

Can I Ask God for Confirmation

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God's will through prayer and obedience, and how asking for confirmation can be a part of that process.

Duration: 45:37

Scripture: Genesis 24:12

Topics: "Seeking God's Will", "Confirmation in Decision-Making"

Description

Shane Idleman explores the theme of seeking God's confirmation in decision-making, using the story of Abraham's servant searching for a wife for Isaac as a biblical foundation. He emphasizes the importance of waiting on God's timing and being equally yoked in relationships, warning against the pitfalls of rushing into decisions based on immediate desires. Idleman encourages sincere prayer and seeking God's will through His Word, while also acknowledging that God may provide signs or confirmations when we are genuinely seeking His guidance. He concludes by affirming that God's desire is for all to come to Him, inviting those who are uncertain about their faith to seek Him earnestly.

Transcript

So, can I ask God for a sign? Can I ask God for confirmation? Well, I'll get to that in a minute. But we're in chapter 24. We left off at 22, but chapter 23 is about the death of Sarah.

And so if you're reading along with us, we're trying to have the whole church read through the whole Bible. So, even if you're not caught up, you can go back home and start in Genesis 1 and get caught up to Genesis 24. Genesis 24 is a bride for Isaac.

So Abraham told his servant to find a wife for his son, but not from the Canaanites, which would have been an easy route. They were right there next to Abraham. But he said, go back to my country and find a wife for my son.

So we learn a very important principle here, actually two, it's worth the wait to do what is right. So, I don't know who needs to hear that this morning, but somebody does. It's worth the wait to do what is right.

And in our culture today, we want immediate gratification, immediate results, immediate answers from God. I don't know about you, but it's hard to wait on God sometimes. He's not doing things according to my timetable.

And that can be frustrating sometimes. And what happened is Abraham didn't want his son to marry a Canaanite. Do you know who the Canaanites were? If you don't, it was a very wicked group of people.

It was false worship to false gods. And he knew it could lead his son away. Because you have to be what they call equally yoked.

Equally yoked. Most of you know what it means, but for those who don't, especially in the Old Testament, of course in the New Testament, even up to current probably, you know, sometimes you'll see pictures of the Amish doing this, but there's a big wooden yoke, and it sits on top of the neck of an ox, and on the neck of another ox. And what do those oxen do? They pull that load in the same direction.

And they get a lot of horse power. Well, ox power. They get a lot of power because they're what? Pulling in unison.

And I've seen videos before of one ox, or actually it was two cows, and one just wants to lay down. Or it doesn't want to go anywhere. And you can't get that load going.

And so we learn another important principle here, the important principle of being equally yoked. Now, if you say, well, I'm already married. Well, guess what? It has a lot more to do with than just marriage.

I believe equally yoked, because in Corinthians, we'll put it up there in just a minute, I think we have it up there. Second Corinthians, it doesn't say anything about marriage, even though it's applicable to that. It's anything when you link up with an unbeliever.

What about if I started this church with an unbeliever? How would that go? Probably not too well. What about a Christian businessman wanting to hook up with a unbelieving businessman? I can tell you some disasters on that. From integrity, to payroll, to where the money goes, to how they spend the money, they're unequally yoked.

And so when we get caught up in relationships where we need to be going the same direction, but we're not, that's called unequally yoked. You're not going in a good direction. But of course, more than anything else, Paul is obviously referring to marriage, the context there if you read all of 2 Corinthians 6, and how he goes on to say, I believe it's later chapters, how believers should marry believers.

And if you haven't married a believer, God will work through that and work with you in that area. Don't divorce your spouse just for that reason. The Bible says you stick with them in that area.

But we learn that young adults, you have to be very careful before you make the second most important decision of your life. The first most important decision is to God. Repenting and embracing that.

The second most important decision, I believe, is who you decide to marry. It's a very big decision, and you want to be equally yoked. Being equally yoked has its own set of problems.

You don't need to add on a lot of other issues. It's very challenging for those in that situation. So that's what Abraham is doing, and it actually wasn't an easy journey.

Probably two to three weeks just to get to the area of bride for Isaac. Let's load up the camels. Let's go find a bride for Isaac.

Three weeks just to get there probably. Three weeks to get back. And so, you can never go wrong waiting to do the right thing.

