



LIGHTING THE FUTURE

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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Lighting the Future

SERMON REFERENCE: Proverbs 3:5-6

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2193

Man is a clever creature, but he has lost his way in the darkness. We live in a day of guided missiles and misguided men, which is a shame because God has cultivated wonderful plans for each of our lives.

Proverbs 3:5-6 explains, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

In order to shed some light on the future, we must first let God choose the way. Every step we take is to be in His plan and for His purpose.

It is difficult to trust in someone we don't know; we must know and love the Lord in order to trust and obey Him. We must receive God's wisdom rather than lean on our own understanding. When we search for God's wisdom and get serious about knowing His will, He promises that we will find it. When we have complete confidence in God, we will faithfully comply with His plans. Only then will we receive His faithful direction.

Second, we must let God confirm the way. God has promised to direct our paths, and He will do it through the Word of God.

Psalms 119:105 confirms, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” The Word of God reveals God's will concerning our salvation, the Holy Spirit, and sanctification. God often directs us through prayer; He speaks to our hearts directly as we pray to Him. He also guides through wisdom and directs us by His providence; He is the one who closes and opens doors.

Finally, we must let God clear the way. After we receive faithful direction from God, the Lord clears the path for us.

Adrian Rogers says, “God will go before you like a bulldozer, He will clear the way. God will open and no man will shut, and God will shut and no man will open. And God Himself will take away the obstacles that keep you from His will for your life.”

Life Application

Are you serious about knowing God's will for your life? Express your full dependence on Him and receive His faithful direction. Begin by knowing and trusting Him; then obey Him.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) One question that is asked perhaps more than any other is this:
 - i) How can I know the will of God for my life?
- b) Man is clever, but he has lost his way in the darkness.
 - i) Daniel 12:4
 - ii) We live in a day of guided missiles and misguided men.
- c) God has promised to guide us.
 - i) Isaiah 58:11
 - (1) As Christians we can say, "Day-by-day, moment-by-moment, Almighty God is guiding me."
 - ii) Psalm 32:8
 - (1) "Guiding with the eye" is a very intimate guidance.
- d) Ephesians 2:10
 - i) God has a plan for each of us that He has ordained.
 - (1) We have a Heavenly Father above us Who is in ultimate control.
 - (2) We have a Savior before us so that we can walk in His footsteps.
 - (3) We have the Holy Spirit within us impressing our hearts so that we can find a way in a dark, dark day.
- e) God doesn't deal with us in mass; He deals with us as individuals.
 - i) God makes no duplicates.
 - ii) Everything that God makes is an original.
 - iii) Psalm 37:23
 - (1) Every step we take is in His plan and His purpose.
 - (2) A plumber who has been called to be a plumber is more pleasing to God than a preacher who was not called to preach.
- f) The highest calling is to do the will of God, whether it is in business or in the home.
 - i) Leaving what God has planned for you to do something else is to take second-best.
 - ii) Isaiah 58:11
 - iii) Dr. Stephen Olford: "God's great plan is for us to find, to follow, and to finish the will of God in our lives."
- g) Proverbs 3:5-6
- h) There are three basic steps that we can follow in order to find God's will for our lives.

2) WE MUST LET GOD CHOOSE THE WAY

- a) How do we let God choose the way?
 - i) There must be a full confidence in God.
 - (1) Many of us do not trust God enough to let Him choose the way for us.
 - (2) Proverbs 3:5
 - (3) You cannot trust somebody that you do not know and you cannot know somebody that you do not spend time with.



