

Knowing and Finding the Will of God

by Jim Cymbala

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God's guidance in making decisions, particularly in ministry and daily life.

Duration: 41:36

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6, Isaiah 55:8-9, Jeremiah 10:23, Jeremiah 29:11, John 16:13, Acts 10, Acts 16:6-10

Topics: "Will Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of spreading the word of God to people all around the world. They emphasize the need to translate the message into multiple languages and make it accessible to everyone, regardless of their location or language. The speaker also highlights the role of prayer and seeking God's guidance in carrying out this mission. They mention that being led by God may not always make sense to the natural mind, but it has a spiritual congruency. Lastly, the speaker shares personal experiences of facing opposition and disagreement when following God's leading, using the example of David's decision to save Kayla.

Transcript

Preaching recently in another part of the country, a man came to me at the end of the service and said, Pastor Jim, thank you for that word. Whatever I'd spoken about seemed to help him. He said, I needed to hear that because I have a dilemma.

I'm a pastor of a smaller church and I've been very, very discouraged now for a long, long time. And now two things have happened. I was offered a job, a secular job, but at the same time, another church contacted me and said, would you come and pastor our church? So listen, he's discouraged, ready to quit, ready to give up.

And now he gets an offer from the secular world, like sell insurance or do something. But at the same time, another church calls him, a tiny church, and says, we need a pastor, would you come? So he's in a dilemma because I could tell as I just saw his eyes, he's wondering, am I really called to the ministry? Because there are a lot of people in the ministry who are not called, but somehow they got pushed into it, pressured into it, or they had their own fantasy. I want to get up there and be a pastor, but you can't make yourself a pastor.

Only God can make you a pastor. Do we all say amen to that? But did you notice the other dilemma was if I am called to the ministry, do I take that other church or do I stay where I am? Should I gut it out? Is God going to give me a breakthrough or should I get over to this other place? Did you notice about this that there's no answer in the Bible for any of those questions that he had? The Bible gives us moral directions, all morality, all doctrine, all don't do and do is found only in scripture. Nobody can tell you what God wants you to do or not to do morally.

And you never ask God, should I gossip about that person? Lord, should I gossip or not? Should I talk behind their back and tear them down or should I not? Or should I steal that money that someone left on that thing? You shouldn't. The woman gave me back \$20 more change and she's going to end up at the end of the day short by \$20. The boss might take it out, but she handed to me the extra \$20.

Should I give her back the \$20 or should I say, thank you, Jesus? Oh, I hit a tender one there, didn't I? So you don't ask, you don't pray about those things that's tempting God. That's tempting God. He's already told us about all those things.

But there's no verse whether that man is called to the ministry. There's no verse that has his name and says, thus sayeth the Lord, I call you into the ministry. There's no such verse.

And let's say he is called to the ministry. There's no verse that says, time is up here, go to the other church. There's no verses that say that.

Those are non-moral, but very important questions that we all face as we come to the name of this sermon, the fork in the road. You're going to have one this week. You're going to make decisions about little things or big things, how to react to someone who goes off on you, how to make a choice on a job, a promotion possibility, furthering your education, investment of money, leasing a car.

These are things that are not found in scripture, but do they have ramifications? Oh my goodness. Think of all the children and all the people who have been hurt. Let's just take children who have been hurt by parents who have total lack of wisdom and make the most ridiculous decisions.

And every decision has a ramification. What you sow, you reap. So now the children have to bear the brunt of the lack of wisdom of their parents who are jumping off of walls and just flying all over the place, deciding on the basis of who knows what.

Important things. Now, not robbing banks, not stealing. Those are moral decisions.

But you see where I'm at here right now. These are very important. And most Christians don't even think about that.

You just say, hey, I got a brain in my head. I'm going to do what I'm going to do. But that totally flies in the face of scripture.