Has anyone gotten in trouble rushing ahead or just me? Alright. Everyone in this room, if I had a lie detector test, I would run you through it, because you know we've all rushed ahead. And often we rush ahead because the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the boastful pride of life.

That's the enemy's weapons that he uses against believers. What the flesh craves, what the eye wants, and the boastful pride of life. And often we make decisions based on that instead of waiting on God.

And even we tell couples often that are considering a divorce, just wait. There's no harm in waiting. Seek God in this.

Don't rush ahead and do a decision that you're going to later regret. And so, there's no harm in waiting to do the right thing. And as you see up there, do not be equally yoked with unbelievers.

And I forgot to mention this in the first service, but where you look determines what you may find. So, he went to the land of his fathers, knowing there would be believers, knowing there would be some people who loved the Lord. So, where he looked is what he found.

So, if you're looking for your spouse at 1 a.m. at a nightclub, where you look is what you might find. Now, some people have wonderful marriages based on that. So, I'm just saying be careful.

Be careful. Where you look is what you will find. And so many times we're looking, what's that song? Looking for love in all the wrong places.

I haven't heard of that in years. It's some of these songs you can never get out of your mind. Genesis 24, 12 through 14, so when the servant got to Mesopotamia, many, many days, he said, Oh, Lord God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day.

So, another key to knowing God's will is guidance begins with sincere prayer. This I can tell you as a living witness. When I give something to God sincerely, and I pray about it, and Lord, I just want to know Your will, He will answer that prayer.

He's not up in heaven going, I'm going to play games with this guy. Let me trick him a little bit. He wants to lead those, the Bible says the humble He teaches His way.

He wants to lead those who are willing to follow. He resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. And this is so important.

Lord, which direction do You want me to go? What do You want me to do in this area? You're asking God to communicate His will in your life. Very important. Without this, it's going to be real hard to determine God's will.

And I'm not talking about just a quick little drive as you're driving. Those are good, I do them. But to really find out God's will on major issues, you're going to have to spend some time seeking the heart of the Father.

Because what I've noticed before is as I'm praying and spending time with Him, my motives kind of change a little bit. Or my heart changes a little bit. And He kind of redirects me.

The Bible in Proverbs, there's two verses, I'm going to talk about that next week. Next week is going to be, how do you know if you're led by the Lord? You know, the Bible says, and he was led by the Lord. And Paul was forbade to go there.

And God closed the door and the leading of the Holy Spirit. What does that look like? That's next week. I'm already working on that.

But Proverbs talks about, though a man plans his way, it's the Lord who directs his steps. Very interesting. So you have this prayer, you're willing to seek the heart of God.

And then also, this is important noting, God meets you right where you're at. So be encouraged. You don't need to be an expert in knowing God's will.

And I look back, when I come back to the Lord, about 20 some years ago now, boy, thank God He treats us where we're at, because He just nurtured me along. Come on, Shane, you'll learn someday. And just like a little kid, you know, now He kind of just makes me just wait and just step out and trust in faith.

You already know what to do, Shane. You don't need the pacifier. You don't need the binky.

You don't need the milk. And so He meets you right where you're at. So how He deals with me is going to be a lot different maybe than how He deals with a teenager that really doesn't know how to discern the will of God.

They don't know what His Word says. They're just now getting into His Word. So He will meet you right where you're at with the sincere prayer, Lord, help me in this area.

And He is gracious and loving to guide those who are willing to follow. But I've noticed, talking to lots of people over the years, thousands of people by now, you know, when you're a pastor, you talk to a lot of people, not everybody wants to know the answer to God's will. Lord, show us Your will.

Oh, please, but if it's that answer, I'm not doing it. And I'll get to that too, because you've got to be willing to do what He wants you to do. You want to restore your marriage? You've got to be willing to do what it takes.

You want to get that relationship with God back on fire again? You've got to be willing to do what it takes. You truly want to know God's will? You have to be willing to do what it takes. And I've shared this before, but when I felt God was calling us to start this church, I had my wife, she took about a three hour car drive.

And it took me that long, well, she wasn't three hours away, but just kind of did some errands and things. And it took me exactly three hours to finally say, okay, I'll do it. Okay, I'll do it.

Okay, I'll do it. Because it was like, ah, mm, mm, ah, ah, mm. Fighting it, fighting it, knowing that I wasn't sure what that answer was going to be.