- (a) When you trust somebody, it is because you spent time with them.
- (b) If they are trustworthy, you come to love them and you can trust them.
- (4) The reason that many of us do not trust the Lord intimately is because we do not really know Him intimately.
 - (a) We must trust in Him with our whole heart.
 - (b) In order to trust Him with all our heart, we have to know Him intimately.
- (5) Do not trust your own understanding.
 - (a) We take the Word of God and parade it past the judgment bar of human reasoning, our understanding, and we try to weigh it out to see if that is really best rather than just trust God.
 - (i) People do not tithe because they do not trust God.
 - 1. Malachi 3:10
 - a. If we believe this passage, we would tithe more.
 - (b) Proverbs 14:12
 - (i) Our minds do not lead us directly.
 - (c) Jeremiah 10:23
 - (i) It is not that we are not to have understanding, but the understanding is to come from the Lord.
 - (d) Proverbs 2:1-6
 - (i) God is not saying that we are not to have understanding, He is simply saying not to lean on our understanding.
 - (ii) Get into the Word of God and search for God's way, as you would search for silver and gold, and God says that you will find it.
 - (ii) There must be a faithful compliance to God.
 - (1) Proverbs 3:6
 - (2) We don't surrender to a plan; we surrender to God.
 - (a) God's plan for your life is not a roadmap; it is a relationship.
 - (3) We must acknowledge God in every situation: "Lord, what do You want me to do here?"
 - (4) Most people want to acknowledge God only in certain areas of life.
 - (a) They believe that they are only required to give a tenth of their income and a seventh of their time to God and that makes them a good Christian.
 - (b) This is wrong; it all belongs to God. All of your money and time come from God and belong to God.
 - (c) Do not segment your life into yours and His; it is all His.
 - (d) "Tis but one life, will soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last."
 - (i) Dr. Stephen Olford: "Anywhere, anytime, any cost."
 - 1. As Christians, we struggle with this because we do not fully trust God.

3) WE MUST LET GOD CONFIRM THE WAY

- a) It is one thing for God to choose the way; but it's another thing for God to confirm the way that He has chosen.
 - i) Many Christians say that they are willing to do God's will for them, but they do not know what it is.
- b) God guides us by His Word, the Bible.



- i) Psalm 119:105
 - ii) Many of us desire to know God's will for our lives, but we are not obeying the revealed will of God in the Bible.
 - (1) They want God to show them something else when it is plain what God wants in some areas and they have not done that.
 - iii) Three times in the Bible where it states specifically that this is the will of God:
 - (1) To be saved.
 - (a) 2 Peter 3:9
 - (b) It is God's will that everyone be saved.
 - (c) Have you given your heart to Christ?
 - (2) To be Spirit-filled.
 - (a) Ephesians 5:17-18
 - (b) Do not be unwise, but be understanding of what the will of God is.
 - (c) Do not be drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit.
 - (d) As a Christian, if you are not filled with the Spirit, you are out of the will of God.
 - (3) To be sanctified.
 - (a) 1 Thessalonians 4:3
 - (b) If we did just these three steps, the rest would be self-evident.
 - (i) "Abstain from fornication"
 - 1. Fornication: sex outside the sacred bonds of marriage.
 - (ii) God does not change His mind and His Word to satisfy your desires.
 - iv) God's will is what you would want for yourself if you had enough sense to want it.
 - (1) Psalm 84:11
- c) God guides us through prayer.
- i) Acts 1:24
 - ii) Prayer is a two-way street; it is not, "Listen Lord, Your servant speaks," but rather, "Speak Lord, Your servant listens."
 - (1) Do you have a quiet time in your prayer?
 - (a) This is a lost art of listening to God; when God will speak directly to your heart.
 - iii) Acts 8:29
 - (1) Story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch.
 - (2) God will impress our spirit with the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit speaks to us.
 - iv) Acts 13:2
 - (1) The Holy Spirit speaks.
- d) God guides us through the wisdom that He gives.
- i) James 1:5
 - ii) What is wisdom?
 - (1) Wisdom is not simply reading something in Scripture, although that is valid.
 - (2) Wisdom is not simply praying and letting the Holy Spirit impress our hearts, although that is valid.
 - (3) Wisdom is sanctified common sense.
 - (a) Using your own mind is not leaning on your own understanding if your mind is filled with the Spirit of God.
 - (i) Get your heart clean and your motive clear, search the Scriptures, pray, and then do what you think you ought to do.
 - (ii) Donald Gray Barnhouse: "90% of wisdom is found between the ears."



1. God gives wisdom.
- (4) Wisdom is not emotionalism.
 - (a) It is not getting wet eye lashes, a warm heart or liver shivers
- (5) Wisdom is sanctified common sense. It is seeing life from God's point of view.
 - (a) There are some things that we do not need to pray about because God gave us a mind and expects us to use it.
- (6) Romans 12:1
- e) God guides us providentially.
 - i) Revelation 3:7-8
 - (1) God will providentially open doors and shut doors and guide you.

