

Codes for the Will:

# Circumstantial Evidence

Message By Ken Baugh

<sup>37</sup> look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said." <sup>38</sup> And that is what happened. Gideon rose early the next day; he squeezed the fleece and wrung out the dew -a bowlful of water. <sup>39</sup> Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece. This time make the fleece dry and the ground covered with dew."

**Judges 6:37-39**

<sup>28</sup>And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup>For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

**Romans 8:28-29**

Opening Question:

What role do circumstances play in your decision making process?

## THE PROBLEM WITH CIRCUMSTANCES

1. The Fleece (Judges 6:37-38)  
"God, if this is your will, then give me a sign."
2. The Open Door  
"God, if this is your will, then give me your options."
3. The Random Bible Passage  
"God, if this is your will, then show me a verse specific to my situation."
4. The Out of the Blue Event  
"God, this must be your will because of this out of the blue occurrence."
5. The Positive Test Result  
"God, if it is your will, then it will have positive results."

Which of these statements do you most relate to when looking for God's Will through circumstances?

Why are these types of circumstantial tests an incomplete way of discerning God's Will?

Why can't we ignore our circumstances when determining God's will for our life?

## UNDERSTANDING THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

According to Romans 8:28-29, what is God's ultimate goal for your life?

What does God's goal for our lives combined with our circumstances teach us about His providence?

"By providence we mean the continuing action of God by which he preserves in existence the creating he has brought into being, and guides it to his intended purposes for it....Providence is in certain ways central to the conduct of the Christian life. It means that we are able to live in the assurance that God is present and active in our lives. We are in his care and can therefore face the future confidently, knowing that things are not happening merely by chance. We can pray, knowing that God hears and acts upon our prayers. We can face danger, knowing that he is not unaware and uninvolved."

Christian Theology. Millard J. Erickson, 413.

How does this view of God's present activity in life effect our perspective on our circumstances?

<sup>24</sup>Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one.

<sup>25</sup>Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, <sup>26</sup>I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. <sup>27</sup>I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.

<sup>28</sup>Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. **2 Corinthians 11:24-28**

<sup>6</sup>For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. <sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup>Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. **2 Timothy 4:6-8**

<sup>12</sup>Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. <sup>13</sup>As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. <sup>14</sup>Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly. **Philippians 1:12-14**

<sup>3</sup> He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave. <sup>4</sup> The men said, "This is the day the LORD spoke of when he said [U] to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'" Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe. <sup>5</sup> Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. <sup>6</sup> He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, or lift my hand against him; for he is the anointed of the LORD." <sup>7</sup> With these words David rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way. **1 Samuel 24:3-7**

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## HOW GOD USES "ANY" CIRCUMSTANCE TO GUIDE US

Which decisions would fall under this everyday decision making process?

### 1. God uses both positive and negative circumstances to guide us into his will.

Why does God use both positive and negative experiences to reveal His Will?

When has God used a negative experience to reveal his will to you?

Are you facing a tough circumstance now? What can you do to respond to circumstances as Paul responded to his circumstances? (2 Corinthians 11:24-28, 2 Timothy 4:8, Philippians 1:12-24)

"Sometimes difficult things happen and we don't know why....God in his providence will allow both positive and negative experiences to come your way. They are not necessarily a measure of your spirituality, although they may very well be a wonderful opportunity to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ....All you can do is learn to accept the fact that God has never promised that life will always be fair or that we deserve an explanation for everything....Learn to trust God in spite of your circumstances." Finding The Will Of God , **Dr. Bruce Waltke** ,138-139.

### 2. God uses circumstances along with other tools of the Holy Spirit to guide us in His Will.

Read: 1 Samuel 24:3-7

If David used only circumstances to define the Will of God, how would he have responded to Saul's presence in the cave?

Which additional tool did David use to find the Will of God in that situation?

What can you do to ingest Scripture so that you can have a framework from which to judge your circumstances?

"But then David's conscience smote him because Scriptures say you cannot touch God's anointed. Once God has anointed someone with holy oil, the Lord Himself must dispose of him. David was not to do it on his own terms. He was not to put a fortuitous circumstance above the Word of God. You can't take a bit of good timing as concrete evidence of God's will." Finding the Will of God: Bruce K. Waltke, 140.

### 3. God often uses difficult circumstances to guide us into His Will.

What is the difference between a difficult circumstance and a negative experience?

How can you keep the difficult circumstances from making you think that you missed the will of God?