If I surrender, Lord, you're going to send me to Africa. And He will send you where He calls you. And when He calls you to do something, there's a joy there because that's how you were designed.

There's always safety in God's will. Always safety trusting that He knows what's best for you. But He will meet you right where you're at.

Now let it be that the young woman, so let's kind of put this in context. The servant, Abraham's servant is now in Mesopotamia. He's now looking for a wife for Isaac.

And this is pretty bold. I wouldn't even do this, but he did it. Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, please let your pitcher down that I may drink of it.

If she says, yes, you can drink of my, I'm going to give you water and I'm going to water your camels, then let her be the one you have appointed for me. That's how you're going to choose a bride? That's like a single person saying, Lord, when I leave church today, I'm going to go to Target. And the first thing coming out of that building with milk and eggs, because they can cook, I guess, that's going to be the one you chose for me.

That's going to be the one you chose for me. That's pretty risky. Can you ask God for a sign? Well, he's not even asking.

He's telling God what he's going to do. But there's a reason here in a minute. And he said, by this, I will know that you have shown kindness to my master.

So he says, if you do this, I'm going to know that this is the bride for Isaac. Wow. That's incredible.

Wouldn't that be a little risky? Can he ask God for a sign? Now, a couple things we have to remember. They didn't have God's Word, but we do. Now, God's not going to tell you, okay, John 8, you're going to meet them at church on September 23rd.

Here's who they are. The Bible doesn't answer every situation for you, but it gives you every principle you need to get through this life. You know it right and wrong and good and evil and truth and error.

You know how to live your life based on the Scripture. But sometimes God will give a confirmation. He'll give some type of sign that you're going in the right direction.

Why is that? Because faith in God pleases Him. So if I step out in faith and say, Lord, for example, Lord, we're going to plant this church. I'm about 80% certain it's you.

If the truth be told, I was not 100% certain. Not too many of us are 100% certain in things we do. There's sometimes a little, I trust God, but I don't trust Shane.

Is that Shane? Is that God? Or is that the enemy planting little seeds? But there are ways to determine that, which we'll be walking through the next few weeks. But, so I'm stepping out. We're stepping out in faith.

God says they're trusting Me. They're hoping in Me. They're counting in Me.

They're doing something that will bless others. And that pleases Me. Because without faith, it's impossible to please God.

So to some degree, there is a mount of faith there knowing, Lord, You're going to show Me. You're going to lead Me. You will direct Me.

And also, His journey was God-honoring. His journey to find a spouse was God-honoring. It's focused on others, not on Himself.

And also, it wasn't just a normal request. Watering camels could take a long while. I don't know how many of you have ever done that.

Any show of hands have watered a camel? How much they can hold? It's amazing. So this probably would have been quite a little, and those pitchers, they let down the bucket. I don't know why they call it a pitcher.

It's more of a bucket. And they watered the camel, then go down and get more water. And so, He made it a little bit difficult.

Lord, if You'd do this and this. But see, here's the thing. Here's how the servant walked it out.

We want to find a godly spouse for Isaac. A God-honoring person. We're going to be equally yoked.

I'm going to take a long journey. I'm going to find that person. I'm going to be obedient to Your will.

I'm going to be praying that You show me, Lord. I'm trusting You. I'm walking out in faith.

And Lord, there's a vast majority. I don't know who these people are. Can You show me who it is? Lord, I need some kind of a sign, some kind of confirmation of the woman who's going to honor You, the woman You have chosen.

And so he stepped out. See, there's a lot of things that led up to this. He didn't just throw something out there at whim.

There was a process to this. But we also have to remember, don't be fleeced by always throwing out a fleece. Do you know what being fleeced is? Being tricked? You were fleeced.

You were tricked. So don't be fleeced by always throwing out a fleece. Does everyone know what throwing out a fleece means? If not, oh, there's quite a few.

Okay, good. The first service too. That's good.

Throwing out a fleece comes from a story in the Old Testament in the Bible. And basically what he's saying, we can actually put it up in Judges 6. So Gideon, God called Gideon to deliver the children of Israel out of the hands of the enemy. But we don't know exactly, did God give them visions, a dream? Did He really impress something on their heart? Did He speak audibly? Did He send an angel? That's a whole other topic.