4) WE MUST LET GOD CLEAR THE WAY

- a) God has to make a way for you; to clear the way.
- b) Proverbs 3:6
 - i) The Hebrew word for "direct" is "yashar" in "He will direct your paths", and has the idea of clearing obstacles.
 - ii) Isaiah 40:3-4
 - (1) Referring to the ministry of John the Baptist, the phrase, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord" is the same phrase that is used for, "Direct your paths".
 - (a) God will straighten the road, remove the mountains, straightens crooked roads, fill in the low places, and smooth out the rocky places.
 - (b) God will choose the way.
 - (c) God will confirm the way.
 - (d) God will clear the way; when you get in the will of God.
 - (e) God will open and no man will shut, and God will shut and no man will open.
 - (f) God Himself will take away the obstacles that keep you from His will for your life.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- b) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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I want you to find a familiar passage of Scripture. As a matter of fact, it may be your favorite passage of Scripture, Proverbs 3 verses 5 and 6. And we're going to revisit that passage of Scripture because it is so pertinent for this time of the year as we're thinking about the future, "Lighting the Future."

Did you know what question is asked more than any other question when people ask counselors and Bible teachers a Bible question? What do you think that question would be? What is the number one question? Do you know what the number one question is? How can I know the will of God for my life? That question, more than any other question, is asked: how can I know the will of God for my life? And that is a great question. That is a wonderful question. And it applies to Adrian. It applies to you. It applies to all of us.

Now man is a clever creature, but he has lost his way in the darkness. If you are fifty years old, you have attained at least fifty years, let me tell you what has happened in the last fifty years. Of course, the atom has been split, and man is now able to destroy himself and the environment with him. In the past fifty years, we've had the exploration of space. We've put up those first meager satellites, and now we have the space stations orbiting the Earth, and we sent probes to Venus and Mars and Jupiter, and beyond all of that. I mean, that's just in our lifetime.

We now, in our lifetime, in the last fifty years, have instant communication by radio and television, and we can watch news as it happens across the ocean, just in our lifetime. An amazing thing! Now we have the internet, and the information super highway, and some of our kids are becoming road kill on that information super highway, but we have instant communication. I was speaking in Neyland Stadium at a Promise Keepers rally in Knoxville. And I was on the platform, came from the platform and went right up to the speaker's place where the speakers were sitting. By the time I got back to my place I had received an e-mail from Australia, a person who had just heard me speak and was responding to my speaking. While I was speaking there on the platform, this man was listening and responded by e-mail. That's the information age in which we live.

And in our lifetime we've seen a cashless society that is coming, and it is coming on very, very strong. It is just around the corner. And that's just in the past fifty years. The automobile began in 1903, but we have now automobiles that can travel 600 miles an hour, we have airplanes that travel 2,000 miles an hour, spaceships 24,000 miles an hour, and we can get there quicker, but we still don't know where we're going. We have all of this that has happened in our lifetime. And the Bible says in Daniel 12:4, "In the last days knowledge shall increase." And that has happened in our lifetimes; I mean, if you're just fifty years of age. But we live in a day of guided missiles and misguided men. We have lost our way in the darkness. And that is a pity, and that is a shame, for God has promised to guide us.

Now I want to give you some verses and I want you to listen to these. Before we get into our text that I'm going to read in a moment, but this is just to set the stage for the text, Proverbs 3 verses 5 and 6. We'll read that in a moment, but listen to these Scriptures that tell us that God wants to guide us. In Isaiah chapter 58 and verse 11, "And the Lord shall guide thee continually." Is that not a great promise? How would you like to say, "Day-by-day, moment-by-moment, Almighty God is guiding me?" That is what he says. "The Lord shall guide thee continually." Now either that is true or it is not true.



Let me give you another verse, Psalm 32 and verse 8, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with My eye." Do you know what guiding with the eye is? Boy, that's the most intimate guidance. Have you ever been with your wife in a restaurant, start a conversation, and she looks at you and you shut your mouth? She says, "Don't go there. Just be quiet." I can guide my kids with my eye. When they were little, they'd be sitting on the front row and I'd be preaching away. Nobody else would know it, but I'd look at them and say, "You're going to get it when you get home," and then just go right on. That is guidance with the eye. That is the most intimate kind of knowledge that God wants to guide us that way, that He can guide us with His eye.

Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 10, the Bible says there, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which He hath before ordained that we should walk in them." That is, that God created us for a plan, the good works that He has before ordained. That is, He's laid out a plan for us. He wants to guide us. And we are so blessed. There is a Father above us controlling all things. There's a Savior before us so we can walk in His footsteps. And there's the Holy Spirit within us impressing our hearts so that we can find a way in a dark, dark day.

I want to say something else. That God has a special plan just for you. Now God doesn't deal with us en masse; He deals with us as individuals. God makes no duplicates. Everything that God makes is an original. Just like every snowflake has its own specific pattern, God made you as an individual, and God has a plan just for you. And the Bible says in Psalm 37 verse 23, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." Is that not incredible? "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." Every step you take is to be in His plan and in His purpose.

