

I want to be led by the Spirit.

The contexts of “Spirit-leading” are specific.

The Spirit’s work of leading is mentioned in two passages (Galatians 5:18; Romans 8:14).

- I. The leading of the Spirit relates to “walking” by the Spirit.
  - A. Galatians addresses the false teaching that the believer can live the Christian life and mature by means of law.
    1. They did not receive the Spirit by law works (Galatians 3:2, 5).
    2. They received the Spirit by hearing consisting of faith (Galatians 3:2, 5).
    3. They were mindless (foolish) to think that what the Spirit began they could finish or come to maturity by flesh (Galatians 3:3).
      - The comparison indicates that maturing by flesh involved using law.
    4. They had been given the Spirit in their hearts (Galatians 4:6). Paul illustrates freedom by referring to Jews who had lived under law but are now New Testament believers.
      - a) Jewish believers had been no different than slaves when they were under the law (vv. 1-3; cf 3:23-24).
      - b) Jewish believers had been bought out from under law in order to be placed as sons, as opposed to infants living like slaves (vv. 4-5).
      - c) Jewish believers experienced the Spirit crying, “Daddy, Father” identifying a relationship which a slave never enjoyed (v. 6).
      - d) Jewish believers are no longer slaves but sons (v. 7).
    5. They had been freed by Christ (Galatians 5:1).
      - a) The believer’s freedom exists in Christ (Galatians 2:4).
      - b) The believer’s freedom is for the purpose of serving believers (Galatians 5:13).
      - c) The Galatian believers were in danger of misusing their freedom for their flesh (Galatians 5:13a, 15).
      - d) The believers were to “**walk**” by the Spirit so they would not bring the flesh’s cravings (lusts) to completion (Galatians 5:16).
        - (1) The flesh and Spirit oppose each (v. 17).
        - (2) The flesh and Spirit each have cravings (v. 17).
      - e) The believers who are led by the Spirit are not under law (Galatians 5:18).
        - (1) The Galatians did not need to turn to law as the guide or standard for their lives, even to address the flesh.
        - (2) The Galatians did not need to obey the flesh/sin nature.
        - (3) The Galatians could be led by the Spirit.
          - (a) This ties to “walk” in verse 16.
          - (b) “Walking” means they are following the Spirit’s lead.
    - B. Romans explains how believers can become stable in their Christian lives (Romans 1:11).
      1. The struggle with one’s sin nature becomes the greatest hindrance to stability.
        - a) The sin nature entered into the world through Adam (Romans 5:12).
        - b) The sin nature reigned by means of spiritual death (Romans 5:21).
        - c) The believer can experience liberation from his or her sin nature by relating to one’s position in Christ (Romans 6:11).
          - (1) The believer was placed into Christ’s death (v. 2-3).
          - (2) The believer was buried with Christ (v. 4a).
          - (3) The believer has the potential to walk in newness of life (v. 4b).
          - (4) The believer is to logically count who he/she is in one’s position in Christ: dead to the sin nature, living to God in Christ (v. 11).

