliable in His hands and to follow
204 whithersoever He may lead you. You are then trusting Him to work out His
205 designs, while at the same time you are co-operating with Him by working
206 out your own salvation with fear and trembling. You, my brother, will find
207 difficulty here because you have not yet learned by experience to know the
208 voice of the Good Shepherd, and this places you in doubt and peril. You
209 ought to be able to distinguish His voice." *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 512.2.

210 *Trust God*

211 "Many who profess to be Christ's followers have an anxious, troubled heart,
212 because they are afraid to trust themselves with God. They do not make a
213 complete surrender to Him; for they shrink from the consequences that such
214 a surrender may involve. Unless they do make this surrender, they cannot
215 find peace.... Worry is blind, and cannot discern the future; but Jesus sees
216 the end from the beginning. In every difficulty He has His way prepared
217 to bring relief. 'No good thing will He withhold from them that
218 walk uprightly.' Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us
219 of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of
220 making the service of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish, and a
221 plain path before their feet." *Ministry of Healing*, pp 480, 481.

222 "Too many, in planning for a brilliant future, make an utter failure. Let
223 God plan for you. As a little child, trust to the guidance of Him who will

224 “keep the feet of His saints.” God never leads His children otherwise than
225 they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning,
226 and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as
227 coworkers with Him.” *Ministry of Healing*, p 479.

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

234 “He gives “to every man his work.” Each has his place in the eternal plan of
235 heaven. Each is to work in co-operation with Christ for the salvation of
236 souls. Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly mansions
237 than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God.”
238 *Christ Object Lessons*, p. 326.

239 “All true obedience comes from the heart. It was heart work with Christ.
240 And if we consent, He will so identify Himself with our thoughts and aims,
241 so blend our hearts and minds into conformity to His will, that when
242 obeying Him we shall be but carrying out our own impulses. The will,
243 refined and sanctified, will find its highest delight in doing His service.
244 When we know God as it is our privilege to know Him, our life will be a
245 life of continual obedience. Through an appreciation of the character of
246 Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to us. As
247 Christ lived the law in humanity, so we may do if we will take hold of the
248 Strong for strength. But we are not to place the responsibility of our duty
249 upon others, and wait for them to tell us what to do. We cannot depend for
250 counsel upon humanity. The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as
251 He will teach somebody else. If we come to Him in faith, He will speak His
252 mysteries to us personally. Our hearts will often burn within us as One
253 draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. Those who decide to
254 do nothing in any line that will displease God, will know, after presenting
255 their case before Him, just what course to pursue. And they will receive not
256 only wisdom, but strength. Power for obedience, for service, will be
257 imparted to them, as Christ has promised. Whatever was given to Christ-
258 -the "all things" to supply the need of fallen men--was given to Him as the
259 head and representative of humanity. And 'whatsoever we ask, we receive
260 of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are
261 pleasing in His sight.'" 1 John 3:22.” *Desire of Ages*, p. 668.

262 *We Must Surrender*

263 “When you give up your own will, your own wisdom, and learn of Christ as
264 He has invited you, then you shall find entrance to the kingdom of God.
265 Entire, unreserved surrender He requires. Give up your life for Him to
266 order, mold, and fashion; take upon your neck His yoke; submit to be led
267 and taught as well as to lead and teach. Learn that unless you become as a
268 little child you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Abide in Him, to be

269 and do only what He wills. These are the conditions of discipleship.” Letter,
270 130, 1898, par. 18.

271 “As Christians, we ought not to engage in any employment upon which we
272 cannot conscientiously ask the blessing of the Lord.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p.
273 629.1.

274 “Christ’s call to sacrifice and unreserved surrender means crucifixion of
275 self. In order to obey it, we must have unquestioning faith in Him as the
276 perfect example, and a clear realization that we are to represent Him to the
277 world. The characters of those who work for Christ are to be conformed to
278 His character. They are to work in His lines; they are to live His life. His
279 call to unreserved surrender is to be to them supreme. They are to allow no
280 earthly tie or interest to prevent them from giving Him the homage of their
281 hearts and the service of their lives. Earnestly and untiringly they are to
282 labor with God to save perishing souls from the power of the tempter.”
283 *Signs of the Times*, June 10, 1908.