And you say, "Well, that's true for those like you, Pastor Rogers, that God has called into His service." No, listen to me, it is true for you. The same plan that is true for the preacher is true for the plumber. The same plan that is true for the missionary is true for the secretary. God has a plan for every individual life. Now God called me to preach; but, you see, a plumber who is being a plumber in the name of Jesus is more pleasing to God than a preacher who's not been called to preach. You have to understand that.

You see, it's not that some things are higher than others. Do you know the highest place? The will of God. The will of God, whether it's in business, whether you're a homemaker, or, you know, whatever you are. The will of God is the highest place. Now, to preach when you've been called to do something else would be to take second best. But, on the other hand, if you have been called to preach, and I have, you'd have to step down to be the President of the United States because that is God's plan for you. God has a plan for your life. Do you believe it? Say, Amen. Amen. Now I want you to believe this. Now don't let this just blow past. God loves you. God has a plan for you. God says, "I will guide you continually. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord."

Now, God deals with us as individuals. Dr. Stephen Olford, said that, "God's great plan is for us to find, to follow, and to finish the will of God for our lives." That's what it is. So let's talk a little bit about how to light the future.

Now go to the text that you turned to there in Proverbs chapter 3 verses 5 and 6. It says this, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him," now listen, "in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths." Now that's God's Word. I submit to you it's either true or false. I believe it's true. You believe it's true. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will," He will, He will, He will, He will, I promise He will, "direct thy paths."



Now, let's just break that down and look at it, and there're three basic things I want you to see in that text that you and I are to do. First of all, **we must let God choose the way**. Now we do that two ways. How do we let God choose the way? Well, **there must be a full confidence in God**. Many of us don't trust the Lord enough to let Him guide us. Notice in Proverbs 3 verse 5, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." Now I'm not asking you to trust in a proposition, trust a person. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." Now, let me tell you something. You cannot trust somebody you do not know, and you cannot know someone that you don't spend time with. You see, when you trust somebody, it's because you spent time with them, and if they're trustworthy, you've come to love them, and if you have come to love them, then you can trust them. Trust in the Lord. Now do you know Him intimately enough to trust in Him?

Sometimes my wife will say to me something like this, "Adrian, will you do something for me?" What's my first question? "What is it?" Now that's a legitimate question. But suppose she says, "Adrian, will you do something for me?" And I say, "Well, what is it?" She says, "Never mind, just trust me." I gulp and I say, "Okay." Why? Because I love that girl and I know her love for me, and I don't have to worry. Have you ever had anybody say, "Close your eyes and open your mouth?" Well, now you've got to know a person before you close your eyes and open your mouth, is that not right? But if you know them, if you love them and you know that they love you, then you can trust them because you know them. And the reason that many of us don't trust the Lord that intimately is that we really don't know Him that intimately.

There's an old story of a man who walking by a seaside cliff, fell over the cliff, grabbed a scraggly limb, and hanging there with hundreds of feet beneath him and waves crashing on the rocks. And he is screaming for help. And in the darkness he hears a voice saying, "You need help?" "Yes, I need help." And the voice says, "Trust me." He said, "I trust you." The voice says, "Let go of the limb." He says, "Is there anybody else up there?" Why? Well, if we don't know who's up there, I mean, how are we going to trust? No, you've got to trust in the Lord with all of your heart. And in order to trust Him with all of your heart you have got to know Him intimately.

And don't trust your own understanding. Look at it again in Proverbs 3:5, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto your own understanding." And always here's the way it is. Over here is God and over here is our understanding, our reason, and we're torn between those two things. We say, well, we take the Word of God and we parade it past the judgment bar of human reason, our understanding, and we try to weigh it out and see if that is really best rather than just trust Him. Frankly, that's the reason people don't tithe. Do you know why people don't tithe? They don't trust. I mean, look at Malachi 3:10, "'Bring all the tithe into the storehouse, and prove Me now herewith,' saith the Lord of hosts, 'if I'll not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, there shall not be room enough to receive it.'" Question: if you believe that, you'd tithe, wouldn't you? Of course you would. Of course you would if you believe that. I mean, unless you're insane. God says, "You bring that to Me and I'll open the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing; you won't have enough room to receive it." The only reason a man wouldn't do that is, he says, "Well now wait a minute. If I do that, I've got to da, da, da, da, da, da, da, da, da, da." That's my own understanding. Over here is the Lord. What do most of us do? We just kind of lean to our own understanding, don't we? "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding."