- d) The believer will not experience liberation from the sin nature by attempting to live/follow/obey law (Romans 7).
  - (1) The law was a channel for the sin nature in the believer (v. 5).
  - (2) The law made the sin nature known (v. 7).
  - (3) The commandment made the sin nature excessively sinful and plainly visible (vv. 7-8, 13). It wasn't given to give freedom from the sin nature.
- e) The believer will experience miserable frustration if her or she tries to live by law, because of the sin nature and the law's inability to give freedom (Romans 7:22-24). This misery does not produce stability but uncertainty.
- 2. The Spirit does what the individual and the law cannot do (Romans 8:2).
  - a) "Law" in verse two is "the principle" by which the Spirit works.
  - b) The principle by which the Spirit works involves the believer's life in Christ Jesus, i.e. his position. The believer must relate to his life in Christ Jesus. This agrees with Romans 6:23, one lives out eternal life by operating in Christ Jesus. This parallels the Vine and branches illustration, "Abide in Me (Christ) and I abide in you" (John 15:1-7).
  - c) The Spirit wants him to relate to who he is in Christ, to his life in Christ.
- C. Walking by the spirit involves how one uses his or her mind (Romans 8:4).
  - 1. "Mind" in Romans 8:5 is the verb *phroneō* and emphasizes the frame of one's mind, restricting of the mind, or "fencing/corralling" in one's mind with a specific truth or set of truths.
  - 2. "Of the flesh" and "of the spirit" indicate the two opposing sources of "things" or thoughts with which one might fence in his or her mind.
  - 3. To walk by the Spirit means to frame one's mind with those things (thoughts/truths) from the Spirit, and we know in this context that the Spirit wants him or her to relate to his or her life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2).
  - 4. One is not obligated to live according to the flesh (Romans 8:12). Despite the flesh's persistence as demonstrated in chapter seven, one doesn't have to obey it.
  - 5. One can put the practices of the body to death by the Spirit (Romans 8:13).
    - a) Paul already told believers to count themselves dead to the sin nature but living to God in Christ (Romans 6:11).
    - b) Paul told the Galatians to "walk by the spirit" and they would not fulfill the lusts from the flesh (Galatians 5:17).
    - c) Paul explained that walking by the Spirit involved restricting your mind to a specific truth/s, in this case, your life in Christ: your death with Him and your living status with God with Him.
    - d) Paul, therefore, is talking about the same truth with slightly different terminology in both letters.
  - 6. All who are being led by the Spirit, are sons of God (Romans 8:14).
    - a) Like Galatians 5, Paul told his readers to "walk" according to the Spirit.
    - b) Like Galatians, being led by the Spirit is directly related to walking by the Spirit.
    - c) Walking by the Spirit in both passages involves following the Spirit's lead regarding one's life in Christ. The Spirit leads one to frame his or her mind with the truth of who he or she is in Christ.
    - d) In Galatians, the one being led by the Spirit is not under law.
    - e) In Romans, the one being led by the Spirit is a son.
      - (1) The Spirit does not enslave the believer (Romans 8:15).
      - (2) The Spirit places (adoption) the believer as a son (Romans 8:15).
      - (3) The Spirit causes the believer to cry out, "Daddy, Father" (Romans 8:15).

- (a) A slave does not refer to his master as “Daddy” or “Father.”
  - (b) A son is privileged with recognizing His Father and to having an intimate relationship with the Father-”Daddy.”
  - (4) The Spirit does not lead the believer to law as the guide for his life, that would be slavery.
    - (a) All New Testament believers are son in Christ (Galatians 3:26).
    - (b) Jews who became New Testament believers were no different than slaves while under the law (Galatians 4:1-3).
    - (c) Jews who became New Testament believers had to be bought out from under the law so they could be placed as sons (Galatians 4:5).
    - (d) All New Testament believers are sons not slaves (Galatians 4:7).
  - (5) The Spirit leads the believer to his or her position of freedom in Christ.
    - (a) The believer is freed from the sin nature.
    - (b) The believer is freed from law.
- II. The leading of the Spirit and walking by the Spirit involve freedom.
- A. Both result in experiential freedom from the sin nature/flesh. (see above notes)
  - B. Both involve freedom from law.
    - 1. He who is led by the Spirit is not under law (Galatians 5:18).
      - a) Law is anartharous (has no article).
      - b) Law, therefore, refers to anything viewed as law. e.g., when Gentiles do things which are like the law, even though they do not have law, these law things are a kind of law (Romans 2:14).
    - 2. Those who are led by the Spirit are sons (Romans 8:14-15).
      - a) Paul means practical sonship, i.e. living consistent with one’s position in Christ.
      - b) The Spirit is not characterized by slavery (to either law or the sin nature).
      - c) Where the Spirit who is Lord is present, freedom is present (2 Corinthians 3:17).
      - d) The law demonstrated slavery to the sin nature by inciting the sin nature, therefore, if the Spirit is not characterized by slavery, He cannot lead to law because that would result in slavery.
  - C. Law is not a guide for living.
    - 1. The law is good if one uses it appropriately (1 Timothy 1:7-8).
      - a) It is for unrighteous individuals (v. 7).
      - b) It can still demonstrate the presence of the sin nature.
    - 2. The law is not for the New Testament believer.
      - a) It could demonstrate our sin nature.
      - b) It cannot free us from that sin nature.
- III. Conclusion
- A. The Spirit’s leading is related to walking by the Spirit.
  - B. The Spirit’s leading is to the individual’s position in Christ.
  - C. The Spirit’s leading is not primarily about discovering God’s will.