In scripture, when it says that the Lord is our Lord and that he purchased us, he purchased us so he could direct our lives. If he doesn't have a right to direct your life, then he didn't purchase you, did he? Do you belong to yourself or do you belong to him? How many belong to Jesus? Lift your hand. Well, what does that mean? You go to church on Sunday? Is that what that means? No.

It means that all the decisions of life, he's to govern us because he knows the plan. And boy, haven't you found out that his plan is better than your plan? Haven't some of us already hit a brick wall trying to do our thing because we were so smart? So now let's just see a couple of cases of this and see what we can learn about what to do in the fork in the road. Let's look.

1 Samuel 23. When David was told, look, the Philistines are fighting against Kayla and are looting the threshing floors. He inquired of the Lord saying, shall I go and attack these Philistines? The Lord answered him, go attack the Philistines and save Kayla.

But David's men said to him, here in Judah, we're afraid. How much more than if we go to Kayla against the Philistine forces? Because they were being chased by King Saul and that army. Once again, David inquired of the Lord and the Lord answered him, go down to Kayla for I am going to give the Philistines into your hands.

So David and his men went to Kayla, fought the Philistines and carried off their livestock. He inflicted heavy losses on the Philistines and he saved the people of Kayla. A town was saved.

Children were saved. Families were kept intact, all because one guy was led the right way by the Lord. Now let's jump to the New Testament.

And now we're on the appalled journey that we covered probably a few months ago as we went through Acts. Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the, wow, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. Now, why would the Holy Spirit do that? When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

So they passed by Mysia and went down to Trass. And during the night, Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia, that's in Greece, standing and begging him, come over to Macedonia and help us. After Paul had seen the vision, we, Luke includes himself now, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia.

Why? Concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. And then finally, one little half of a verse from Isaiah 9 that we read at Christmas time. For unto us a child is born, and to us a son is given.

And the government will be on his shoulders, and he will be called Wonderful Counselor. Now, counselor there doesn't mean someone you sit with for a couple hours every week, and they counsel you in terms of working you through difficult situations in your mind and in your heart. God does that too.

But the word counselor here, speaking of Jesus, this is a prophecy of Jesus being born hundreds of years before he was born by the Jewish prophet Isaiah. This word counselor here means the one who gives directions and tells you where to go, and what to do, and when to do it, and how long to do it. He counsels you that way, and is the Wonderful Counselor.

So you see in the situation of that minister who came to me and said, Pastor Jim, what do I do? He needed counsel from the Lord. He needed direction from the Wonderful Counselor. He needed to find out some way, however this works, what to do.

Am I called to the ministry? Should I leave and get a secular job and supply from my family? Many ministers around the world, I've counseled, wept with them, prayed with them. They're not called to the ministry. They're sent out by some overzealous church that doesn't have discernment.

The man doesn't have the gift to preach. He's not called to be the first man in a church and the senior elder or the lead pastor. Now he's called to do something he's not equipped to do because God didn't equip him.

Well, he's sincere and he loves the Lord. That doesn't make you a pastor. So now nothing happens.

There's very little fruit. He lacks those gifts that you need. So now nothing happens.

It affects the finances, affects his marriage. There's frustration. He feels negative about himself.

He gets down about himself. Anybody would. You're trying to do something that you're not called to do.

Let me grab the microphone and try to sing Elisha's song. You'll see someone not feeling good about themselves real quick. Not called to do that.

Can't do that. Then it affects the children. Are you kidding? I've been around children now in their 20s and 30s who told me the war stories of how they grew up, with a father who was trying his best, but it wasn't called to do it.

But someone thrust them out there. You know, another worker is better than no workers, but doesn't exactly work that way. So that man had to be led by God.

Here's the case of David. David was a warrior. David finds out the little town of Calah is under siege and the Philistines are going to not only defeat them, they're going to rob them at harvest season, which is when the barley and everything else was being brought in, which would then really hurt the town of Calah, affect all kinds of families.

And David is on the run, living in the wilderness, in rocks and caves, in the woods, because King Saul is after him, being jealous of him, has the whole army looking for him. David has about 600 men with him. And now he gets this idea, should I go and deliver this town Calah? See, there's no Bible verse.