Now you can't trust God that way until you know Him that way. We want to trust our own understanding, but the Bible says in Proverbs chapter 14 verse 12 "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Our minds sometimes don't lead us directly. And, again, Jeremiah chapter 10 verses 23 and 24, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Now most of us, we want to lean, however, to our own understanding. Now



it's not that we're not to have understanding, but the understanding is to come from the Lord, not your own understanding.

Go back to Proverbs chapter 2. We're not just talking about flying blind. God gives you understanding. Look, if you will, in verses 1 through 6, "My son, if thou wilt receive My words, and hide My commandments with thee, so that thou incline thy ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." God is not saying that you're not to have understanding. He's just saying don't lean on your own understanding. Get in the Word of God. Search for God's way, just as you would silver and gold, and God says that you will find it. Now what we're talking about is letting God choose your way, and we're saying, first of all, there must be full confidence in God. "Trust in the Lord." Do you have that confidence in Him?

Not only must there be full confidence in the Lord, but **there must be faithful compliance**. Now notice again, look, if you will, in this passage of Scripture, Proverbs 3:6, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, in all thy ways acknowledge Him." In every situation. Now, you don't surrender to a plan. Most people want somebody to give them a plan for their lives. God's plan for your life is not a road map; it is a relationship. I'm glad that God doesn't just write out a plan, seal it, and hand it to us, and say, "This is what you're going to do the next fifty years, next twenty years." How boring, or maybe how frightening. No, no. We are to trust in the Lord with all of our heart, lean not unto our own understanding, and then in all of our ways acknowledge Him. Every time you come into a new situation, just acknowledge God in that situation. Say, "Lord, what do You want me to do here? Lord, what do You want me to do here?"

Now, most of us want to acknowledge God in certain areas of our lives. But what does this verse say? "In all thy ways acknowledge Him." Question: do you want God to have control of all of your lives? Do you know what some people think? They have really arrived when they say this, "I give a tenth of my money to God. I give a seventh of my time to God. I am a Bible Christian, yes, siree. One tenth is God's and one seventh of my time is God's. I'm found in the house of God every Lord's Day. Every seventh day I've given to God, and every tenth part of my income I've given to God." You think that's good Bible Christianity? I want to tell you it is not. Listen to me, one tenth of your income doesn't belong to God; ten tenths belong to God. One seventh of your time doesn't belong to God; it all belongs to God.

Don't get the idea that life is like a pie and you can cut it into seven pieces and take one seventh and give it to God, and then you eat the rest. Don't get the idea that you take one tenth and give it to God and the rest is yours. No, the one seventh and the one tenth is only an indication that it all belongs to Him. I'm not saying that God doesn't want you to buy groceries. I'm not saying that God doesn't know that you have car payments. God knows all of these things. God knows that you should lay by for retirement. God knows all of that. But, friend, when it comes to finding God's will for your life, you must take every red cent that you have and every moment that you have, and, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him." In all thy ways acknowledge Him. Don't segment your life.

Now don't say this won't work if you haven't tried it. There must be a full confidence and a faithful compliance. That's what He's saying. Let God choose your way. Are you really ready for God to do whatever He wants to do in your life? I mean, have you signed the contract at the bottom?

Stephen Olford, I mentioned him a little while back, one of the greatest preachers in the world, and recognized so, was a young man, started out, his father was a faithful missionary. Stephen Olford, as a young man, had a bent, a proclivity toward engineering. He loved automobiles. You wouldn't know this



about Stephen Olford, but he loved motorcycles and could drive one, race them and take them apart and put them back together. He had planned this in his life. Stephen Olford said, "I am going to be an engineer. I'm going to make a lot of money. And then I'm going to use my money to support missions and the things of God." That would've been fine if that's what God had called him to do. But God had not called him to do that, and down in his heart he knew he was running from God.

He got deathly ill. His father, a missionary in Africa, not really even knowing that Stephen Olford was deathly ill, and according to Dr. Olford, two weeks from death, he received a letter from his father. And his father had written to him these words, "Tis but one life, will soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last." And God used that to pierce the heart of young Stephen Olford, and he bowed his head there in that hospital and he prayed a prayer, three short phrases in that prayer. Listen to it, "Anywhere, anytime, any cost," period.

