

DISCERNING THE WILL OF GOD

"Teach me Thy way, O Lord." – Psalm 27:11.

THE LORD does not wish us to walk by sight, and thus to have no difficulty in discerning His will. Therefore He puts matters in such a way that both our obedience and our perseverance are tested; for we are to walk by faith and not by sight. In order to do this, we should daily take everything to the Lord in prayer. We should not undertake anything without seeking to know the will of the Lord respecting the matter.

Since, however, we have no miraculous insight through which we may know what is the will of God in all the details of every-day life, we are not always able to discern that will. When the matter is one about which the Scriptures give instructions, then the way is clear; for the only course which the child of God desires to follow is that of *obedience*. But when the matter is such as depends upon *one's own judgment*, then the way is not so clear. Realizing that our judgment is not sufficient, we should not tax our minds with what we know is beyond our power to decide, but should leave the matter to the Lord.

We know that the Lord can direct our course in whatever way He chooses, if we put ourselves under His care. So at the beginning of the day we can say, "Lord, here am I; I thank Thee for the privilege of another day, which I hope will be full of opportunities for serving the Truth and the brethren. I ask Thee to direct my thoughts, words and conduct, that I may serve Thee acceptably." *Then* we may go forth and use our best judgment.

If the Lord wants to lead us in one direction or another, that is His part, not ours. We have solicited His guidance; and our eyes are alert to know and to do His will at any cost. In this attitude we may

rest easy, knowing that God is able and willing to overrule all things for His glory and our profit.

As a child, the Editor noticed that some people had a *certain way* of going to the Lord with all of their affairs. They would open their Bibles at random; and whatever verse their thumb or finger happened to touch they would consider to be the Lord's message to them; and they would follow its suggestion carefully. Sometimes the text to which they opened seemed to be a remarkable answer to their prayer.

This method is not one with which the Editor desires to find fault. But since it did not appeal to his judgment, he took the matter to the Lord in prayer and said, "Father, I am really afraid to adopt this plan. So if it please Thee, I would rather be directed by my judgment than by this method; for my mind does not seem capable of accepting it." The Lord seems to have taken him at his word.

There is surely a reason why right is right in every matter; and we should desire to know it. We should desire to know why God wishes a matter *this* way rather than *that* way; not that we doubt His wisdom, but that we may enter into the *spirit* of the Divine regulations. The Editor's method of seeking Divine guidance is to study the Scriptures, taking all of the verses bearing upon the subject under consideration, and trying to find the *underlying principle* of God's dealings and teachings.

By this method he has much more happiness than he otherwise could have. By following the other method he could not know whether God or the Devil or chance would open the Bible for him. He much prefers to follow what he believes to be the teaching of the Word of God; that is, to commit all to the Father in prayer, asking Him to guide both reason and judgment, and then go out **[R5212 : page 105]** and use that judgment and reason to the best of his ability. Even if God should permit him to use his judgment in a way that afterward appeared not to have been the best, nevertheless the Father

may use it to bring some great blessing or profitable lesson. By *judgment*, of course, he means his understanding of the Father's Word and of His providential leadings. Thus doing, he knows that all things shall work together for good. – Rom. 8:28.