He could have read the law of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. He could have read that over and over. There is no verse that says, go to Calah and save the people.

No verse that says that. It's in that realm of what's the will of God? What is God doing in my life? Now we have a dilemma again for David. What to do? Notice he asked the Lord for directions.

He knew God gives directions when you come to a fork in the road. Now we have even a more mysterious one. In the New Testament, we have the Apostle Paul traveling with a team.

He's on his second missionary journey, and he wants to keep going through Turkey and now go further north to plant the gospel in some places he hadn't been on his first journey. And now the Spirit of God says, don't go. How did that happen? And why would the Spirit say, don't go? He's not trying to do something other than good, spread the gospel.

Why couldn't he go? Why shouldn't he go? And how did he know the Spirit of God was saying, don't go? And then he moved west and he wanted to go to a place called Bithynia. And now it says the Spirit of Jesus somehow communicated to him, do not go there. This is almost strange language for us.

We kind of live this way. See need, do need. See a problem, try to solve the problem.

Well, that's good in a certain elementary sense, but when you're going to commit your life and you're going to travel and you're going to get involved in something, you're going to ask God, is that the thing I'm supposed to do? Or do you have another worker that you plan to do that? It can't be everywhere at once. Look around the world. Look at the map of the world.

Read what's going on around the world. Like we just had these great visitors from mainland China, really from Hong Kong here with us this past Tuesday. You missed the great prayer meeting.

Oh my goodness. And they were telling us about the needs there, but there's needs in Ethiopia. There's needs in Bangladesh.

There's needs in Bolivia. There's needs everywhere. So where do you go? What do you do? Where do you give? As a pastor, what do you direct the church to do? Not going to be found in the Bible, but that's the point.

His name is called Wonderful Counselor. He's the one who said, look, I gave my life for you and I died for you. You don't think I'm going to guide you now through the things of life that face you? You're saying, well, God's not interested in that.

Well, let me tell you a little bit about that. God is interested. When you have a child or a grandchild, you're not just interested who they're going to marry and whether they're going to go to college.

You're interested about grade school, what they wear every day and what they eat every day. You're concerned about everything about your child, aren't you? Well, of course you are. You think God is less caring than you are? He's interested in every day of your life.

He's interested in where you work, when you change your job. You can't just go out and buy a condo. You can, but you could get in trouble.

God knows what's around the bend. He knows where you're supposed to be living. And there has to be some direction.

Otherwise, you live like a lot of us live, do what you want. And then when you're in trouble, ask God to fix it. There's got to be a better plan than that.

Listen, I've been counseling for decades. That's what you run into. People, don't pray, don't ask, don't seek direction, end up in a bind and say, lay hands on me.

Well, listen, we'll lay hands on you and ask God to help you get out of the jam you're in, but you're just going to go in another jam. And there are some people that they just make jam. That's not a bad idea, making jam.

They just go from one jam to another, one mess to another, right? And then you pray for them, like, Ooh, yeah, I feel it. And then boom, they're into another mess. Why? Because they're not led by anything but their brain.

Listen, with my IQ, I can't figure out life. God's ways are not your ways. His thoughts are not your thoughts.

You're not that smart. And neither am I. And it'd be better if we just admitted it and said, God, you know what's around the bend. I don't know what's around the bend, but God knows all kinds of things.

Why don't people go to the Lord more? Why don't they go to the wonderful counselor? Some of us live too quick. We just live too fast. Your pace, you're in the left lane.

You're passing everybody. So just as situations arise, boom, you make a decision because you know, because I know, and you just make decisions. That's why a lot of people don't consult the Lord.

They've been kind of brainwashed into, look, he died for me on the cross. I'm going to heaven one day, and now I'm just going to truck through life. And I'm just going to just fly through and make every kind of decision.

Don't need to consult him. Hey, pastor, I have a degree. I've got more education than you do.