Now, was that just for Stephen Olford? Come up close. That is for you, for me, for all of us to say. Have you said that? Oh, you say, "Good night, Pastor. You want me to say, 'Anywhere, anytime, any cost?' How can I do that?" Do you know why you're having difficulty with that? Because you don't trust the Lord with all your heart. See you're just afraid if you close your eyes and open your mouth, He'll put something in there you don't want. You just really don't trust Him! Now, folks, the only way this is going to work is the way it's written. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy path." Point number one: let God choose the way.

Point number two: **let God confirm the way**. Because, you see, it's one thing for God to choose the way, but it's another thing for God to confirm that this is the way He's chosen. Now there are a lot of folks here in this building that say, 'Well, yes, sure, I'll do God's will, but I don't know what it is. Yes, I'll say anytime, anywhere, any cost, but what is the time? Where is the place? What is the cost? I don't know.' All right. Now the Bible says, "He will direct your path." If you'll do this, "He will direct your path."

Now how does God confirm the way? Once God has chosen the way, how does God confirm the way? I want to mention four ways that God will confirm His will to you for your life, and how God will light your future. Number one: **God directs your way by His Word, by the Bible**. Let me give you some Scripture. Remember, we're talking about lighting your path, lighting your future. Psalm 119 verse 105, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." The Word of God. God gave you His Word. Now many people are wanting to know the will of God for their lives when they are not obeying the revealed will of God in the written Scriptures. And they're wanting God to show them something else when it is as plain as day what God does want in some areas, and they've not done that.

For example, let me mention three times in the Bible where the Bible specifically says this is the will of God. First of all, concerning your salvation. Listen to this, Second Peter 3 verse 9, "The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." That's the will of God for you. Have you repented of your sin? Have you given your heart to Jesus Christ? Well, don't quibble with me about wanting to know the will of God for your life when the Bible clearly, plainly, black print on white paper, says God is not willing that you should perish, but that you should have eternal life. Not willing that any should perish. God wants everybody saved. I believe that. I hope you believe that. Some do, some theologians don't believe God wants everybody saved. I believe He wants every mother's child saved. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. All right. That's one place He just mentions the will of God. We're just talking about finding God's will in the Word.

Let me give you another place where He mentions the will of God. Ephesians chapter 5 verses 17 and 18, "Wherefore, be ye not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Be not drunk with wine,



wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." Not only is it God's will that you be saved, but God's will that you be Spirit-filled. That's what He says in that passage of Scripture, "Don't be unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Don't be drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit." Now, are you, now, sitting there listening to Adrian, are you filled with the Spirit? If not, you're out of the will of God, because He says clearly and plainly that is the will of God. I mean, look, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand that. God says, "It is My will that you be saved and Spirit-filled." Now if you're not saved and Spirit-filled, why're you coming to me saying, "Oh, I wish I knew the will of God for my life." I mean, there it is! You're going to find that in the Scripture.

Let me mention a third time in the Scripture where He uses the specific phrase "the will of God." First Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 3, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication." What is the will of God? Saved, Spirit-filled, and sanctified. And in those Scriptures, He absolutely says this is the will of God. By the way, if you'd just do those three steps, you'll find the rest of it is almost axiomatic, did you know that? If you'll just do that. And, it's amazing. He says, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication." What is fornication? It is sex apart from the marriage, sacred bonds of marriage.

Sometimes, in counseling, if you've ever been a counselor, ever been a pastor, you've had a man come to you, or sometimes a woman, with this proposition: "You know, I am married but my wife and I are not getting along. We really should never have gotten married. We don't really love one another, and our marriage is a disaster. And I have discovered true love. I have discovered a God-given love. There is a woman that I love with all of my heart, and she loves me. And, Pastor, I've prayed about it, and I really feel it's God's will that I marry this other woman, because God doesn't want me to be in bondage, ta, da, ta, da, ta, da. You know, God wants me to be happy, and this is where happiness is. Pastor, would you give me some advice?" I say, "No, I won't give you any advice. You're out of the will of God. Do you think God is a liar? Do you, I mean, do you think that God is just going to take His Word and set His Word aside and say, 'Now I know this is what I said, and I know this is My will, but since you prayed, I've changed My mind?'" No! Absolutely not!