So, does the leading of the Spirit have a relationship to knowing and doing God's will?

- I. Some things the leading of the Spirit is not.
  - A. It isn't "peace in my heart" which really means, "I **feel** comfortable with my decision, whereas the other decision gave me butterflies."
    1. God's will for you may involve an activity which does not leave you "comfortable."
    2. God's will may put you in an "awkward" or painful situation.
      - a) All who wish to live godly, will suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12).
      - b) It is necessary that we enter the kingdom of God through adversity (Acts 14:22).
  - B. It isn't the Spirit supernaturally guiding.
    1. The Spirit spoke regarding the apostolic trip of Saul and Barnabas (Acts 13:1-2).
    2. The Spirit twice forbid Paul and his companions from ministering in regions they had attempted to enter (Acts 16:6-7).
    3. The Spirit does not continue this type of work today. It is not in the scope of this study to demonstrate this, but this work ended when the apostolic era ended.
  - C. It doesn't involve "mysterious **feelings**" that this is **right**. This is highly subjective, and often rests on what we want and what we don't want.
- II. The leading of the Spirit involves truths revealed in God's Word. The Spirit leads your mind to consider and frame your mind with these. The Spirit's leading is the basis for these. Following are some examples of how to evaluate God's will in light of these.
  - A. The word of God acts as a judge between our soul and spirit (Hebrews 4:12).
    1. It acts as judge of those things about which believers become excited.
    2. It acts as judge of those things which believers intend to do.
    3. The Hebrews were planning on withdrawing from assemblies in response to hardship. This would be contrary to God's will (Hebrews 10:23-25).
  - B. You are to present your body and be transformed (Romans 12:1-2).
    1. This presentation is part of your priestly service (v. 1).
      - a) It is a sacrifice. Almost all the other priestly sacrifices hang on this one.
      - b) It is a presentation done with the intention of permanence. You don't present it to God for ten minutes, the next hour, but intend to never remove it.
      - c) It is a priestly work toward God - *latreia* [λατρεία cp λειτουργεω-people work].
        - (1) *Latreia* is God-ward service.
        - (2) *Latreia* is done by the Spirit of God (Philippians 3:3).
    2. This transformation is accomplished by the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17-18).
      - a) He brings freedom (v. 17). In the context this is freedom from law (vv. 7-8).
      - b) He transforms us so that we reflect Christ (v. 18).
    3. This transformation involves using the renewedness of your mind (Romans 12:2).
      - a) This renewedness is a result of the Spirit's work (Titus 3:5).
      - b) This renewedness continues day to day in our inner man (2 Corinthians 4:16).
    4. This presentation and transformation heads a list on God's will (Romans 12-15).
 

Following each statement is a question or comment relating to God's will.

      - a) You should be mindful of the body and use your gift (vv. 3-8). Do your aspirations get in the way of taking time to serve others saints?
      - b) You should have unhypocritical love (v. 9). Are we to love other believers or pursue our own goals at their expense (cf. 1 John 3:16-18)?
      - c) You should<sup>1</sup> stand apart from spreading evil - age conformity (v. 9). Are we to determine "God's will" based on legal principles?

<sup>1</sup> Most of this following list in chapter twelve consists of participles, not imperatives. I am translating these as appeals to the appropriate character which results from the presented body.

