

Discovering God's Direction

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning again. We are still in the book of Proverbs. If you'd like to take your Bibles and turn with me to Proverbs 3. We'll be looking at verses 5 and 6 as we talk about discovering God's direction.

How do we find out God's will for us? And as we think about it, life's greatest goal. People have many different goals in life. Some it's education, some it's work goals, some it's money goals.

They want to make their first million before they're 30 or whatever it is. Different people have different goals. But think about this. I really believe that life's greatest goal is God.

As we look at all things in life compared with the knowledge of God and to experience Him as our Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, I see that as life's greatest goal in finding God's will and doing it is our purpose.

So God is our goal to spend daily time with Him, to spend eternity with Him, and then finding God's will for our life is our purpose.

[1 : 17] All as we go through our life, day by day by day, is it not our purpose to be doing the will of God at every moment of every day? So our purpose in life literally is to find the will of God in every moment.

And the will of God, do you realize the will of God for our life changes moment by moment?

Because what God wants me doing right now may not be what God wants me doing five minutes from now.

You know what? God wants us here right now. But in five minutes, something may occur. And God wants us engaged in whatever it is at whatever moment in our life. As we are going to the store and we see someone who needs assistance, maybe God's will was for us to leave to go somewhere. And then along the way, God says, no, wait a minute. I want you to stop and I want you to talk to this individual. I want you to help them. So God is consistently and constantly moving us, guiding us, directing us.

And we need to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading as we go through our days. So the question is, how can we find God's will? And how can we do the will of God?

[2 : 23] Well, Solomon had a four-word solution. And his four words were this, trust, lean not, and acknowledge.

So as we look at Proverbs 3, verses 5 and verse 6, we're going to see how these, I believe, four words can lead us to the center of God's will.

Let's look first at Proverbs 3, verses 5 and 6, where Solomon said, Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

I believe that's a great place to begin. Because many of us, where's the first place we go? We go to what we feel is right. If we don't understand something or if we feel that we understand something, then that's what we go with.

But often we find that God's will goes beyond our understanding or sometimes goes contrary to our own understanding of a matter.

[3 : 26] Because God's ways are higher than our ways. God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts. And the things of God are spiritually understood or spiritually discerned.

Meaning, without the Holy Spirit, there are many things about God that we could not wrap our minds around. And so Solomon says, Trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't lean on your own understanding.

In all your ways, acknowledge Him and He shall direct your path. So let's take this one statement at a time.

So the first statement that we see is, Trust in the Lord with all your heart. We see that in verse 5. Trust in the Lord with all your heart.

Trust launches a personal relationship with God. Because our relationship with God begins with trust.

[4 : 26] We have to know who God is. The Bible says that we know that Jesus is God Himself. I had an interesting conversation in Lowe's the other day.

I was getting some Roundup to spray around the yard and we stopped in the right there where we first come in and this gentleman was speaking to a lady there and excuse me, sorry about that. And we got to talking to him and he was he was talking about he was talking about God well then as he begins talking to me he said you know the way to heaven and I just played along with him I said well what is the way to heaven well he kind of rambles on a little bit and then he said but you know where people go wrong is they believe that Jesus is God oh okay and so we got on that little train for a little while and he was very very adamant then when I went to scripture to scripture to scripture that saying well since the Pharisees said you say you are God that's why they wanted to stone him and he said oh well that's what they believed I said did Jesus correct them no so if Jesus was a good guy and a good man and he was honorable would he have not corrected them and said no I'm not God no he didn't correct them and then we went in the beginning and why did God say God created man in our image and it was an interesting time and so finally I just had to say well sir I don't think we will ever agree and so we parted ways and he was still wanting to talk to me so we weren't getting anywhere but the thing is the Bible Jesus said you want to see God or you want to know God he said if you've seen me you've seen God you've seen the Father because I and the Father are what I and the Father are one well he took issue with that too so I don't see how we can make anything more plain than that but knowing God and the trust comes in where we say I know that Jesus is God I know that Jesus died on the cross in my place and I trust him for that so to believe is to have faith and that was Paul's answer do you remember the Philippian jailer sirs let's look at