But somehow Gideon felt that God wanted to deliver him. But he said, Lord, if this is really You, I'm going to place a wool fleece on the floor. And in the morning, if it's wet, and the whole ground is dry, which would be a miracle.

Have you ever seen anything get wet? But everything else is usually wet because it's dew on everything. Your car, your plants, bush, concrete. But in this case, he said only the fleece and everything else is dry.

So he gets up in the morning and guess what? The fleece is wet. He wrings out the water. And I like Gideon because he says, Lord, can I test You one more time? Then Gideon said to God, do not be angry with me.

Let me test You one more time. Let me put the fleece out and this time it will be dry, but the whole ground will be wet. Only a miracle that God can do.

He gets up. Boy, oh boy. Two confirmations.

So, as you walk in your faith, maybe as you mature more, people might often say, or maybe you just never came across it, they'll often say, why don't you throw out a fleece? In other words, ask God for a sign. Why don't you ask God for a sign? A fleece. To see if this is really His will.

And that's not a bad idea, but you have to be careful. Because Gideon, to do this, he needed courage to fight evil. He was already walking in obedience.

I think it was the night before, he tore down the altar of Baal. It almost cost him his life. He was obeying God.

He was walking in the fear of God. He was wanting to deliver His people. He needed courage.

He trusted God, not himself. And deliverance of the nation of Israel lined up with God's Word. So he had all these things in his favor.

But he wanted that final confirmation. But we can't be flippant about confirmation. It's not about playing games with God.

It's about genuinely seeking His will. So, back to the question. I'm going to answer.

My opinion. This is the Shane Idleman opinion, okay? Shane said the Bible says this. But I think we could prove it.

Throughout Scripture, God would give them a sign. Here's a sign to you that a virgin will be born. Here's a sign to you you'll see the star.

Here's a sign to you. Here's a confirmation in the book of Acts. There's so much Scripture.

So can we ask God for a sign from time to time? So I do believe that we can ask God for confirmation from time to time. I think it's biblical. Because He knows, Lord, I trust You.

Again, I don't trust moi. I don't know what ulterior motives are going on up here. I want comfort and convenience.

God wants His will. I might do things a little bit differently with ulterior motives. God has pure motives.

So Lord, I need to know, is this Your will? I need confirmation. However, there are certain conditions that have to be met. Number one, and this is all biblical because we can find Scriptures on all of these.

If you're truly seeking God's will through prayer and the application of His Word. So if you're praying, you're reading God's Word, you're applying God's Word, He knows your heart. But how many people are doing neither of those? Or maybe they're quick little prayer right now, but they're not applying God's Word.

This happens a lot. People are dating. And they're saying, Lord, show us a sign.

Confirmation, is this Your will that we get married? Well, first you've got to move out from living together. Stop fooling around. Break in the fornication rule.

And then get in God's will. Because see, if we're in disobedience in one area, it's hard to get clear direction in another area. He usually says, go back and obey what you need to obey.

And then you'll get orders from headquarters. After you begin with this step of obedience. Or what about, Lord, do You want me to... I mean, you fill in the blank.

Do You want me to stay in this marriage? Do You want me to do this? Do You want me to separate or divorce? But if we're disobedient in other areas, we're not going to hear clearly in God's Word in this area. And God says, I hate divorce. God joins them together.

And so, if we're praying and we're walking obedience according to God's Word, it's okay to ask for confirmation to help solidify, to make sure you're making the right decision. I can give you a lot of examples where I needed some type of confirmation. And that's, if you want to get technical, you hear in the Bible, have you ever heard the term word of wisdom? Word of knowledge? The gifts of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12, 13, 14, to get the full context.

All that is, is I think Wayne Gruden talks about it in his book, Systematic Theology, on a prophetic word. It's just God spontaneously brings something, let's say, to your mind, that He's supposed to give to me. That confirms God's will or convicts or gives me a word of, that's what God does sometimes.

That would be the whole point of that gift. It's not weird and this is like, sometimes you need a little help. Lord, I need a little help.

I need to know if this is You or not. So God will give you something for somebody else. It's called a word of wisdom, word of knowledge.

It happened a lot in the New Testament. Paul talks about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. And we're a church that still believes in those gifts of the Holy Spirit.

I don't believe that now that we have the Bible, we don't need a little help. We need a little confirmation. And I've given you so many examples over the last couple years, I don't want to keep giving you examples of this, but so many times, I remember a couple years ago, I was in the back and I was going to have to deliver a very hard message.

