







- c. The choices I make that have eternal rewards (that is, motivated by the Holy Spirit) always require a measure of faith, and include a perception of risk.** *Someone has said, “Don’t ask if something is possible, but rather ask, ‘Is it God’s will?’, because if it is God’s will, He will make it possible”.*

2 Cor 4:16-18 ... we do not give up.... For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. **So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen.** For what is seen is temporary, but **what is unseen is eternal.**  
Gal 3:11 ... the righteous will **live by faith.**  
Heb 11:6 ... **without faith it is impossible to please God...**  
1 Peter 1:6-7 ... now for a short time you have had to struggle in various trials **so that the genuineness of your faith**—more valuable than gold, which perishes though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- d. Choices based on faith may result in sacrifice and/or suffering. There is a price for obedience to His will. Trials ought not to be viewed as an enemy.**

Luke 21:1-4 He looked up and saw the rich dropping their offerings into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow dropping in two tiny coins. “I tell you the truth,” He said. “This poor widow has put in more than all of them. For all these people have put in gifts out of their surplus, but **she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on.**”  
Heb 5:8 Though He was God’s Son, **He learned obedience through what He suffered.**  
James 1:2-4 Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, knowing that **the testing of your faith produces endurance.** But endurance must do its complete work, **so that you may be mature and complete,** lacking nothing.

#### **4. Criteria - Four factors to consider in making right choices:**

- a. The Word of God: Does the Bible say something specific about the matter, or present principles related to it?**



Psalms 119:105 Your word is **a lamp** for my feet and **a light** on my path.  
2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable **for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training** in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.  
1 Thess 5:16-18 Rejoice always! Pray constantly. Give thanks in everything, for **this is God’s will for you** in Christ Jesus.  
1 Thess 4:3-5 For **this is God’s will,** your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality, so that each of you knows how to control his own body in sanctification and honor, not with lustful desires, like the Gentiles who don’t know God.  
Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able **to judge the ideas and thoughts of the heart.**

## **b. The Peace of God: Do I have God's peace?**

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Colossians 3:15 And let the peace of the Messiah, ... **control your hearts** (*that is: "act as an umpire"*). Be thankful.

Philippians 4:6-7 **Don't worry about anything**, but **in everything**, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And **the peace of God**, which surpasses every thought, **will guard your hearts and minds** in Christ Jesus.

**CAUTION: "Feelings" and "desires" may be deceptive. My natural tendency is to be independent rather than to follow His direction. I must be honest with myself! It is often helpful to ask myself (and God), "Would this be pleasing to God?"**

Proverbs 16:2 **All a man's ways seem right to him**, but the LORD evaluates the motives.

Proverbs 28:26 **The one who trusts in himself is a fool**, but one who walks in wisdom will be safe.

Jeremiah 17:9 **The heart** is more **deceitful** than anything else, and **incurable**—who can understand it?

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; **these are opposed** to each other, so that you don't do what you want.

**CAUTION: I need to confess any known sin.**

Psalms 66:18 **If I had been aware of malice in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.**

Proverbs 28:9 Anyone who turns his ear away from hearing the law—**even his prayer is detestable.**

Proverbs 28:13 **The one who conceals his sins will not prosper**, but whoever confesses and renounces them will find mercy.

James 4:3 You ask and don't receive **because you ask with wrong motives**, so that you may spend it on your evil desires.

1 John 1:5-10 Now this is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light, and **there is absolutely no darkness in Him**. If we say, "We have fellowship with Him," yet we walk in darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth. But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. **If we say, "We have no sin," we are deceiving ourselves**, and the truth is not in us. **If we confess our sins**, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say, "We don't have any sin," we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."

**c. Circumstances: There is really only "One Circumstance" and that is God. Are circumstances suitable? Are doors opening or closing?**

- **Finances? (Caution: If not used carefully, credit cards (and debt) can be a hindrance to God's freedom to use finances as a tool to guide me.)**
- **Is the obstacle (problems) I am experiencing a "Trial" or a "Direction?"**

**The path of least resistance may not be God's will. Difficulties or suffering do not necessarily prove that I am not in the center of God's will any more than material and comfort blessings prove that I am in the center of His will.**

2 Corinthians 1:8-9 (*Paul*) ... we were completely overwhelmed—beyond our strength—so that we even despaired of life. Indeed, we personally had a death sentence within ourselves, **so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God** who raises the dead.