Think mama raised a fool. I know what I'm doing. I don't need help.

I'm not like a little child. But as A.B. Simpson, the great preacher of another generation who founded the Missionary Alliance churches, he said, if you're in Egypt somewhere and you're looking across the desert there, you're going to cross the Sahara. He has this great illustration.

Tell me something. Who is safer? A guy, 35 years old, who's chiseled and works out and has 175 IQ, and he's in tremendous shape going off and talking to someone out. Look, I got to go be going for days across there.

Give me a map. Show me how to go. And the guide will say, listen, you can't do it.

You don't know you're crossing the Sahara desert. This is no joke. Who's safer, that guy or a nine-year-old who just holds somebody's hand and the guide says, son, you'll never make it.

But you know what? Just hold my hand. I'll take you across. Who's in better shape? The nine-year-old who knows, I don't know how to do this.

I'm just going to hold the guide's hand. Or the guy who said, I can do this thing. That guy's going to probably die.

But the nine-year-old is going to just make it. Why? Because wherever God leads us, he goes with us. Oh, how many are happy for that? Wherever he leads us, he goes with us.

The Lord, he just doesn't do a GPS kind of thing and make that turn and that turn and that turn. He says, I'll go with you. If you want him to guide you, if we want him to lead us, he'll not only show us the way, he'll go.

He'll go. He'll be the one who holds our hands if we'll follow his way. A lot of people live too fast.

They're just making all kinds of decisions real quick. Some people have been brainwashed by their anti-supernatural churches that God doesn't do that anymore. We have the scriptures now, we have all we need.

So anybody who talks about God leading you or the voice of the Spirit, they're into fanaticism and emotionalism, and you got to be careful of them. That's hogwash. The Bible is full of incidents where people were led by the Spirit in the Bible.

How else would Philip know to leave Samaria to go and speak to an Ethiopian eunuch and get the gospel into northern Africa? How would he know to do that? There was no verse. He was led by the Spirit. How would Peter know to go to Cornelius's house so the gospel could come to the Gentiles like you and me? The scripture has all kinds of verses that tell us that morality and doctrine is found only in scripture, and there is no new doctrine, there is no new morality, but for the leading of life and the direction of the affairs of God's people, he says, I'll be with you.

I'll direct you. I'll show you where to go. I'll tell you where not to go.

I'll tell you when to be quiet, and I'll tell you when to talk. I'll tell you where to spend your money and where not to. I'll tell you what ministry to get behind and what ministry not to get behind.

And I know the turf. I've been around forever. I have no beginning and no end.

How many know God knows the turf better than us? Lift your hand and say, Amen. I mean, and he's saying, I want to help you. What parent wouldn't want to help his child? Just name a parent that you know who's normal, who has natural love for their child or grandchild, and say, no, I don't want to help you.

That's too insignificant. No, are you kidding? You want to make sure the laces are tied on his sneakers. Now, others are not living too quick, or have not been brainwashed that God doesn't do those things.

They're just, we're too full of ourselves. We're going to figure it out ourselves. We're just, we know, we know.

The people getting the most trouble in life are the ones who have a spirit inside, although they never say it. Pastor, please. I know.

I know you're trying to help me, but I know. I've seen more I know people that you could shake a stick at. They're friends with the jam making people.

They're always... No, I grew up in church. I've been around the things of the spirit. I'm a Pentecostal, or I'm a charismatic, or I grew up in a Bible-believing church.

It doesn't mean anything. You've got to be led by the spirit every day. And some of the biggest colossal blunders have been made, have been made by people who knew better, but they got full of themselves.

They worked by instinct instead of humble themselves like a child. So, let's just say a couple more things until we get practical on how do you get guided by God. Don't you want to be guided by God? I want to be guided by God.

I've always wanted to be guided by God, but now more than ever I want to be guided by God. Decisions have to be made, things that we could do to bless the world and invest our energies, like royal family kids camp, things here, things far away. How do you know what to do? Do you notice that in the case of David, that if you want to be led by God, a lot of times it makes no sense.