And I didn't know if it was coming from anger. And I said, Lord, I can't do this. I cannot do this unless I know it's, give me a sign, give me confirmation, because I'm not just going to do that.

This might be a little bit too much Shane Eidelman going on. I'm back there, I'm standing back there, I'm just praying. And here comes this little old lady.

She gets off the altar, it's about 6.30 in the morning. Marilyn Enos was her name. And she walks back and she goes, she tells, she goes, Pastor, God put on my heart to tell you, speak everything He put on your heart, don't hold back a word.

And then she comes back up. Like, oh, that was a coincidence, hmm. Yeah, right, right? That helps.

See, I can't turn to a passage in Bible because the Bible tells me to speak boldly, but it doesn't let me know if that's me, my own impulse. Or many of you heard of Leonard Ravenhill. His son, David Ravenhill, told of a story where he was with a group of missionaries.

And this young girl was there, I think around 20 years old. And throughout the whole dinner, God is pressing it upon this missionary's heart to tell this girl, go tell her that I hate mommies and daddies too. What? That's not God.

You got to be kidding me. And so he fought it and fought it for an hour later. He said, okay, okay, I just, and he told the missionary girl this, God wants you to know that He hates mommies and daddies too.

And she starts breaking down and crying because her uncle used to abuse her and say, let's go play mommies and daddies. I can give you story after story after story of God confirming His Word, confirming His will through the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit. Many times, I mean, I think of five or six more just that had to deal with this church that was unmistakably God.

But I can't turn to Deuteronomy 6 and get that answer. You see, because the principle's there, but the confirmation for my exact situation is not there. And so that's why God gives us these gifts of the Holy Spirit to be able to speak into the lives of people.

And so also, number two, if you're waiting on Him, if you're waiting on God, not in a hurry, anybody make bad decisions rushing out, right? We talked about that. That's called reacting and not responding. Reacting, not responding.

That's why I've told you before, I'd post like a thousand more things on social media, but I'm usually reacting, right? Now I'm gonna go tell them off. Reacting, reacting, reacting, instead of responding, responding in love. And so if we're waiting on God, we wanna serve Him, we wanna walk out in faith, we've repented of besetting sin and wrong attitudes if warranted, then we can rest assured that God might give us a sign.

What about number three? You're using wisdom and applying principles that align with His Word, His character, and His nature. So if we don't apply wisdom, it's hard to ask God to give us a sign if we know our decision's gonna be a foolish decision. Now sometimes things don't always make sense.

When you step out and do things for God, doesn't quite make sense. So you have to be careful with this one of wisdom. But for example, I saw this a lot.

A lot of people, when I was in real estate, they would wanna make an offer on a house that was above their means. Like, ah, it's not a good idea. Boy, oh boy.

I don't know how you're gonna make, and you know, they had all the, oh, we'll just sell this and we'll live this and we'll just eat off rice and beans all week and we'll save money. And you know it was not a good idea. And they would tell me a lot, Shane, let's make an offer, and if we get it, we know God opened that door.

And I'd say, no, you might get it. You make an offer, you might get that house. But now if you know God is maybe leading you, He's put on your heart, it fits financially, there's a burden there, and it's something that only God can do, you know, I'm not against that, but just be careful in this area because God has given us wisdom.

The book of Proverbs says wisdom is the principal thing. Meaning it's the main thing. Therefore, get wisdom.

Get understanding. She will exalt you. She will promote you.

She will lead you down the right path. So many times I think we're wanting to know God's will in all these areas or different things, but we're not ready to apply wisdom to our life. It begins there.

It begins with wisdom. And number four, God may show you a sign, give you confirmation. If you're prepared to obey regardless of the answer.

How many of us try to, when the door isn't open, we try to look for a window. And when the window's not open, we look for a hole in the wall. Like, I'm going to find a way in here somehow.

And I've done that, God's given me an answer. I'm like, nope, that's not, I'm going to keep trying. I'm going to keep fighting this.

And you have to be prepared. Okay, Lord, give me a confirmation. If this is Your will or not, and I will obey.

And then number five, we talked about, I think briefly, you're not double-minded, wishy-washy, and always looking for a word. Have you met those people? Do you have a word for me this week? Do you have a word for me next week? Is there a sign? Is there confirmation? There's no clouds in the sky. That must mean I don't want to drive that way.