2 Corinthians 11:24-28 (*Paul, in the center of God's will*) Five times I received 39 lashes from Jews. Three times I was beaten with rods by the Romans. Once I was stoned by my enemies. Three times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a night and a day in the open sea. On frequent journeys, I faced dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my own people, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the open country, dangers on the sea, and dangers among false brothers; labor and hardship, many sleepless nights, hunger and thirst, often without food, cold, and lacking clothing. Not to mention other things, there is the daily pressure on me: my care for all the churches.

**d. Spiritual counsel: I should seek godly and wise counsel. (My spouse may also "balance" me.)**



Proverbs 1:5 A wise man will listen and increase his learning, and **a discerning man will obtain guidance.**

Proverbs 12:15 A fool's way is right in his own eyes, but **whoever listens to counsel is wise.**

Proverbs 15:22 Plans fail when there is no counsel, but **with many advisers they succeed.**

Proverbs 19:20 **Listen to counsel and receive instruction so that you may be wise** later in life.

**CAUTION: Counsel can be wrong.**

Job 2:9 His (*Job's*) wife said to him, "Do you still retain your integrity? Curse God and die!"  
Job 42:7 ... He (*The LORD*) said to Eliphaz the Temanite: "I am angry with you and your two friends, for **you have not spoken the truth about Me**, as My servant Job has."  
(See also: 1 Kings 13:1-26)

## 5. Making Right Choices: Two different methods.

- a. **“Active”** - Unless otherwise directed I cautiously move ahead in what **honestly** appears to be the best direction, consciously trusting God to confirm or to restrain, by either opening or shutting doors.

**(You can't steer a parked car, or a boat that's tied to the dock.)**

**Note: This is usually the way we seek a spouse or a job, buy a house or a car; that is, things we desire.**

Psalm 37:23-24 A man's steps are established by the LORD, and He takes pleasure in his way.

Though he falls, he will not be overwhelmed, **because the LORD holds his hand.**

Proverbs 3:5-6 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.** (NKJV)

Isaiah 30:21 ... and **whenever you turn to the right or to the left,** your ears will hear this command behind you: “This is the way. Walk in it.”

Acts 16:6-10 They (*Paul and team*) went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia and **were prevented by the Holy Spirit from speaking the message in Asia.** When they came to Mysia, **they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.** So, bypassing Mysia, they came down to Troas. During the night a vision appeared to Paul: A Macedonian man was standing and pleading with him, “Cross over to Macedonia and help us!” After he had seen the vision, we immediately made efforts to set out for Macedonia, **concluding that God had called us** to evangelize them.

- b. **“Passive”** - I wait for God to do something “special” to confirm His guidance.

**I can often find myself using this method regarding things I may not desire to do. I am told to “wait” on the Lord, but I need to be careful that I don't use that as an excuse not to move forward in obedience, especially if I already understand what I should do, but am reluctant to trust.**

**We need to be honest with ourselves. Someone has said, “God will give us enough evidence to act upon, but usually not enough to convince”.**

Exodus 14:14 The LORD will fight for you; **you must be quiet.**

Psalm 27:14 **Wait** for the LORD; be strong and courageous. **Wait** for the LORD.

Psalm 37:7 **Be silent** before the LORD and **wait expectantly** for Him;...

### Questions to ask myself:

- If I could choose one course for my life, would it be one of my choosing or one of God's selection?
- Do I prefer to know God's plan and purpose for my daily life while I'm still here on earth and am able to act upon it, or would I rather wait until I stand before Christ at the Tribunal of Christ? (2 Cor. 5:10)

It seems reasonable that each of us is going to become aware of His purpose and plan for our life, either here on earth -- or there.