- d) You should cleave to the good - pursuing the well-being of others (v. 9). Are we to do what is beneficial for other saints or pursue our own well-being?
- e) You should be one having a family (God's family) love by being fond of other saints (v. 10). Are we to be kind to them or ourselves?
- f) You are to prefer (lead your mind) one another by honor (valuing) them (v. 10). Do you put them ahead of yourself and your goals?
- g) You are not to be hesitant (slow) in being diligent (v. 11). Are you slow to get to the service and opportunities God has put in front of you?
- h) You are to be zesty/boiling by the Spirit (v. 11). Do you allow the Holy Spirit to make you excited to get to the opportunities He's given to you?
- i) You are to be slaving to the Lord (v. 11). Are you recognizing the Lord's right to be in charge of your life and decisions or are you your own lord?
- j) You are to be rejoicing in the hope (v. 12).
  - (1) Your hope is God's glory and final salvation with it's freedom (5:2; 8:20, 24).
  - (2) Your hope is that God will finish in all of us what He started.
- k) You are to be patient in the adversity (v. 12).
  - (1) This adversity and patience is to work us towards the glory (5:2-4).
  - (2) Avoiding or running from adversity is not best for you or others.
- l) You are to hold fast in the worship (v. 12).
  - (1) You need to remember God's identity and work.
  - (2) You need to reflect that in how you interact with other believers.
- m) You are to fellowship in the needs of the saints (v. 13). Will you share to address their needs even at the expense of your goals?
- n) You are to pursue hospitality (v. 13). Will you welcome other saints into your home without regard to your cost? Implies you are involved in a church.
- o) You are to say goods things to others (v. 14).
  - (1) You do this even for those who persecute you.
  - (2) You do this instead of cursing them.
- p) You share appropriately with others saints (v. 15).
  - (1) You rejoice with those rejoicing. Sometimes easy, unless your life is down.
  - (2) You weep with those weeping. Uncomfortable and not a positive.
- q) You are to have the same frame of mind (attitude) to one another (v. 16).
  - (1) You don't adopt a high attitude, "I'm above them."
  - (2) You lead your mind together in the low things.
  - (3) You do not make yourself the framework of your mind. It should be things in Christ (cf. Colossians 3:1-2).
  - (4) You consider carefully how to respond to the attitudes and actions of others (in the context these a primarily believers) (vv. 17-21).
- r) You are to submit to the government over you (Romans 13:1-10).
  - (1) Your motivation for obeying secular law systems can be love for other believers (v. 10). How many Christians think it is God's will to fight the secular government or to at least oppose it?
  - (2) Your actions should reflect being awake and alert rather than acting like we are part of the world (vv. 11-14). How many Christians are sleeping by living no different than the world and its own frustrations.
- s) You are to take to yourself those weak in the flesh (Romans 14).
  - (1) They struggle because they do not know all God's promises.
  - (2) They place confines upon you because of their immaturity and weakness. Have you forgotten how long it took you to grow through these issues?

- (a) You should let God stabilize them (16:25ff).
  - (b) You should teach the truths God uses to stabilize them (16:25f).
- C. You are a kind of new creation as part of the new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).
  - 1. This will affect the way you look at fellow believers (5:16).
  - 2. This requires you to recognize that God reconciled you to Himself (5:18-20).
  - 3. This may require in a plead to be reconciled to God (5:20).
    - a) “Reconcile” means to be changed.
    - b) If you are not looking at your brother as part of that new creation, you are not acknowledging the change God has affected.
    - c) If you are at odds with your brother, practically you are at odds with God.
    - d) The verb “be reconciled” is an Active voice, “you be...” while it is passive in other texts, because those texts view God’s work.
  - 4. This requires you to recognize your righteous position (5:21).
  - 5. This requires you to not receive God’s grace in vain (without content; 6:1).
    - a) The manner in which you live says something about God’s grace.
    - b) Today is the day of salvation, for God’s grace to be saving to you (6:2).
    - c) Today is an appropriate time to not stumble your brothers (6:3).
  - 6. The Point: How you live with fellow believers should reflect the new creation and your reconciled, righteous status in Christ. Therefore, a decision regarding God’s will that does match this will not result in your doing God’s will.
- D. You have a position in Christ shared with all other grace believers (Ephesians).
  - 1. You are alive together in Christ (2:4).
  - 2. You are raised together in Christ (2:6).
  - 3. You are seated together in Christ (2:6).
  - 4. You were created for good works (2:10). These will primarily be to the body.
  - 5. You were either Jew or Gentile but are now made one (2:14).
  - 6. You are part of the one new man-the Christ (2:15).
  - 7. You have been reconciled (changed) in one body (2:16).
  - 8. You both (those of Jewish or Gentile background) have access through Christ (2:18).
  - 9. You are a joint-citizen with all other grace believers (2:19).
  - 10. You are harmoniously joined to all other grace believers in Christ (2:21).
  - 11. You are jointly built with all other grace believers into a temple of God (2:22).
  - 12. You are a joint-heir, joint part of the body, and a joint-partaker (3:6).
  - 13. The Point: Your position in Christ is a shared position, and whatever might make you different in the world (background, race, culture, sex) has been eliminated in Christ. So, how should you get along with others? Would you move because your neighborhood has become the “wrong” neighborhood? Because the town changed? Because the “makeup” of your assembly has changed?
- E. You have been made fullness in Him (Colossians 2:10).
  - 1. Nothing in the world-its rules or philosophy-can enhance your spiritual life.
  - 2. You watch out for logical and plausible arguments used to mislead us (2:4).
  - 3. You don’t be carried away as spoils of war through philosophy, human traditions, elements of the world, which will only steer you away from Christ (2:8).
    - a) Remember who Christ is for you (1:27-28).
    - b) Remember who you are in Him (2:10).
  - 4. The Point: Be cautious in pursuing education, especially Christian education, that it is built on the proper foundation, not upon the world’s things. Be cautious in how you present truth; keep it Biblical and focused on what Scripture says about Christ, not on philosophy and traditions.