284 *We Must seek to perfectly conform to God’s will.*

285 “Holiness is constant agreement with God.” *Signs of the Times*, June 21,
286 1905, par. 3.

287 “True sanctification means perfect love, perfect obedience, perfect
288 conformity to the will of God. We are to be sanctified to God through
289 obedience to the truth. Our conscience must be purged from dead works to
290 serve the living God. We are not yet perfect; but it is our privilege to cut
291 away from the entanglements of self and sin, and advance to perfection.
292 Great possibilities, high and holy attainments, are placed within the reach of
293 all. The reason many in this age of the world make no greater advancement
294 in the divine life is because they interpret the will of God to be just what
295 they will to do. While following their own desires, they flatter themselves
296 that they are conforming to God’s will. These have no conflicts with self.
297 There are others who for a time are successful in the struggle against their
298 selfish desire for pleasure and ease. They are sincere and earnest, but grow
299 weary of protracted effort, of daily death, of ceaseless turmoil. Indolence
300 seems inviting, death to self repulsive; and they close their drowsy eyes and
301 fall under the power of temptation instead of resisting it.” *Acts of the*
302 *Apostles*, 565.1,2.

303 “One has asked, Are we never to have our own will, our own way? Yes, any
304 amount of will, our own way, but never apart from God’s will and God’s
305 way. We are the purchased possession of Christ. We are to give over our
306 entire being, our intellect, our ambition, our activities, all our capabilities,
307 into His service. “Ye are not your own. Ye are bought with a price:
308 therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” [1
309 Corinthians 6:19, 20.] If you give your everything to Jesus, He will give
310 back to you tenfold more than you have yielded.” Manuscript 61b, 1895.

311 “We cannot retain self and yet be filled with the fullness of God. We must

312 be emptied of self. If heaven is gained by us at last, it will be only through
313 the renunciation of self, and the receiving of the mind of Christ. Pride and
314 self-sufficiency must be crucified, and the vacuum supplied with the Spirit
315 and power of God. Are we willing to pay the price required of us for eternal
316 life? Are we ready to sit down and count the cost, and conclude that heaven
317 is worth the sacrifice of dying to self, of having our will brought into perfect
318 conformity with the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming
319 grace of God will not be manifested upon us. When we present our emptied
320 nature to God, he will by his Holy Spirit supply the vacuum made by the
321 renunciation of self, and give us of his fullness.” *Signs of the Times*,
322 November 21, 1892, par. 4.

323 *Surrender Daily*

324 “Consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first work.
325 Let your prayer be, “Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at
326 Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work
327 be wrought in Thee.” This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate
328 yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried
329 out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may
330 be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded
331 more and more after the life of Christ.” *Steps to Christ*, 70.1.

332 *Seek God’s Will In Prayer*

333 “He makes it plain that our asking must be according to God’s will; we
334 must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must
335 be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal.”
336 *Education*, 257.7.

337 “When we pray for earthly blessings, the answer to our prayer may be
338 delayed, or God may give us something other than we ask, but not so when
339 we ask for deliverance from sin. It is His will to cleanse us from sin, to
340 make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life.” 1 John 1:9.”
341 *Desire of Ages*, 266.2.

342 *Seek Direction In the Scriptures*

343 “The nature of one’s religious experience is revealed by the character of the
344 books one chooses to read in one’s leisure moments. In order to have a
345 healthy tone of mind and sound religious principles, the youth must live in
346 communion with God through His word. Pointing out the way of salvation
347 through Christ, the Bible is our guide to a higher, better life. It contains the
348 most interesting and the most instructive history and biography that were
349 ever written. Those whose imagination has not become perverted by the
350 reading of fiction will find the Bible the most interesting of books. *Counsels*
351 *to the Church*, 170.5

352 The Bible presents a perfect standard of character. This sacred book,
353 inspired by God, and written by holy men, is a perfect guide under all
354 circumstances of life. It sets forth distinctly the duties of both young and
355 old. If made the guide of life, its teachings will lead the soul upward. It will

356 elevate the mind, improve the character, and give peace and joy to the
357 heart.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, 100.3.