So, if you're going to go strictly by your brain and by your logic, you will not be led by God. I'm not saying to be weird is to be led by God. Some people who are weird are just weird.

They are not led by God at all. But they have identified acting strange as being led by God. That is false.

How many have met some people? They are just strange. Just lift your hand if you know one strange person. Okay.

But notice, it doesn't always go by logic. When David was led by the Lord, go save Kayla, I'll be with you. Did that make any sense? If you're being chased by King Saul and an army, now do you have to go pick a fight with the Philistines? Does that make any sense? I'm asking you, does it make any sense? You're just good enough.

You should be thankful you're alive another day and find another cave to hide in and just stay safe. No, no. Now you're going to try to save a town.

See, when you're led by God, it doesn't always make sense to the natural mind. But it has a spiritual sense. It has a congruency, spiritually speaking.

Notice number two, when you're led by God, sometimes people will fight with you and disagree with you. When David came back and said, guys, we're going to go save Kayla. I just talked to the Lord.

They said, you're out of your mind. You are out of your mind. It's illogical.

He didn't get support. Now if you got good spiritually sensitive people who love the Lord, a good prayer partner, and you have overseers, you run these things by, you will get a yay and amen from someone. You'll know that you're working in the purpose of God and moving in the plan of God.

But a lot of times people close to you might not see it. If I could just say something now, she's here now, and I say this in the most sensitive way, because my mother is, you know, the dearest mother anyone could have. And my mother's amazing.

She's 99, going to be 100 in November. And someone came to me the other day and said, I just saw your mother. Don't get a big head now from this mom, but I got to say it.

Someone said, I just saw your mother. She's pretty. She's beautiful.

And she's 99. You should have seen her at 39, 49, 29. But anyway, when I went in the ministry and left my job, I was a college graduate, basketball player, got through school on a basketball scholarship.

So my mom had plans for me. She's Eastern European. You have bills.

You pay it. You plan. There's a place for everything.

Everything has its place. She has an orderly mind. You pay your bills.

You make a budget. You don't overextend. So then I remember the time I called her.

She was not in a good place then, like she is now. I think she's the strongest spiritually she's ever been. But she had gone through more than a decade with an alcoholic husband, my dad, who, you know, there was a lot of violence in the home and pressure and anxiety and emotion.

So I told her, mom, I'm leaving my job and I'm going in the ministry. She said, what? I've been already married a year and a half, two years. I already had one daughter.

She said, what? You went to college. You didn't study for the ministry. I said, I know it's just something I feel and Carol feels we're supposed to do.

And she said, and how are you going to pay your bills? And I said, well, mom, I can see myself holding the phone, no cell phone back then, just holding the phone and feeling her on the other end. And she said, how are you going to live? How are you going to pay your bills? You have a child. I said, well, I'm going to live by faith.

And she said, Jim, what does faith pay? And the truth, you're laughing. I wasn't laughing. Tears formed in my eyes because I could feel her concern and I had no further answer.

She's the biggest supporter that this church has, but not that day, all those years ago. She did not support my decision, but I knew God was leading me. So sometimes when you're led by God, they don't bring out the brass bands to cheer for you.

I remember the day we were pastoring in Newark, New Jersey, to begin with my wife and I, that's how we started in the ministry, a church her father had begun. And then they had called us, her dad and her mom, and said, look, the Brooklyn Tabernacle on Atlantic Avenue, it's about to close down. The pastor's left, is leaving.

There's less than \$3 in the checking account. There's a handful of people and more than half of them are very problematic. The pastor had kind of led everybody, let everybody do what they want to do.

They said, would you come and just pastor two places for a while? Well, I was doing a bad job in one place. I figured why not do a bad job in two places? Makes sense in a certain kind of way, doesn't it? So we went and did that. So every Sunday I'd have three services.

First one alone without Carol in Brooklyn on Atlantic Avenue to 10, 12, 15, 16 people. The organist could only play one song, Oh, How I Love Jesus. That's all she could play.