- F. You have died with Christ (Colossians 2:11-12, 20).
1. You are in Christ where the dogmas have been wiped out by Christ's cross (2:14).
    - a) Dogmas are rules based upon an opinion as opposed to an innate right or wrong.
  2. You should not allow someone to rule against your activity, because you don't meet their misapplied Old Testament standard or a non-biblical standard (2:16-19).
  3. You are not under the basic principles of the world system (2:20).
  4. You should not submit to its dogmas: don't touch, don't taste, don't handle (2:21).
  5. The Point: When you determine God's will, you do not do so based upon legal or world system rules/principles as a measure of your or another's life.
- G. You are light in the Lord, so walk as children of light (Ephesians 5:8).
1. Watch that you don't share in the unfruitful works of darkness (5:10).
  2. Watch that you don't talk about those same works (5:12).
  3. Your life should act as a reproving light (5:13).
  4. The Point: Does your life say something different, or do you operate just like the world? Not all they do is immoral, but all they do arises from their own selfish ambition, and you might involve ourselves with them in their "neutral" works. You sometimes make decisions regarding God's will because you like to fit in and don't wish to be different from the world.
- H. You are to be united with your fellow believers (Philippians 1:27).
1. You should stand in one spirit (1:27). You "know" the same.
  2. You can work together as a team in one soul (1:27). You can "feel" the same.
  3. You can contribute to this unity.
    - a) Direct others to encouragement in Christ for the spirit (2:1).
    - b) Soothe others from love for the soul (2:1). Guard against being gruff.
    - c) Focus on sharing together regarding the Spirit for the spirit (2:1).
    - d) Exercise compassion and tenderness for the soul (2:1).
    - e) Frame your minds with the same thing for the spirit (2:2).
    - f) Have the same love for the soul (don't play favorites) (2:2).
    - g) Become ones of united soul (2:2).
    - h) Have one thing with which you frame your mind (2:2).
    - i) All these are to develop and maintain an attitude of united service.
  4. The Point: As a church you can and should be united not only around truth but even in the care and concern for one another's feelings. Watch for running roughshod over fellow saints. Callousness does not engender unity in service.
- I. You can be made strong in the one strengthening you (Philippians 4:13).
1. This strength is inner strength, not physical power (cf. Ephesians 3:13).
  2. This strength is in the one Strengthening me - In Christ but by the Spirit.
  3. This strength makes contentment possible (4:11-12).
    - a) He was content when humble and lacking-hungry (v. 12).
    - b) He was content when abounding and being filled (v. 12).
  4. The Point: If you are discontent, and you make decisions regarding God's will because you are discontent (not rejoicing and ungrateful) in your present circumstances, you need to begin relating to your position in Christ and count on the promise that the Spirit will strengthen you to be content. Consider how many run all over the country seeking the next great thing to fulfill them.
- J. God will fill full all your needs by the standard of His riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).
1. The Philippians' need was not material, though they were poor.
  2. The Philippians' need was to frame their minds on the same truth.