Acts 16 31 he says sirs what must I do to be saved and so Paul says so they said believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved you and your household so salvation is by faith alone trusting in Christ so our relationship with God begins with trust and so Solomon said trust in the Lord with all your heart so finding the direction of God begins with trust see salvation is by faith alone look at Romans chapter 5 verse 1 therefore having been justified by faith we have what peace with God the only way to be at peace with God and not incur the wrath of God is to have faith in Christ so we are made right we are justified we are made right before God by faith and trust in Christ

[8 : 07] Jesus so salvation begins by faith our relationship with God begins with faith and trust trust in the Lord with all your heart and it's grace that makes this possible we look at Ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 and 9 verse 8 says for by grace you have been saved it's not by our merit you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God not of works lest anyone should boast faith brings everlasting life immediately as we look at John 3 36 he says he who believes on the son has everlasting life he doesn't say will might one day but he says he who believes in the son has everlasting life and he who does not believe in the son shall not see life but the wrath of God abides on him so for this gentleman in Lowe's this past week the Bible is very clear if you believe on Jesus you have life if you don't believe on

Jesus you do not have life and you will not see heaven and so God I believe makes it very clear that a relationship with God begins with trust and in order to be finding the will of God in your life we must have God's Holy Spirit and that again comes through faith so we start off with trust God with all your heart now what does that mean to trust God with all of our heart what if we trust God with just a portion of our heart well it means it's not complete trust it would be like trying to I don't know be like trying to get on an airplane and flying from point A to point B and leaving one foot on the ground you just can't do it you have it's complete trust you have to place your entire being you have to place everything and all of your trust on that aircraft on that pilot and the crew to get you from here to there the same goes for our faith in Christ it's trusting

God with all of our heart and even for his daily direction as we go through life it is trusting God with everything it's not just adding God to our routine and it's not just well I think I will trust God no it is trusting God literally with every fiber of our being complete whole trust just like the trust test where someone stands behind you and you fall backward you're putting your complete faith and trust that

that person will hold you will catch you and keep you from hitting the ground complete faith and trust in him with all our heart so trust in God trust in the Lord with all your heart and then second lean not so the first word that Solomon uses or uses to say how can we find and do the will of God first of all is the first word is trust second two words are lean not so what are we what are we not to depend on what we our all wrap see we don't have to be able to wrap our minds around every concept of God in order to be able to do the will of God case in point it does not work that way in real life or it works that's the way it works in real life because think about this how many of you know all of the intricacies and the way that electricity works

I mean there are some here who passed really huge tests on electricity and electrical current and code and all of this so you're excluded from this Jeremy and anybody and I think Nathan's taken some of those tests but the thing about it is how many of us have to understand all about electricity to reap the benefits we don't we just plug something in and we use it and same with God we cannot understand God because God is infinite and we cannot our minds are finite we cannot understand God so what does God want us to believe believe he's eternal believe that he is God the only God in Jesus believe that Jesus is God that he died on the cross he became human he became flesh died in our place and that his payment was complete for our salvation we don't have to understand how he could still be God and man at the same time we don't have to understand how could he leave all we have to do is trust that what

God said is true and then Solomon goes on to say trust in him and don't lean on your own understanding when things don't make sense still trust God don't lean on your own understanding trust in the Lord with all your heart and then the second portion of verse five says and lean not on your own understanding Matthew Henry the commentator said this those who know themselves find their own understanding a broken reed which if they lean upon it will fail let me read that again those who know themselves find their own understanding a broken reed which if they lean upon will fail I think Matthew Henry got it right because if we look at ourselves and our own understanding of life and eternity and things that if we rest upon our own understanding it will not hold us up our own understanding will fail our own understanding or our understanding of all things is limited to our intelligence and our experience think about it what human apart from

[14:52] Jesus Christ could ever know everything that there is to know nobody what human has had every experience that a human could ever have to learn from that experience no one so the point being if we lean on our own understanding of an issue whether it's a relationship issue it's a work issue it's a financial issue it's whatever it is if we or something that the popular culture is saying if we try to understand and lean on what we know it will fail us so how do we know what's right and know how to do what's right trust what God says and if it goes counter to what we think or understand we must always fall on the side or come down on the side of God trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't lean on your own understanding you see