I need to drive this way. And if that doesn't turn red, I need to turn left. And if I get down to Santa Clarita and I see somebody walking on the side of the street, that probably means I need to, I mean, it just never ends.

And they become unstable in everything they do because God's Word is the primary source of guidance. The principles, the application of it, the obedience, using wisdom, and then from time to time, especially on major, I think it's major decisions. When there's some major challenging decisions here, we need to hear God's confirmation in many areas.

Number six, you're not asking for confirmation on things that oppose His Word. Uh-oh. Lord, please open this door.

God, give me confirmation. Knowing that that doesn't line up with Scripture. Does not line up with Scripture.

Lord, give me confirmation if I should go spend \$1,000 today on the lottery. Hmm. You might get confirmation, but it won't be from God.

The enemy can drop a lottery ticket and you're like, what is that? Oh my goodness, God gave me confirmation. Or you meet someone again, maybe not a believer. They're not equally yoked.

But you're going to change them. You're going to convert them. No, that's God's job.

So make sure you're okay with the answer and you're not asking for things opposed to His Word. And then number seven, this has been a big help for me. You're prepared to keep trusting God even if there is silence.

No answer. Because I don't want you leaving here thinking, oh yeah, God will just give you a sign, confirmation every time you need one for something. Sometimes, there's nothing.

I'm dealing with stuff right now. Nothing. Lord, do you want me to keep praying in this area? Do you want me to do this? There's nothing.

But then it goes back to without faith, it's impossible to please God. At some point, you step out and say, Lord, I'm going to step out in faith. I believe this is good.

It's God honoring. I feel you're leading me to do this. I'm trusting you.

God is happy about that. The Bible says without faith, it's impossible to please Him. So I think sometimes we don't have signs and confirmations so we can exercise even greater faith.

Isn't that true? If God gives me a clear confirmation, I'm like, oh, okay, that's Him. Not much faith involved. There's not much faith involved, right? Because I got confirmation.

No faith. I don't need faith. He just confirmed it with me.

Real faith is when you walk through the darkness and the black trusting God without any light. And so that He may take you through that as well. But then the answer comes in Genesis 24.

Before he had 15 through 17, I believe. Before he had even finished praying. So he's praying and then Rebekah comes out.

She was beautiful. She was a virgin and she went down to the well. She filled her pitcher and came up and the servant ran to meet her and said, please give me a drink from your pitcher.

So a couple things I do want to mention this. God's will regarding sexual purity. God's will regarding sexual purity in a culture where they despise virginity.

God's Word puts a very high price on it. It's a very good thing. And I know many of us have a past and God can still redeem that.

God can still work through that. You don't want to beat yourself up, but at the same token, you have to understand that God can still use you, but He wants to spare you the pain and the difficulty of carrying extra baggage. And so we learn a very valuable principle here because a lot of people are forced in to not being sexually pure because of the media, because of their friends.

But it's a wonderful biblical principle. And then he put here, the woman was very beautiful, but keep in mind, attraction is good, but it's not a gauge. So just because you're attracted to someone doesn't mean that's the gauge of success.

Oh, attraction, it must be in God's will. No, it could be the lust of the flesh. It could be something that's not God's will.

So it's good, obviously, right? I hope, maybe not, I don't know. But attraction can be good and God-given, but it's not the gauge you use to determine if something is God's will. Because that's the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and that can't be the determining factor.

And then so she said, in verse 18, drink, my Lord. Then she quickly let her pitcher down and she gave him a drink, and guess what? She said, I will also give water to your camels. Uh-oh.

But here's what's very interesting. He didn't say, and the man wondering at her, he said, in other words, he didn't just get excited and say, oh my goodness, I can't believe this. I just prayed this and tell her the story.

No, what does he do first? Hmm, now that's interesting. He remains silent. So it's like, wait a minute, why are you remaining silent? You just asked God to do that.

Because he's still like Gideon, probably. Let me ponder this for a minute, because sometimes God's will unfolds day by day or hour by hour. Sometimes it's a process.

You don't always have all the information, because sometimes you're getting the information, this looks good, and then God just slams the brakes on it. Has that ever happened? Man, I can tell you, before we came up to this church, there was a couple churches over the hill who we were possibly going to merge with. I was going to become the lead pastor.