3. The Philippians' need was to rejoice in the Lord (2:18; 3:1; 4:4).
  4. The Philippians' need was to work together (3:1; 1:27; 4:3). It appears that some found it irksome or tedious to keep reminding others.
  5. The Philippians' need would be met in Christ Jesus as they related to God's generous provisions (4:19).
  6. The Point: While you are tempted to focus upon material needs, you sometimes or often have the need of rejoicing together and working together and that can only be accomplished as you work in Christ. How often do you make decisions regarding the will of God because you can't work together with other believers.
- K. God's peace will guard our hearts and the results of your minds (conclusions) in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).
1. The Philippians needed to stop worrying (4:6).
    - a) They may have been worrying about how these conflicts would be resolved.
    - b) They may have been worrying about whether they would have to continue urging others to think and feel the same and to rejoice in the Lord.
  2. The Philippians needed to talk to God about these worries (4:6).
    - a) They were to worship (pray).
    - b) They were to supplicate (ask with some unknown variable).
    - c) They were to thank God.
    - d) They were to ask specifically.
  3. The Philippians needed to experience God's peace (4:7).
    - a) God's peace would cover over their hearts (where people make decisions).
    - b) God's peace would cover over the conclusions of their minds.
  4. The Point: Rather than worrying about a situation in which you cannot make others make the right choice, you can talk to God and God will provide them peace in Christ so that you do not make bad choices or draw improper conclusions.
- L. Paul did not teach for monetary or material pay (2 Corinthians 2:17).
1. He taught from sincerity; he wanted the best for other believers.
  2. He didn't teach so as not to offend other believers so they would stay and pay him.
  3. He spoke as one before God in Christ. Whenever he opened his mouth, he related to his position in Christ and remembered that God was part of his audience.
  4. The Point: You should, when teaching, present the Word as one standing before God in Christ. You are not there to please the people but God.
- M. This present dispensation is in God's grace by faith and ends in love (1 Timothy 1:4-5).
1. You need to pay attention to this dispensation which is by faith (v. 4).
  2. You need to know that the purpose of living in this dispensation is love (v. 5).
    - a) It is to be love from a clean heart; know how to have freedom from sin.
    - b) It is to be love from a good conscience; know it **and live it**.
    - c) It is to be love from an unhypocritical faith; faith acts and isn't selfish.
  3. You need to recognize that some would rather be law-teachers (vv. 6-7).
    - a) They do not know what they are affirming (v. 7).
      - (1) They do not understand law (v. 7).
      - (2) They do not understand what is healthy doctrine (v. 10).
    - b) They do not know that healthy doctrine not intended for our conduct, is measured by the standard of the good news regarding the reputation of the happy God (v. 11). Law-teachers do not emphasize this aspect of God's character, because it is not conducive to their goals of character-change.
    - c) They cause shipwreck to the Faith (v. 19).
      - (1) This involves the same charge begun in verse four (v. 18).

- (a) It involves faith (v. 19).
- (b) It involves a good conscience (v. 19).
- (2) This involved blasphemy (v. 20).
  - (a) They were teaching that God still wanted believers to live by law.
  - (b) They were turning from the plain instructions for living by faith.
- (3) This involves not living by faith and not focusing in God's promises to us as New Testament believers.
- (4) This is related to the matter addressed in 6:5.
- 4. The Point: You will not be in God's will if you choose to live by law, and you cannot live by law and live by faith. Some attempt to live by law thinking that they can then achieve God's will.
- N. Godliness is a source of great gain when combined with contentment (1 Timothy 6:6). This is closely related to the matter of law-teachers in chapter one.
  - 1. Some wished to live by the Law.
  - 2. Some supposed that godliness was a means of gain (v. 5).
    - a) They applied law principles to believers, and supposed that God would cause New Testament believers to be "rich" if they followed these principles.
    - b) These were/are mentally diseased when it comes to arguments (v. 4).
  - 3. You need to realize that God has real gain for believers- not material gain!
  - 4. The Point: No aspect of God's will today provides you the means of gaining material wealth, so don't make plans to get such gain.
- O. If you wish to live godly in Christ Jesus, you will suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12).
  - 1. Godliness involves attitudes and actions which honor God.
    - a) You honor God by living as He has prescribed. The Son did (cf 1 Timothy 3:16).
    - b) You honor God by living out the salvation which He has given to you: a new nature, eternal life, a new kind of mind.
    - c) You do not honor God by coming up with what you think or popular Christendom considers to be God-honoring.
  - 2. Godliness requires you to operate in Christ so that eternal life can be lived out in a plainly visible manner.
    - a) You must abide (be at ease) in Christ and He then will abide in you (John 15:5).
    - b) You can only use eternal life as you mentally operate in Christ (Romans 6:23).
  - 3. Godliness is not welcomed in the world (John 15:20-21).
    - a) They persecuted Jesus (15:20).
    - b) They will persecute Jesus' disciples (15:20).
    - c) They persecute because of His (Jesus') name (15:21). Name refers to His character, which involves His life made visible.
    - d) They persecute because His life stands in contrast to their sin (15:22).
  - 4. The Point: Be ready to suffer if you wish to live a life which honors God by living out what He has given you as part of you salvation. Do not make decisions in order to avoid persecution, because you would have to choose not to live godly.