God's understanding is far above that of all people look at Isaiah 55 verses 8 and 9 verse 8 says for my thoughts they're not your thoughts nor your ways my ways says the Lord I mean that's pretty well pretty succinctly put it God says your ways that's not my way and my thoughts they're not your thoughts for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways now that puts things in perspective think about this here we are on planet earth how far is outer space from planet earth that's a pretty fur piece you know we're not getting there in our Ford or our Chevy so God says think about that distance think about how far it is from earth to outer space that's the same you've ever done the how much you know do you love me how much do I love you to the moon and back well that again is a fur piece that's a long way so God says my thoughts are your thoughts compared to my thoughts the heavens are higher for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts so if we've got to weigh our understanding of something versus

God's will and what God says about something we're much better off coming down on God's side because God says my ways you don't understand them my ways are much higher my thoughts are much higher than your thoughts God knows everything because God is God is love God is power God is everywhere present God is all knowing God is eternal God created everything that there is we think of time God created time we think of space God created space we think of matter God God there is nothing that exists that did not come into existence that was not spoken by God spoken by God so God's ways are higher than our ways and we discover where do we discover the wisdom of God in the Bible in God's word God has given to us his will his word through the writers of scripture

so as he wrote through them they have given to us what we believe is a completed scripture we call it a completed canon of scripture we have everything that God wants us to know about him here now can we fully plumb the depths can we fully understand everything in God's word that's kind of a loaded question through the spirit

God's holy spirit can teach us whatever God wants us to know about himself but I believe that we could study God's word if we didn't have to sleep 24 hours a day from the moment we could read to the moment we die and still never find every truth there is for us to find in the word of God that doesn't make sense well because God's ways are higher than our ways God's thoughts or higher than our thoughts so how do we find the will of God and I believe that as we go through life has this ever happened to you I know it's happened to me you've read maybe a verse almost your entire Christian life you've heard it in Sunday school you've memorized it either from those of us who went through BMA Bible Memory Association back 30-40 years ago or through Awana and you read that same verse tomorrow when you're going through something and you're saying and you think to yourself

I never knew that verse said that or that verse means so much to me in what I'm going through today why is that because Bible says or scripture is alive it's powerful it's able to pierce even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit it's it is what we need the moment we need it where we need it because God's word is alive and so we find God's direction in the word of God the scriptures the Bible what David and his teachers had said made David wiser than his teachers look at Psalm 119 99 David says I have more understanding than my teachers now that wouldn't fly if you say that in class to one of your teachers right but David could say it because when

[21 : 25] God taught David David had understanding that his teachers of his day didn't know because David had a special relationship with God he says I have more understanding than all my teachers why for your testimonies are my meditation David said I meditate on your word I study your word it becomes part of my life and that's what makes the difference we find God's will through studying God's word we find God's will through talking to God and allowing God to talk to us through his word through the direction and guidance of his holy spirit so how do we how do we find young people how do we find the right person to marry those of you older how do we find the right job how do you go to the right school how do you do well you know what you say God I want to know what's best for me and I want you to lead me and I will ask you and I will allow you to guide me through your word

God guides us through his holy spirit prompting us God guides us through the wise counsel of others who know Christ as well so there are a number of ways that God will lead us and guide us a gentleman by the name of Charles Bridges said this no step well prayed over will bring ultimate regret let me say this again no step well prayed over will bring ultimate regret what are the things you regret most most of the time is stuff that you made on the spur of the moment decision you go man I wish I wouldn't have done that but how many things that you prayed over you poured over God's word and you asked God's guidance and you say God I want to know what you want me to do and I want to know what's best and through wise counsel through prayer and through searching God's word you arrive at a decision and you carry out that decision how many of those decisions have you regretted probably not many if any and so no step well prayed over will bring ultimate regret so we spend time with God trust God with all of our heart don't lean on our own understanding and then lastly in all your ways acknowledge him in all your ways acknowledge him that's in verse six in all your ways acknowledge him and he shall direct your paths to acknowledge the