We were going to merge with them. Everything looked great. We need a building.

They need a pastor. The pastor's retiring, whatever. Oh, this is perfect.

This is God's will. Actually had some confirmation. Some people said it sounds good.

Godly counsel said it sounds good. Boom, boom, boom, and then slammed shut. Completely slammed shut.

End of story. Why? Because just because it looks good initially, you're like, okay, Lord, I'm still trusting You. I don't want to be naive.

Continue to lead me. Continue to show me. So sometimes it's a process.

Have you ever experienced that? You thought you were getting that job. Everything went great. You went in for a second interview.

They said they're going to hire you, and then what happened? The irony is, I just have to tell you this. One of the churches said, you didn't go to seminary. So everything's great, but you didn't go to seminary.

Like I'm stupid? I don't know the Bible? What do you mean? But see, I thought it was God's will. Confirmation. Bam, slammed shut.

Completely slammed shut. Other situations where I thought it was God's will. Many of you know, when I stopped working at 24-hour fitness centers, I started a website.

WhatWorksWhenDietsDon't.com and we had personal trainers. We had monthly income there. I was teaching all the time.

I was doing seminars. I said, man, this is God's will for my life. Finally, I found it.

No, you just, you kind of closed, but it's over here, Shane. Ah, darn it. And that kind of just fell apart.

I'm like, what was that about? Because sometimes God lets you, you know, kind of just, you plan your ways, but it's the Lord who directs your step. Or how many of you have been engaged? Oh, this is, we're both Christians and this is wonderful. Why are we broken up now? You see? He pondered it in his heart.

Just because that first part was confirmed, he used wisdom. Said, well, Lord, let me just wait on You. Did you know my wife was engaged before we met? See, you don't know.

You should tell her that. Shane said, but it looked great. Christian guy, Christian girl.

This is, wow, what happened? Because it's not God's plan. Initially, sometimes God shows us in pieces. And sometimes it's to learn about yourself during that journey.

Or sometimes it's to readjust your direction. Or sometimes, we don't really know, we just trust in God's sovereignty. But my point is, he didn't rush ahead.

He said, okay, checklist number one is done. Let's keep seeing how this works out here. And so, oh, that's why I don't have the rest of it.

That's next week. Man, now I got y'all hanging. You're gonna have to come back next week.

Well, and the reason is, if we keep reading in Genesis, he says, the Lord led me to you. And so next week, I wanna talk about what is the Lord's leading? How do you determine when the Lord is leading you? Ooh, that's a little controversial too. But we see that in Acts.

Paul said, the Lord led me here. Paul said, the Lord closed the door. The Lord closed the door to this area.

And then He appeared to me by a vision and led me to Macedonia. And the Lord led, and I'm like, what is all this stuff? And it really sounds difficult. We make it a lot more difficult sometimes.

We worry about these phrases, leading of the Lord, Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, but they're all given by God to direct us and to encourage us. His Word is primary. It is the foundation.

It is inerrant. It is inspired. It's our gauge.

But sometimes we need a little hamburger helper. You know what that is? Young adults might not, it's something you would add to some hamburger. And now I'm not talking about adding anything, but I need a little help.

Lord, I've been searching your Bible for six months. I don't know if I'm supposed to start a church. It doesn't tell me.

Would you give me some confirmation? Please Lord, give me some confirmation. And that actually, oh yeah, that's her. I don't think she's at this service.

But she was one of them 12 years ago. And about Nofo, L-O-T-E-S, he taught the men's, a good friend of mine, and about six other people, my aunt, all out of the blue within the same four or five days. Have you ever thought about being a pastor? I'm like, yeah.

They just asked me that last week. And then she'll just, God, confirm me, confirm me, confirm me, confirm me. Because I was like, there's no way I'm doing that.

That's for like, you know, that's just, because I came from a construction background, hardworking, drinking beer, fighting. I'm like, I'm not going to be a, that's wimpy. That's, you know, wear the glasses.

And they're like, let's see what God's Word says, chill. Yeah, that's not for me, that's not for me. And then people, but God keep confirming it, keep confirming it, keep confirming it.

And then I realized, okay, I don't have to be wimpy. That's good. I can just be bold and see what God's Word says, be like a watchman.