The Spirit's leading is necessary to be in God's will. However, it is not subjective feelings but based on experiencing liberty and then relating to the Spirit's other works so as to be doing His express will and evaluating specific individual details regarding our lives in light of what He has told us. God's will isn't really complicated.

**What difference does it make if you live by law? Consequences of choosing to live by law.**

What does it hurt if a New Testament believer chooses to live by law? Isn't the law a moral standard? Doesn't it involve a righteousness and wasn't the Mosaic Law given by God? True. Yet Paul states that we are not under law but grace. He points out several consequences for one who lives by means of the law. Take heed, there is no work around for these.

The sin nature through means of the command took occasion deceived Paul and through it killed him (Romans 7:11). Why? Because, the law was given to increase the trespass which evidences the sin nature (Romans 5:20). In Christ you are dead to the sin nature and it is effectively dead. The Law incites it to make it visible (Romans 7:8, 13). Consequences: it will incite the sin nature. It will result in your flesh producing fruit which is death (Romans 7:5). Why would you want to stir the sin nature to action?

Law is the power of the sin nature (1 Corinthians 15:56). Do you want to empower the sin nature...it doesn't need your help.

Sin doesn't act as a lord over us because are not under law but under grace (Romans 6:14). Consequence: turning to the Law makes sin a lord/master over us.

The law is/was weak and unable to free us from the principle of the sin nature and the death (Romans 8:2-3). Consequence: you remain enslaved. This is more of Romans 6:14.

We have been rendered idle away from the Law, so we can serve in newness of spirit (Romans 7:6). Consequence: your service will not come from the proper source (your renewed spirit) nor will it arise from the proper motivation.

Law righteousness attempts to do what God alone has already done (Romans 10:4-5). Consequence: you're trying to do God's job? Good luck with that.

We are not justified from law works. "Justified" here is present tense salvation indicated by Aorist Passive Subjunctive verb meaning it is a potential (Galatians 2:16). To live by law is to rebuild and constitute yourself a transgressor (v. 18). You already died to it (v. 19). Do you want to rebuild it? Christ took it down. He removed the wall which divided Jewish and Gentile believers (Ephesians 2:14-15). Consequence: You're re-erecting what Christ removed.

You didn't start by law, you won't mature by it (Galatians 3:2-3). Consequence: you won't mature (see also Hebrews 7:19).

You are cursed if you don't do all of it (Galatians 3:10). No one does. Consequence: you're cursed.

Law isn't from faith (Galatians 3:11-12). Faith is the principle by which we operate today (1 Timothy 1:4; 2 Corinthians 5:7). Consequence: you can't live/operate by faith.

You are ineffective away from Christ and fallen from grace (Galatians 5:4). Consequence: you may be busy, but it isn't God's work.

The Spirit's leading does not lead to law but frees from the sin nature (Galatians 5:18). Consequence: since you are not following the Spirit's lead, you can't stop the sin nature.

Law righteousness is your own righteousness and not by faith (Philippians 3:9). Consequence: you will pursue and have the very kind of righteousness Paul considered loss.

Sometimes we find ourselves thinking we're good, that we can do it. However, we do not act righteously from God's perspective. We tend to slip into a law mentality, thinking that because we are righteous in keeping with a legal standard, we deserve some "blessing" or if we act unrighteously, we risk losing some "blessing." We might even receive a benefit and wonder what we did to deserve it, or if we suffer, we might wonder similarly what bad thing we did to deserve it. This is subtle legalism. We've slipped from grace into a law way of thinking.

How do you know God's will?