So I would get up every Sunday and say, I feel led to sing, Oh, How I Love Jesus. Because if she sang some, if I went to any of the songs, she might take her hands off the keys, which I told her, you can't take your hands off the keys because then the people are distracted and feel like the meeting is, you know, we've lost it. Then I would race out through the Holland Tunnel and go to Newark and preach there and then go to McDonald's with my daughter and my wife and race back in for a Sunday night service in Brooklyn to another 10 or 15 people.

I remember the day riding in the car. The only salary I had was in Newark. That had a more stable church, had been around a couple hundred people.

And I remember turning to my wife. We had been doing this for about a year. And I said, you know what I feel? We're supposed to leave the church in Newark and put all of our energy in Brooklyn and move back to Brooklyn.

My parents, my mother had made possible, put the down payment down for a house in Maplewood, New Jersey. That's where we lived. It made no sense.

And I turned to her and I said, that's what I feel. And she just turned to me and said, I feel the same thing too. And that's how we ended up at the Brooklyn Tavern.

I go, there's no verse. Just want to be directed by God. And sometimes it doesn't make sense.

And sometimes people might give you a lot of aggravation when you do it. I remember one very strong personality that was in the church, a man who the other pastor had let kind of go wild because he just wanted to keep him in the church. The guy had the preacher's itch.

You know what the preacher's itch is, right? He came up to me, maybe my second Sunday there and said, Hey, listen, I know you're the pastor now, but I just want you to know I have a greater anointing than you. And I can now preach you. So I want you to start turning the pulpit over to me regularly here.

And I was so young, so naive. And I just looked at him. He just stared at me.

But you got to fight through because this is what God wants us to do. How can we be led by the spirit? How many just from the verses we've looked at, how many want that wonderful counselor to be more in an intimate relationship with you so he can guide you and save you from a lot of trouble? Come on. Just one last word about Paul.

That's a very strange one, isn't it? He was supposed to go preach. He wanted to share the gospel. And the Lord said, No, not you, not there.

No, no, but there's a need. I know. Not you, not there.

Enthusiasm alone does not build the church of Christ. You have to be led and equipped, be the right person at the right time, the right place. Here's some practical things for us to be led by God.

Choir needs this. We all need this. The pastors need this.

Every week, I get emails and invitations. Would you come here? Would you go there? Would you come here? We're having a big prayer event in Florida. Would you come? Would you do this? Would you do that? Would you do this? Now, how in the world from my Bible would I know what to say yes to and what to say no to? If I say yes to everyone, you won't see me.

But I'm going to say no to everybody. Maybe I'll miss out on someplace where God wants me. Because one day I went to that prison in Angola because I felt that's what God wanted me to do.

And now look what it's opened up. Look what it's opened up. Wonderful ministry that we can give to those guys down there and help them.

So number one, if you and I want to be led by God, choir, congregation, you have to know when you come to a fork in the road, you have to make a decision. And it can be about little things. I was reading last night, late at night, when some guy came to rebel against Moses in the wilderness and said, who are you Moses? We're Levites too.

And God didn't give you all the authority. And his name was Korah. And he rebelled against Moses and against God.

And you know what the Bible says? Moses fell on the ground and began to pray. Then he got up and he told Korah, okay, we're going to get it on now. And we're going to see if God is with me or with you.

But how did he know to do that? Because he fell on the ground and he prayed. Many times in just reacting to people, small things, big things. Some people just say some things to you and you can feel something moving inside of you and it isn't the Holy Spirit.

How many have ever had one of those, right? You know, like, oh, don't go there. No, you didn't. I don't believe you just said that.

You got to stop just momentarily even and just be praying in your heart. Lord, what do I do? Lord might say, just be quiet or walk away. We might give you a kind word to say to diffuse it.

But if you just react with your own emotions and your own intelligence, you can make a bad situation worse. And we've all done that. We've all done that.

