

Sermon Outline: Divine Guidance

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Distinctives of a Reformed Church: Divine Guidance

Sermon Notes

The two biblical meanings of "God's will" Deuteronomy 29:29

1. God's decreed will involves every detail of the whole course of history including every detail of the life of every believer. It is a secret will known only after the fact; e.g., whether I will be alive tomorrow at 7:am. God's decreed will is described in WCF III:1 "Of God's eternal decree."

2. God's moral will is based on his unchanging character and is declared throughout the Bible, being summarized in the Ten Commandments. It was revealed to apostles and prophets and can be found completely in the Bible. Its directives are a general call for all believers, e.g., "Marry only a believer."

The idea of personal revelation of God's ideal will is an unbiblical distortion.

WHY?

1. It is not true.
2. It tends to make the Bible secondary rather than primary.
4. It is open to self-deception and abuse.
3. It is not practicable since hundreds; even thousands of decisions must be made every day without pausing to get God's individual will-decision for each one.

Principles for making decisions:

1. Determine the morality of a given course of action by the standard of God's Word. If it is sin it cannot be right.
2. Determine the wisdom of a given course of action. Pray for wisdom to make a wise decision among all the morally permissible choices. Consult others who might be able to advise you.

Consider which course of action you most desire.

3. Determine a course of action thanking God for the freedom and responsibility to make decisions within the boundaries of his revealed will. Do not worry that you may have missed the ideal will of God.
4. Avoid using the language of special revelation when discussing future decisions with others.

Principles for making decisions.

1. Whenever the Bible has specifically addressed an issue, the revealed commands and principles of God are to be obeyed. These "things revealed" constitute the moral will of God.
2. In cases of decision making where the Bible gives no command or principle, the Christian is free to choose a course of action. Any decision which does not violate the moral will of God is acceptable.
3. When making decisions within the moral will of God, the Christian should seek wisdom.
4. In all decisions the Christian should humbly submit to the outworking of God's sovereign purposes. (James 4:15)

Getting Wisdom

Have an attitude of humility, reverence and teach-ability.

Ask God for wisdom. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. (James 1:5)

Apart from commands or principles, seek general wisdom from the Scriptures. (examples, etc.)

Seek wisdom through personal research.

Seek wisdom through the wise counsel of others.

Seek wisdom through life experiences, both good and bad.