- I. God has revealed many aspects of His will for the believer in His Word.
  - A. He expressly states some activities and attitudes are His will.
    1. Is there a simple overview of God's will for me that reflects these three principles?  
This list involves matters which God specifically identifies as His will.
    2. Rejoice always (1 Thessalonians 5:16).
    3. Give thanks in everything (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
    4. Worship without ever think "I'm done worshipping" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).
    5. Present your body a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1).
    6. Be transformed (inside showing outwardly) by your renewed mind (Romans 12:2).
    7. Use your spiritual gift for the benefit of others saints (Romans 12:3-8).
    8. Give yourself to the service of other saints (2 Corinthians 8:5).
    9. Be set apart to God in your conduct (1 Thessalonians 4:3).
    10. Serve others as a slave (Ephesians 6:6, 7).
    11. Experientially know the riches of the glory of the Christ in you (Colossians 1:27).
    12. Ask for yourself and others according to God's will (1 John 5:15; John 15:7-8).
    13. Make good use of the time (Ephesians 5:17).
    14. Be filled by the Spirit (Ephesians 5:17-18). This filling is so you might live as a member of the body of Christ-the fullness (cf. Ephesians 1:21-22).
    15. Love the Father by loving the family (1 John 2:15-17; 4:21).
  - B. He tells us to do many things, and therefore, these too are His will.
    1. Some activities are always appropriate. (This is a sample as the number is large)
      - a) We are people charged to love fellow believers in the manner Christ loved us (John 13:34), so we lay down our lives for them (1 John 3:16-18).
      - b) We are people who live by grace not law (Romans 6:14).
      - c) We are people who live by faith not law (2 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 3:11-12).
      - d) We are to walk worthy of our calling from God (Ephesians 4:1).
      - e) Do good to all, but especially believers (Galatians 6:10).
    2. Some activities are appropriate to the specific circumstances.
      - a) Bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2). - You must see a burdened believer.
      - b) Do all things without grumbling or disputing (Philippians 2:14). If you are serving and grumbling and/or disputing you should apply this.
- II. To do God's will, we must apply truth to our given situations. Following are some examples.
  - A. **Contentment:** Philippians 4:11-13-Paul learned to be content in any situation.
    1. 2 Corinthians 12:9 God's grace is sufficient, it is enough
    2. 1 Timothy 6:8 - food and covering is enough
    3. Hebrews 13:5 - the present things are enough
    4. Is your interest in God's will a result of discontent and wishing/wanting something else?
  - B. **Can you rejoice in your present situation?** Joy is the ability to appreciate God's purpose, even if the situation does not cause happiness. Rejoicing always is God's will (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).
  - C. **Are you worshipping (praying) God?** Are you so focused on the decision and circumstances that you have forgotten to focus upon God? Worshipping without concluding is God's will (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).

- D. Are you thankful in all things?** Thankfulness is the recognition that God's grace is good. Thankfulness is a result of the Spirit's filling and is God's will (Ephesians 5:18-19; 1 Thessalonians 5:18).
1. If any of these are not true, you are already out of God's revealed will and are in no shape to make a decision about other matters of life.
  2. Why would God give you something new when you can't even rejoice where He has you, while you do not focus on Him, while you are ungrateful for God's gracious work in the present?
- E. Are you serving others in the body of Christ:** presenting your body a living sacrifice, ministering your gift for their benefit, serving them as though you were a slave?
1. Will your decision prevent you from doing this by consuming too much of your time, by taking you someplace where you cannot serve (no believers)?
  2. Are you evaluating a decision without any regard to serving other believers?
- F. Are you loving other believers as Christ loves us? This may involve making good use of your time.**
1. Will your decision prevent you from the time to love other saints?
  2. Will your decision allocate your resources so they are not available to address others' needs?
  3. Is your decision a result of loving the world or its things rather than loving the Father and others?
- G. Is/are your choice/s affected by plain statements in God's Word? (samples)**
1. You are free to marry in the Lord, i.e. another believer (1 Corinthians 7:39). -Are you more interested in being married than in doing God's will?
  2. Your ministry activities are not to be done in union with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14-17). -Are you more concerned with accomplishing "something" than doing God's will?
  3. You are to talk to God not worry, to throw your worries and cares upon Him (Philippians 4:6,7; 1 Peter 5:7). -Are you making a decision out of worry or fear?