358 *Humble and Fast In Seeking Direction*

359 “Spread every plan before God with fasting, with the humbling of the soul
360 before the Lord Jesus; and commit thy ways unto the Lord, and the sure
361 promise is that He will direct thy paths. He is infinite in resources. The
362 Holy One of Israel, who calls the host of heaven by name and holds the
363 stars of heaven in position, has your individuality in His keeping.” Letter
364 45,1893, par. 27.

365 “Every follower of Christ should earnestly inquire: “Lord, what wilt Thou
366 have me to do?” We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting
367 and prayer, and to meditate much upon His Word....” *Great Controversy*,
368 601.1

369 “Go to Jesus, fast and pray, and wrestle with God. Let every one know for
370 himself what the will of the Lord is; then he will not move blindly.” *Review*
371 *and Herald*, December 15, 1885, par. 3.

372 *Be Sensitive To the Holy Spirit’s Promptings*

373 “When the hearts of men are softened by the presence of the Spirit of God,
374 they are more susceptible to impressions of the Holy Spirit, and resolves are
375 made to deny self and to sacrifice for the cause of God. It is when divine
376 light shines into the chambers of the mind with unusual clearness and power
377 that the feelings of the natural man are overcome, that selfishness loses its
378 power upon the heart, and that desires are awakened to imitate the Pattern,
379 Jesus Christ, in practicing self-denial and benevolence. The disposition of
380 the naturally selfish man then becomes kind and pitiful toward lost sinners,
381 and he makes a solemn pledge to God, as did Abraham and Jacob. Heavenly
382 angels are present on such occasions. The love of God and love for souls
383 triumphs over selfishness and love of the world.” *Testimonies*, Vol. 4,
384 470.3.

385 *Stay In The Path of God’s Choosing*

386 “I know that human beings suffer much because they step out of the path
387 that God has chosen for them to follow. They walk in the sparks of the fire
388 they have kindled themselves, and the sure result is affliction, unrest and
389 sorrow, which they might have avoided if they had submitted their will to
390 God and had permitted Him to control their ways. God sees that it is
391 necessary to oppose our will and our way, and bring our human will into
392 subjection. Whatever path God chooses for us, whatever way He ordains for
393 our feet, that is the only path of safety. We are daily to cherish a spirit of
394 childlike submission, and pray that our eyes may be anointed with the
395 heavenly eyesalve in order that we may discern the indications of the divine
396 will, lest we become confused in our ideas because our will seems to be all-
397 controlling. With the eye of faith, with childlike submission as obedient
398 children, we must look to God, to follow His guidance, and difficulties will
399 clear away.” Letter 6, 1894.

400 “Whatever God requires is the very best and safest course to follow. Now
401 we find it profitable to yield obedience to God’s plans. All who embrace the
402 truth must be educated from the very first that their own ideas and will are
403 not to be a power, but we are to study God’s will. His will is to become our
404 will, our ways must be submitted to God’s ways.” Letter 23, 1885, par. 32.

405 *Shun Chance Methods*

406 “To our people I will say, Let none be led from the sound,
407 sensible principles that God has laid down for the guidance of His people,
408 to depend for direction on any such device as the tossing up of a coin. Such
409 a course is well pleasing to the enemy of souls; for he works to control the
410 coin, and through its agency works out his plans. Let none be so easily
411 deceived as to place confidence in any such tests. Let none belittle their
412 experience by resorting to cheap devices for direction in important
413 matters connected with the work of God.” *Selected Messages*, Vol. 2, p.
414 326.

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

420 *Recognize God’s Call To Service*

421 “God expects every one who has the knowledge of the truth to improve in
422 ability by putting to exercise the talents He has lent them. The pen, the
423 power of speech, the sanctified affections are to be used in His work of
424 enlightening the world and in working in God’s lines. God is constantly
425 renewing, sanctifying, elevating and increasing the moral power of the
426 light-bearers to do a great amount of good. God has brought truth to them.
427 They see it, they love it. The believer sees that he has a Bible full of
428 important truth, and God’s voice is heard and acknowledged in His Word.
429 This to him is a treasure superior to everything else. He no longer asks what
430 is agreeable to self and his own interests, but what is God’s will, what is for
431 His glory and for the good of his fellow men? How shall I be instrumental
432 in the salvation of souls? Let every one who claims to believe the truth ...
433 feel the burden of souls. If he is indeed a partaker of the divine nature, he
434 will feel the burden, he will love as Christ loved, he will work as Christ
435 worked, expecting the reward at the end of the warfare.” Manuscript 58,
436 1886.