Lord in all things is full surrender to him to acknowledge God in everything so that means as we go through our day everything that we do we're thinking okay at eleven thirty after we're done here we're going to go to lunch at fill in the blank but if you acknowledge God will that make a difference in where you go it may it may not if we acknowledge God in everything we do meaning God we're doing this and God by your will if it's your will this is what we're going to do and if we acknowledge God in everything that we do God will lead us and guide us and direct us so if we are acknowledging God on the way into the restaurant and we see someone with a need or we see something that God will if we're acknowledging God he can even more easily direct us to do something or it might be any other need in all our ways acknowledge him and if we acknowledge God in every thought and in every deed now how can we do that that's an interesting question well we simply do it by realizing that God is in control and every moment of every day belongs to God

we acknowledge the Lord if we acknowledge the Lord at home if we acknowledge the Lord on the job if we acknowledge the Lord on our vacation if we acknowledge the Lord in everything we do we acknowledge the Lord when days are dark and we acknowledge the Lord when days are bright you can see there are there are dark days at times that's not a time to forget God because that's not a time when God forgets us so acknowledge him on the dark days acknowledge him when the days are bright acknowledge the

Lord on the interstate because sometimes that might make a difference in the way we deal with other drivers right acknowledge God in our expressions as well as the express ways acknowledge God acknowledge the Lord not only with saints but also acknowledge God with sinners you you see we can love someone even while they're sinning we may not agree with them we may have nothing to do with them at certain points in time but there are certain points in time when we can acknowledge God with them and let them know that God loves them let them know that God cares about them and is willing to accept them where they are and bring a brand new outlook and a different outcome so we acknowledge God in every area of our life so as we bring this and wind this down to a close understand this

[27:11] God's direction doesn't guarantee perfection meaning we won't be perfect on this earth but we can know that if we're following the will of God we're pleasing him in all we do because God knows our frame God knows we're weak God knows we falter we fail but if we are quick to acknowledge when we sin when we disobey he doesn't leave us he doesn't forsake us he's willing to say I'm here and I forgive you you are forgiven through the blood of Christ also another quote from Charles Bridges he says God's promise for guidance doesn't make us infallible our very errors will be overruled to produce greater humility do you realize sometimes that our faults and our mistakes can be used by God to humble us and to bring us where he wants us so God uses everything in our life we are but sinners saved by grace yet led by God from place to place he leads us everywhere we go and it really is a privilege to be on

God's path is it not it's a privilege it's not a right you know to say you know what we all have a right to be in heaven what do we really deserve we really deserve an eternal separation from God because of who we are we're sinners but by God's grace Jesus Christ offers or God offers the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord and so it's a privilege because by grace God reaches down and says I want to give you a new life through faith and trust in Jesus Christ so I'm sure everyone here has but here's the question have you begun life with God through faith in Christ and have you decided to totally trust God for direction you see it's one thing to know Christ as our Savior but it's yet another to depend on God moment by moment by moment for direction and trust for decisions trust for what we say trust for what we do trust for where we spend our money trust for everything in all your ways acknowledge him and what will God do

God will direct your path and that's what we're told so have you ever surrendered completely to the Father's will my encouragement to you this morning is surrender let's come to the end of ourselves let's come to the end of our intellect and understanding and say God I'll never know it all I'll never understand everything as I'm supposed to so God I want to acknowledge you in everything I do and I want you to direct my path and know this the direction of the Lord will bring purpose to your life and it will provide a joy that you could not know otherwise so let God lead and let God guide you let's pray our precious Lord we thank you that you've given us these words of direction to trust to lean not and to acknowledge you in everything we do and we thank you

Father that you will direct our paths as we trust you as we acknowledge you in everything we do Lord may you give by your grace this morning the power for each one of us here to completely submit and surrender to your guidance and direction to truly allow Jesus to be the Lord of our life that we would dethrone ourselves and allow you to sit on the throne of our life reigning over us directing and guiding Lord I thank you for each one here may you continue to provide your guidance and direction and because of your unfailing love we thank you father for saving us and bringing us a brand new life for this father we pray in Jesus name amen amen