You say, "Oh, Adrian, you're so narrow-minded." Well, some people are so broad-minded their mind gets thin in the middle. I'm just simply saying, folks, God gives His will. And you say, "Oh, I've got to do the will of God." Friend, God's will is best for you. God's will is what you'd want for yourself if you had enough sense to want it. God is a good God. Psalm 84 verse 11, "The Lord thy God is a sun and a shield. The Lord will give grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." I'm just talking to you about how to let God confirm His way. Number one is the Scripture. You'll find so much of the will of God in the Scripture. Many of us are not in the Scripture.

I was reading about a man named Vido, V-I-D-O, Miti, M-I-T-I. He was a Spanish student in Barcelona. And he was working on his Ph.D. in Philosophy. And so he was in the library blowing the dust off some of the old books of philosophy, and he found a book that had been in the library, no one knows how long, really. And as he was going through there, he found some paper inside this book, this library book, and he opened it up and read it. And it was the philosopher's Last Will and Testament. And he said, "Whoever finds this in this book will inherit my estate," because he didn't think anybody would read his old, dry philosophy book. And there it was. Vido Miti took that to the authorities. They read it and said, "It is valid," and he was awarded \$250,000, the full estate of the old philosopher. I wonder how many treasures are in God's Word that God wants us to inherit, but we've never blown the dust off the Bible.



Now here's a second way that God will direct you. Number one: through His Word. But not everything is found in His Word. I mean, some of you guys and gals are thinking about where you're going to go to college, or who should you marry, or whatever. You're not going to find in the Bible, "Go to thus and such university." The second way that God guides you is **through prayer**. And God will guide you through prayer, beyond the shadow of any doubt. Let me give you some Scriptures that teach that. For example, in the early church in Acts chapter 1 verse 24, they were wanting an apostle to take the place of Judas, who fell. And now listen to what it says here, "And they prayed, and said, 'Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whither of these two Thou hast chosen.'" They prayed and said, "Lord, show us." Now prayer is a two-way street. So many of us want to say, "Listen, Lord, Your servant is speaking," rather than, "Speak, Lord, Your servant listens." Do you have a quiet time in your prayer? This is a lost art of listening to God. God will speak directly to your heart, directly.

Let me give you another Scripture. Acts chapter 8 and verse 29. Philip was a deacon, was actually holding an evangelistic crusade, and the Holy Spirit spoke to him. Listen to this, Acts 8 verse 29, "Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.'" Philip is out there in the wilderness now being led of the Spirit. Here comes the Ethiopian eunuch riding by in a chariot. And the Spirit says, "That's the one. Go join yourself to him." Now the point I'm making is this: that God will impress your spirit with the Holy Spirit. That's very mystical, but I can tell you time and time again when I have felt God speak to my heart in that sweet communion. It's almost, again, like I say, guiding you with His eye.

When the first missionaries were chosen, Acts 13 verse 2, "And they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.'" The Holy Spirit speaks. God guides through His Word. God guides when we pray and the Holy Spirit of God speaks to us.

Now let me tell you a third way that God will guide you. I'm talking about four ways now to confirm God's will. The Bible, through prayer, number three: **through the wisdom that God gives**. One of the great, great, great promises in the Word of God is James chapter 1 and verse 5, and it says this, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth liberally to all men, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Now there's not a one of us that doesn't want and need wisdom. Well, here is an unqualified promise. "If any of you," that applies to all of us, "lack wisdom," that applies to all of us, "let us ask of God that giveth to all men," not some men. How? "Liberally, and it shall be given him." I submit either that is true or that is not true.

Now what is wisdom? Wisdom is not reading something in the Scripture, although that's valid. Wisdom is not praying and letting the Holy Spirit impress our hearts, though that is valid. Wisdom is sanctified common sense. Do you know many of us are afraid to use our mind when it comes to knowing the will of God? We think that if we use our mind, that we're leaning to our own understanding. No. No, when your mind is filled with the Spirit of God, don't be afraid to trust it. Get your heart clean, get your motive clear, search the Scriptures, pray, and then do what you think you ought to do. Donald Gray Barnhouse said, "90% of the will of God is found between your ears." God gives wisdom. What is wisdom? Wisdom's not emotionalism. It's not getting wet around the lashes and warm around the heart, liver shivers. Wisdom is sanctified common sense. It is seeing life from God's point of view.