437 “Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. He
438 who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver
439 becomes a giver. The grace of Christ in the soul is like a spring in the
440 desert, welling up to refresh all, and making those who are ready to perish
441 eager to drink of the water of life.” *Desire of Ages*, 195.

442 “There is something for everyone to do. Every soul that believes the truth is

443 to stand in his lot and place, saying, "Here am I; send me." Isaiah 6:8."
444 *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, 49.

445 *Avoid Employment Contracts*

446 "Human beings belong to the Lord, body, soul, and spirit, and they are to be
447 guided and controlled by him. He has bought us. We are under obligation to
448 be laborers together with him. No one should bind himself to serve for a
449 certain number of years in any institution. I know that some have thought it
450 advisable for the workers in our sanitariums to sign certain contracts. But I
451 know also that it is not in accordance with God's plan for the workers to
452 sign these contracts. They are pledged to God, and if he moves upon them
453 to take the message to a certain place, shall they be bound by a pledge that
454 hinders them from going? Never, never, We are not our own, and we are not
455 to bind ourselves to human beings by signing contracts to do this or that.
456 We are to work under our Master, Christ Jesus, looking to him for
457 directions. We are to pray and work and believe, following always the
458 course that he marks out." *Spaulding Magan Collection*, p. 307.4

459 *Be Exact In Following Divine Arrangements With Tithe*

460 "You may say, I have not large means and can do but little with the little I
461 have. All the Lord asks of you is to be a faithful steward, to render to God a
462 tenth of all your increase without stopping to measure the matter to see how
463 you are coming out. You have but little means, render back to him the
464 portion belonging to him; for it is not yours. It is a serious matter to rob
465 God. Thus you deprive yourself of the blessing he has promised to bestow if
466 you exercise faithful stewardship. If you have been untrue to God, if you
467 show that you will not do according to the agreement he has made with you,
468 will he bless you with facilities of obtaining more means? You keep
469 yourself under condemnation as unfaithful stewards by working contrary to
470 a "Thus saith the Lord." You deprive the treasury of God of your proportion
471 of his agreement with you, because you choose to walk in the light of the
472 sparks of your own kindling. In your finite wisdom, you think you are
473 making better terms with yourself than God has made with you. How then,
474 if you are unfaithful steward with the least, can the Lord entrust to you
475 larger responsibilities? God wants all his stewards to be exact in following
476 divine arrangements. They are not to offset the Lord's plans with some deed
477 of charity, some gift, or some offering, done or given when and how, the
478 human agents, shall see fit. God has made his plan known, and all who co-
479 operate with him will carry out his plan, instead of daring to attempt to
480 improve on it, by their own arrangements. Those who honor a "Thus saith
481 the Lord," who accept exactly what the Lord has devised, will be according
482 to God's plan. God will honor them, and work in their behalf: For we have
483 his pledged word that he will open the windows of heaven and pour us out a
484 blessing, such as there will not be room enough to receive. It is a very poor
485 policy for men to seek to improve on God's plan, and invent a makeshift,
486 averaging up their good impulses in this and that instance, and offsetting
487 them against all that is required of God. God calls upon you to give every
488 jot of influence to his own arrangement and ordinances. We are to strike
489 true and faithful figures in tithing and then say to the Lord, I have done as

490 thou hast commanded me. If you will honor me by trusting me with thy
491 goods to trade upon, I will be thy faithful steward, doing all in my power to
492 bring meat to thy house, and I will seek to instruct others how to work in the
493 same lines.” *Kress Collection*, p. 156.1,2.

494 *Let God Choose Your Marriage Partner*

495 “If men and women are in the habit of praying twice a day before
496 they contemplate marriage, they should pray four times a day when such
497 a step is anticipated. Marriage is something that will influence and affect
498 your life, both in this world and in the world to come. A sincere Christian
499 will not advance his plans in this direction without the knowledge that God
500 approves his course. He will not want to choose for himself, but will feel
501 that God must choose for him. We are not to please ourselves, for Christ
502 pleased not Himself. I would not be understood to mean that anyone is to
503 marry one whom he does not love. This would be sin. But fancy and the
504 emotional nature must not be allowed to lead on to ruin. God requires the
505 whole heart, the supreme affections.” *Messages to Young People*, p. 460.