So you have to have the humility to say, I'm at the fork in the road and I need help from the Lord. You said you would be wonderful counselor. I got this opportunity.

This job seems like a better job, but how do I know it's a better job? Just because it looks like a better job doesn't mean it is a better job. The supervisor there within 24 hours could have it in for you and now you got to torment. The company could shut down three months later and God saw that coming and said, no, don't go there even though they're promising you the world.

These things are too complex for us, but do not tell me that God isn't concerned about the decisions we make. Well, of course He is. He loves us.

When you love someone, you're concerned about that. At the end of September, Carol and the music department and all of you, we're going to do a live album over a whole weekend, live praise and worship. This will be the first one we've ever done live.

I mean, the live instruments, everyone, our band, maybe guest soloists, but our own soloists, and you're going to sing those songs. We're going to make a DVD out of it. We're going to send that DVD.

We feel led to include some testimonies. I'm searching now. God, what testimonies do we use? I don't know which ones to use.

I'm searching and praying over that because what I want to do, what we feel to do, and everyone thinks it's a great idea, but God, I believe planted in my heart is to make that DVD, and then there'll be downloading songs and all that, but then make a 55-minute video and put three stories together with your singing and the choir and the singers or whatever she chooses to do. She has to be led by God like she just was when she switched her songs there, which led to us being able to minister to people. God's smart.

How many have found that he's real smart? He knows what to do. Let's give God and his wisdom a hand. So then we're going to translate it, make it a 55-minute video, try to get it on national television, but then translate it into 12 languages, Arabic, Hebrew, Spanish, German, French, Chinese, two Chinese dialects, Mandarin and Cantonese.

Get it into Korean, Japanese, and get it all around the world, all around the world, not charging anybody. Just get it so that in Bolivia, in some little barrio in La Paz, somebody can show that and people can see the power of Jesus Christ. Now, what songs, what testimonies? You just can't use your brains.

These God's ways are not our ways. How to do that day, how to do the weekend, it needs prayer. But coming to God and saying, God, lead us is the beginning.

God, direct me. I'm going to go slow and I'm going to listen. Finally, in conclusion, how do you hear God's voice? How does God give you direction? Well, if you study the Bible, then if you look at church history, which backs it up, you'll find out God speaks in many ways.

Sometimes he can take a verse and just make a verse that you're reading in your daily reading. Do read the Bible every day. Feed your spirit so it stays strong.

Sometimes a verse in the Psalms, he'll apply it to your heart and there's your answer right from the word of God. It won't be the direct answer, but you'll know from the verse, oh, wow, I just see where that, how would I read that right now? And God just will be speaking to you. That's the way to go.

Sometimes it comes in a still, small voice in your heart. Sometimes it can come through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I've had people come to me at the end of the meeting and say that something that was said from the pulpit or through the gifts of the Holy Spirit gave them the answer that they had been searching for for months.

God can do it through a child speaking to you and says a sentence and suddenly, you know, oh no, that's the answer that I was looking for. You just know. The thing that's behind all those things is an interesting verse, which many of us have not appreciated.

So let's just look at this verse and I'll explain it and then we'll dismiss. Look at this one verse. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.

Colossians 3.15. Say it with me. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Again, let the peace of Christ.

Now that word rule literally means let the peace of Christ act as the umpire and decide the issues of your life. One translation says let the peace of Christ give the verdict. What does that mean? It means that when you're at a fork in the road or an invitation is made to you or you're going to do something that seems logical because in Succubesa it sounds right, but then there's a lack of peace.

I have no peace about that. I know, but Jim, you got to do it. Come on.

This is an opera. This is a gig. I have no peace about it.

I've turned down myself personally, not forgive the self-reference. I've turned down some speaking engagements that were humongous in terms of the numbers of people. Some years ago, seven, eight years ago, six years ago, I was asked to be the national president of the National Day of Prayer or the spokesman for the National Day of Prayer.