There are certain things that you don't have to pray about. Now I'm not against prayer. How many of you prayed about the necktie you would wear this morning? Now some of you should have, but, I mean, how many of you prayed about that? No. I mean, you've got enough sense to know, when I get up I shave, I wash my face, I do this, I do that. God gives you a mind. Why would God renew your mind and then not



use it? Romans 12:1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice; holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Now, I see that I've got to head on. Let me give you the fourth way that God is going to guide you, and that is not only through the Scripture, not only through prayer and the Holy Spirit impressing your heart, not only through the sanctified wisdom that God gives to you, but by providence. **You're going to find out that God will providentially guide you when you get in the stream of His mercy.** Put down this Scripture, Revelation chapter 3 verses 7 and 8, "I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door. I am He that openeth and no man shutteth; I am He that shutteth and no man opens." You're going to find out that God will open doors and God will shut doors, and God will open doors and God will shut doors, and God will guide you providentially.

Now here's the third and final thing, and this is very important. Number one: let God choose the way. Number two: let God confirm the way. And number three: **let God clear the way.** Now most of us think, "Well, if I just knew the will of God and surrender to the will of God, then it would all be fine." No, no. God's got to make a way for you. He's got to clear the way. Now look in Proverbs 3 verse 6, and it says there, "And He will direct your paths." The word there is yashar. It's a Hebrew word which literally means to clear the way. As a matter of fact, the New American Standard translates it this way, "Make your paths straight." That's what some of you may be looking at right now. I looked it up in another translation. Moffatt translates it this way, "And He will clear the road for you." Now the word direct that's used there, "He will direct your path," it is a word that has the idea of clearing obstacles.

Let me show you another place where it is used in the Bible, and this will make it crystal clear. It's found in Isaiah chapter 40 verses 3 and 4. And it speaks of the ministry of John the Baptist clearing the way for Messiah to come, and it says, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.' Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain." Now, what's the idea? It's like John the Baptist was a bulldozer making a way for the Messiah. Here is a mountain. He moves it out of the way. Here's a boulder. He moves it out of the way. Here's a crooked road. He straightens that road. Here is a depression. He fills it with dirt until you have a smooth highway for Messiah. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

Now the same phrase that is used, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," is the same phrase that is used for, "Direct your path." Same word. What he is saying is this, listen: God will choose the way, God will confirm the way, and, hallelujah, God will clear the way when you get in the will of God. God will go before you. God, like a bulldozer, will clear the way. God will open and no man will shut, and God will shut and no man will open. And God Himself will take away the obstacles that keep you from His will for your life. Are you telling me that there's a God in the glory and He has something He wants you to do, but it can't be done because God's not able to make it happen for you? Oh, no. God, I promise you, will clear the way.

Back in the olden days, when the Earth's crust first hardened, I played football. And every now and then, I'd get hold of a ball and I'd start down the field. Well, friend, it's impossible, virtually impossible, to run that ball down the field unless you've got some men out there in front of you. They're blocking, clearing the way for you. Now you've got to run, but those guys are out there blocking. And it may sound irreverent to you, but I think of God as my downfield blocker. I mean, He is clearing the way. God is the heavenly bulldozer. God is the One that opens and no one shuts; shuts and no one opens. God moves that mountain. God fills that valley. God straightens that road when you get in the will of God for your life. But you've got to obey Him. In all your ways acknowledge Him. Lean not to your own understanding. Trust Him with all of your heart.



An evangelist came home. He'd been away for a long time. He had a present for his wife, and it was quite heavy. When he came in the house, his little daughter saw it and said, "Daddy, let me take it to Mommy." This little girl had been crippled. She used crutches most of the time, but when she was at home she put her crutches aside and just kind of scoot along the floor. And the little girl said, "Daddy, let me take it to Mommy." He said, "Sweetheart, it's too heavy. You can't take it." She said, "Please, Daddy, let me take it to Mommy." Said, "But, sweetheart, it's so heavy." And then he looked. He saw a little glimmer in her eye and knew she had something up her sleeve, and said, "All right, sweetheart." And he put it in her hands, and she said, "Now, Daddy, pick me up and bring me to Momma." And so he picked her up, package and all, and brought her. That's what our Lord does. That's what our Lord does. If our God gives us a burden, our God will pick us up. And He is the One who carries us, and He's the One who clears the way when we get in the stream of His will.

God has a plan for you. God wants to light your path, if in all of your ways, you will acknowledge Him. Don't lean to your own understanding. Trust Him with all of your heart. Give Him not just one tenth; give Him ten tenths. Give Him not one seventh; give Him the whole week. Give it to Jesus and trust Him, and I'll tell you, He will choose the way, He will confirm the way, and my God will clear the way for you, for you. He has a plan for you.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. If you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."



2941 Kate Bond Road | Memphis TN 38133 | (901) 382-7900