506 *Let God Rule Your Family Through the Scriptures*

507 “We have Bible rules for the guidance of all, both parents and children, a
508 high and holy standard, from which there can be no swerving. God’s
509 injunctions must be paramount. Let the father and mother of the family
510 spread out God’s word before him, the searcher of hearts, and ask in
511 sincerity, “What hath God said?” *Review and Herald*, September 15, 1891,
512 par. 16.

513 *Guard the Principle of Personal Responsibility*

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

517 “If we are to be co-laborers with God, we must hold direct communion with
518 Him; we must ask His guidance in everything we undertake. We cannot
519 commit to another the explanation, or ask them to direct us. But how few
520 know what it is to hold intercourse with God. How readily some place the
521 responsibility of their duty on others, and ask them to tell them what to do.
522 We say to all such, you must know your duty from God. Many have
523 depended on their fellow men until they have no individual experience.
524 They are towed along as a barge by a steamer. All must see and understand
525 their duty for themselves after seeking wisdom from God. He is the only
526 One to whom you may commit your soul for safe keeping. If you come to
527 Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to you personally. You may sit
528 together in heavenly places with Christ. We may individually understand
529 God’s will; we may know for ourselves what He would have us do, for He
530 will direct us if we will consent to be consecrated and humble in heart
531 before Him.” Letter 55, 1897, par. 31, 32.

532 "God desires to bring men into direct relation with Himself. In all His
533 dealing with human beings, He recognizes the principles of personal

534 responsibility. He seeks to encourage a sense of personal dependence, and
535 to increase the need of personal guidance. His gifts are committed to men as
536 individuals. Every man has been made a steward of sacred trusts; each is to
537 discharge his trust, according to the direction of the Giver; and by each an
538 account of his stewardship must be rendered to God.” *Loma Linda*
539 *Messages*, p. 257.5.

540 *Accept His Direction*

541 “It is in neglecting to follow the exact directions of the word of God that
542 many err. They turn away from God's plans, to follow their own ideas.
543 Christ himself declared, "The Son of Man can do nothing of himself, but
544 what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also
545 doeth the Son likewise." So utterly was he emptied of self that he made no
546 plans for himself. He accepted God's plan for him, and day by day the
547 Father unfolded his plans. If Jesus was so wholly dependent, declaring, "I
548 do nothing of myself," how much more should the human agents depend
549 upon God for constant instruction, so that their lives might be the simple
550 working out of God's will. Oh, that failing, erring mortals would be content
551 to seek wisdom from God, and be entirely submissive in working out his
552 directions, in exemplifying his character! If ever mortals needed to send to
553 heaven an earnest cry, "Lord, show me thy way; teach me the way of the
554 Lord," it is now. Only those will have a fitness for the mansions above who
555 give to God full and implicit obedience. God knows that we would not
556 appreciate his rarest gifts if we were not perfectly submissive to his will.”
557 *Signs of the Times*, November 21, 1892 par. 2.

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

568 “When the students in our schools shall learn to like God's will, they will
569 find it comparatively easy to do it.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education*,
570 p. 293.2.

571 “In the smallest as well as the largest affairs of life the first question should
572 be, “What is God’s will?” ... Yield yourselves to My training. Submit your
573 will to My will, your way to My way. Let your life be one with My life.”
574 *Signs of the Times*, February 19, 1902, par. 13.

575 “All who have determined to serve God will seek to know and to do his
576 will, at whatever cost to themselves. The true servants of God will be made
577 manifest by their willing obedience to all the commandments of their

578 Master. They will not be murmuring and finding fault with the law, but will
579 declare by word and action, "This is the love of God, that we keep his
580 commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." In obeying the
581 law, they are doing that which is well-pleasing in the sight of Heaven, and
582 all the promises of the word of God are pledged to the support of the
583 faithful and obedient. They may hope in his mercy, build on his immutable
584 counsels, obtain the desires of their hearts, because their wills are placed on
585 the side of God's will. It is their meat to do the will of God and to finish his
586 work. The gates of the eternal city shall open for the nation that has kept the
587 truth. The servants of God shall eat of the tree of life, and enjoy the
588 unsearchable riches of eternity." *Signs of the Times*, January 6, 1888 par 5.