And so you don't have to, you know, so don't tell anybody, let's edit that part out. But, but I was fighting that because you have all, you know, you have picture, you know, certain visions of something you don't want to be. It's kind of like humbling, I guess.

But it's funny, because when people used to make fun of blue collar workers, you know, it never bothered me because I love hard work. I think it's manly. I think it's actually more manly than pedicures and sitting at a desk.

So I didn't, that didn't bother me. And, you know, a lot of those, where those terms come from, like a redneck, that's actually comes from out in the sun. Your neck is really wet, wet, red.

Or I would get really sweaty, and that's where the term like a wet back, you know, that's where it comes from. It's hard work. And so these aren't derogatory terms to me.

It comes from hard work, and it comes from working hard and letting God, you know, build you. So I just, I never, that stuff never bothered me. So when I felt He was calling me to do this, it's like, ah, that's a little wimpy.

And so it took, I didn't want to do it. It took a lot of confirmation from other people to do that. And so God will give you confirmation and give you a sign.

So to recap briefly, confirmation must be supported by obedience. You're obeying God's Word. You're wanting to walk in God's Word.

You're using wisdom. You're praying, you're prayed up. You're waiting on God.

You're seeking godly counsel. We'll talk about that next week. And there's scriptural support for what you're doing.

I believe it's okay to say, Lord, all this lines up. Help. Is this you? Help.

For example, many people have asked, are we ever going to plant another church? Or what, I'm like, Lord, I need a little help. You show us. You show us what that looks like.

Because I can go find a building. I still have a background in real estate. I can find a building in Lancaster, East Lancaster, and I can find a building, I can negotiate with the landlord on 10 improvements and cam and common maintenance charges.

And I can really, you know, I can negotiate. But that's me forcing a door open. Not just God opening a door.

And so that's what we wait on God and we ask Him for confirmation. I think He loves, I mean, I don't want to put words in God's mouth, of course, but I think it's something He would want to show His children. Here's the right path.

Here's the right path. You're on it. Here it is.

Here's a confirmation that you're in my will, that I love what you're doing, that you have my support. I don't see there's anything wrong with that. We get that a lot throughout Scripture.

But something I came across, I also want to share with you. Do you know that God desires that all sinners should be saved? I want to just give you this closing thought. God's will, God's desires, God desires that all sinners be saved.

And I know there's theological debates on both sides, whether you're Calvinism or Nemeanism, whatever it is, total depravity, free will. The bottom line is I just read Scripture. And God's will is that you be holy, you be set apart for Him, that all come to the saving faith.

His will is that. And the reason I bring this up is people ask me, well, how do I know if it's God's will for me to be saved? How do I know if I'm one of the chosen? How do I know if I'm one of the elect? Well, repent and find out. His will is that none should perish.

And to get serious here, I use the King James on the last three, because I like the wording of that. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord might be saved. So to me, whosoever is whosoever.

So the problem isn't with God, the problem is with the person. Whosoever. Whosoever, what does call upon the name of the Lord? Their heart breaks.

They repent of their sin. They repent of their disobedience to God. They own it and they say, God, I am a sinner.

I call out to You are my only hope. The cross of Jesus Christ that bridged that gap and then saved me. Lord, I repent and I need that gift of salvation.

They call upon the name of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. And the Spirit and the bride say, come.

And let him that heareth say, come. And I love this part. And let him that is basically thirsty, a thirst.

Let him who is thirsty come and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. That's what Jesus said. Come to me all who are weak and heavy laden.

I will give you rest. Whoever comes to me out of their belly shall flow rivers of living water. If you drink, if you want righteousness, you desire, you hunger and thirst for righteousness, you will be filled.

And that call goes out to everyone. We can even tell California or the United States with this recent decision and all this chaos, if you thirst for the one true and living God, come to Him. He will not turn you away.

All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And you have heaven before you. You have heaven before you and the grave behind you.

And so, of course, I never want to leave this morning without letting you know that there is a God who loves you. There is a God who died for you. I don't understand everything, but I don't want to go to hell over a mystery.

I don't want to not know God because I'm bitter about Him. Or I don't understand everything He does. And to truly know His will, to know His heart, you just have to repent and believe.

And even if that's a hard point, ask, Lord, show me who You really are. Give me confirmation. Lord, I want to believe, I want to trust, but I have doubts.

Lord, would You show me and He will.

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