I prayed about it and I got back to the people in Colorado. I said, I don't think I'm the right person for that. I don't think I'm supposed to do that.

They said, what are you kidding me? I said, no, I don't feel peace. If you don't feel peace, you can't go on, can you? Let the peace of Christ be the umpire. Safe, safe, out.

Go, don't. That's probably how Paul knew that the spirit of Jesus forbid him to go. He started to go and then there was probably, maybe it was a gift of the spirit kind of manifestation.

Someone gave a word, but a lot of times it can just be like, wow, I've wanted to do this, but now I feel, wow. We had a woman almost destroyed her life. He was singing in the choir.

She was about to marry some guy. She's getting older. She wanted to get a husband.

Oh, she hooked up with some guy and the Lord started dealing with her for months. Do not marry this guy. Do not marry this guy.

Do not marry this guy. People were praying for her. She never shared it with anyone.

She just, do not marry this guy. It's not what it seems. Do not marry him.

No, I got to get married. I'm getting older. The body, my body clock is running and all that.

Oh yeah. And then by the mercy of God, I got a call one day from someone who said, I think you know this guy and you know the woman in the choir and he lived in another state. He just got arrested on a very nasty charge.

And when I broke it to her, sure, there was an emotional outburst, but there was a relief because for months God had been giving her no peace. Come on. How many have ever had a moment where you were on the verge of something and you had no peace? Come on, lift your hand.

Haven't we ever had that? And then other times, even though you don't know where it'll end, that's what walking by faith is. I don't know where this is going to go, but I got peace. This is what I'm supposed to do.

Like how we bought this building. All the pastors prayed and we all felt peace. We had no money.

Didn't know how we were going to do it. It made no sense. It was totally crazy.

Totally crazy. I think some minister told me this is the largest capital campaign anyone has ever done in the history of New York City with no money. Like how did you do this? How did you sign the contract? Oh, it just seemed like we all felt peace.

And when God is leading you, he's going to hold your hand. He doesn't just say, yo, go down that road. He goes, I'll walk with you.

You might get messed up there. There's some tricky turns. Let's close our eyes.

Too many of us for any altar because we all need this so badly, don't we? This is a word from the Lord for us today from the Bible. Think of the headaches and heartaches that have come upon us and our families and innocent children because people just do stuff without asking God. It's just a whim.

Like I want that toy. I want to move. I want to buy that car.

I want to do this. I don't like this job anymore. I'm going to quit it or Lord lead us.

Wonderful counselor. Be what you said you'd be. Anybody here today feel like pastor? I'm right on the cusp of a decision.

And I needed to hear this today. And you made an example and you made an application, which you have no idea how significant that was because God is telling me, slow down and listen. Get direction from me.

If you want God to direct you and you want to submit that situation or your life in a new way to God's directives, just stand where you are. Don't come to an altar. Just stand behind me, in front of me.

I needed to hear that. I got to be careful. God knows best.

The Lord will lead me. He will guide me. Jesus, this last word we want to say to you, draws closer to you so that we'll be more sensitive to your directives, your promptings, your blocks.

You're taking away peace as a warning to us. Don't go that way. That's not good for you.

We want to be led by the spirit. We don't want to be weird. We want to be godly.

We want to be like Christ who lived and ministered for three and a half years on earth, led by the directions of his father. Little decisions, big ones. Help us not to say, no, God doesn't care about that.

Lord, you love us so much you care about everything. So help us to be sensitive about every decision. Give us good prayer partners and spiritual people around us and help the pastors to be there for the people who don't know that many other people so that we can listen and pray and feel some kind of peace.

This is the way. Walk in it. Lord, you said in your word, and you'll hear a voice behind you saying, this is the way.

Walk in it. We ask you to do as you said. For we pray all of this in the name of Jesus, knowing that you're not only here, but you'll answer.

In Christ's name, we pray. And everyone said, amen. Hug a bunch of people.

Come on, everyone. Turn around. Give somebody, say shalom to them.

Shalom, peace.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25912.mp3>

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