589 *Accept God's Training Experiences*

590 "Christ has given to every man his work, and we are to acknowledge the
591 wisdom of the plan He has made for us by a hearty cooperation with Him. It
592 is in a life of service only that true happiness is found. He who lives a
593 useless, selfish life is miserable. He is dissatisfied with himself and with
594 everyone else. True, unselfish, consecrated workers gladly use their highest
595 gifts in the lowliest service. They realize that true service means to see and
596 to perform the duties that God points out. There are many who are not
597 satisfied with the work that God has given them. They are not satisfied to
598 serve Him pleasantly in the place that He has marked out for them, or to do
599 uncomplainingly the work that He has placed in their hands. It is right for
600 us to be dissatisfied with the way in which we perform duty, but we are not
601 to be dissatisfied with the duty itself, because we would rather do something
602 else. In His providence God places before human beings service that will be
603 as medicine to their diseased minds. Thus He seeks to lead them to put aside
604 the selfish preferences which, if cherished, would disqualify them for the
605 work He has for them. If they accept and perform this service, their minds
606 will be cured. But if they refuse it, they will be left at strife with themselves
607 and with others. The Lord disciplines His workers, so that they will be
608 prepared to fill the places appointed them. He desires to mold their minds in
609 accordance with His will. For this purpose He brings to them test and trial.
610 Some He places where relaxed discipline and over-indulgence will not
611 become their snare, where they are taught to appreciate the value of time,
612 and to make the best and wisest use of it. There are some who desire to be a
613 ruling power, and who need the sanctification of submission. God brings
614 about a change in their lives, and perhaps places before them duties that
615 they would not choose. If they are willing to be guided by Him, He will
616 give them grace and strength to perform the objectionable duties in a spirit
617 of submission and helpfulness. They are being qualified to fill places where
618 their disciplined abilities will make them of the greatest service. Some God
619 trains by bringing to them disappointment and apparent failure. It is His
620 purpose that they shall learn to master difficulty. He inspires them with a
621 determination to make every apparent failure prove a success. Often men
622 pray and weep because of the perplexities and obstacles that confront them.
623 But if they will hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the
624 end, He will make their way clear. Success will come to them as they
625 struggle against apparently insurmountable difficulties; and with success

626 will come the greatest joy. Many are ignorant of how to work for God, not
627 because they need to be ignorant, but because they are not willing to submit
628 to His training process. Moab is spoken of as a failure because, the Word
629 declares, he "hath been at ease from his youth, . . . and hath not been
630 emptied from vessel to vessel, therefore his taste remained in him, and his
631 scent is not changed." (Jeremiah 48:11.) Thus it is with those whose
632 hereditary and cultivated tendencies to wrong are not purged from them.
633 Their hearts are not cleansed from defilement. They were given opportunity
634 to do a work for God, but this work they did not choose to do, because they
635 wished to carry out their own plans. The Christian is to be prepared for the
636 doing of a work that reveals kindness, forbearance, longsuffering,
637 gentleness, patience. The cultivation of these precious gifts is to come into
638 the discipline-life of the Christian, that when called to service by the
639 Master, he may be ready to exercise the energies of heart and mind in
640 helping and blessing those who are ready to die." Manuscript 79, 1903, pp.
641 1-3.

642 **Be Wary of Hesitating and Doubting**

643 "If anything is accomplished to the purpose, it must be done at the golden
644 moment. The slightest inclination of the weight in the balance should be
645 seen, and should determine the matter at once. Long delays tire the angels.
646 It is even more excusable to make a wrong decision sometimes than to be
647 continually in a wavering position; to be hesitating, sometimes inclined in
648 one direction, then in another. More perplexity and wretchedness result
649 from thus hesitating and doubting than from sometimes moving too hastily.
650 I have been shown that the most signal victories and the most fearful defeats
651 have been on the turn of minutes. God requires promptness of action.
652 Delays, doubtings, hesitation, and indecision frequently give the enemy
653 every advantage...." *Gospel Workers* 133.4-134.3.



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