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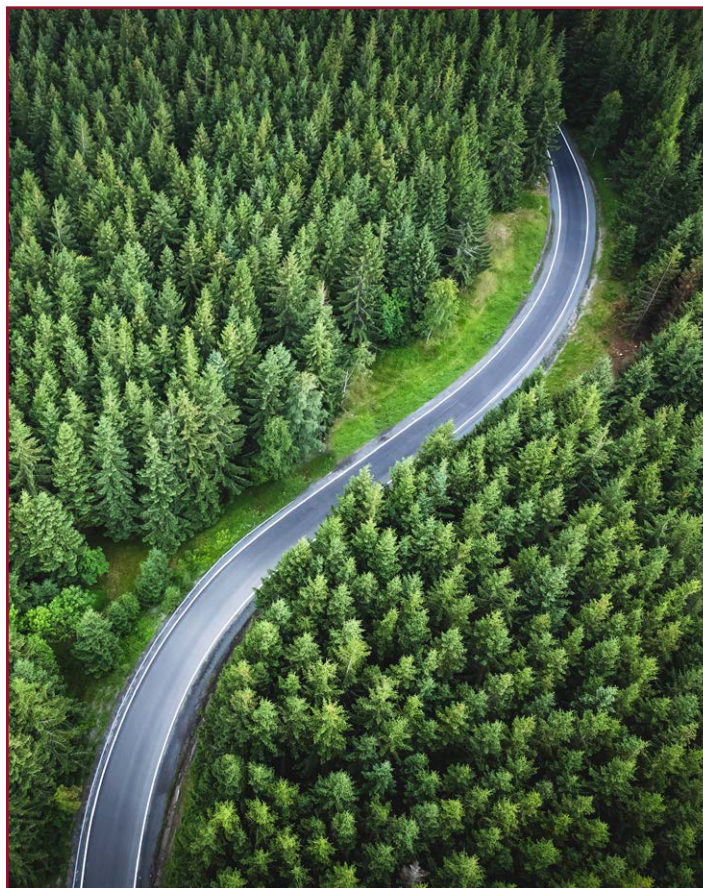


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FOCUSED ON THE WORD

Better Understanding His Guidance



What a mind-boggling wonder that God would empty Himself, *taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man*, and that *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him* (Philippians 2:7–8; 2 Corinthians 5:21). This unfathomable truth—that God would incarnate Himself to save us from our sin—bespeaks the depth of love expressed.

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WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

White House Cabinet and Governors: Wednesdays 8am (EST), light breakfast served
Senate Members: Tuesdays 8am, rotating offices, hot breakfast served
House Members: Thursdays 8am, Natural Resources, Longworth 1334, hot breakfast served

The views expressed in each Bible Study are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of any individual Bible Study sponsor.



PUBLIC SERVANT PROFILE

A Steady Reminder of Truth: Senator Ted Budd on the Capitol Ministries Bible Study



For U.S. Senator Ted Budd (R–North Carolina), the weekly Capitol Ministries Bible Study is far more than a scheduled meeting—it is a steady anchor of truth in the demanding environment of national leadership.

“It serves as a weekly reminder to me of biblical truth,” Senator Budd explains. “Some lessons are new because of the context that we’re in, and others are reminders of things we’ve seen before. We may have studied them on our own, but now we’re seeing them in a new light and with other Senate colleagues. It’s been tremendously important.”

As a public servant navigating complex decisions, Senator

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This same infinite and personal God cares not only for our eternal destiny, but also for the here and now. He is not removed from our day-to-day existence but is here to care and to guide. With that introduction in mind, this study should be a great aid to you as you reflect on upcoming goals and how you will best invest all that God has given you for maximum impact on the maximum number of people for His glory! May God bless you as you study this lesson.

I. INTRODUCTION

You have probably heard the now-cliché-like saying, “God has a wonderful plan for your life!” If you have not rejected Him as your Savior and Lord, I believe that statement to be true. God is sovereign, and He has a purpose for all of His creation. He has a plan or “will” for each of us, gifting us and providing us with time, talent, and treasure of varying degrees in order to achieve His specific purposes for our lives.

We often make His will more difficult to respond to than it really is. For the obedient believer, it would require a great deal of prolonged gymnastics to get out of the center of His will. In this lesson, we will explore God’s will and how we are guided into His will.

II. GOD’S WILL

A. THE MEANING OF GOD’S SOVEREIGN WILL

God’s sovereign will involves His ultimate, complete control over everything. Nothing happens that was not in God’s plan. History is really the unfolding of God’s purposes, which happen exactly as He has planned.

Read the following verses and write out the key thought about God’s sovereign will:

The LORD of hosts has sworn saying, “Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand” (Isaiah 14:24).

Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11).



*“Remember the former things long past
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,*

*Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, ‘My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’” (Isaiah 46:9–10).*

B. THE MEANING OF GOD’S COMMANDED WILL

God’s commanded will is revealed throughout the Bible as laws or principles. It is that aspect of His will to which men are held accountable.

According to the Great Commission, what are new believers to be taught? *“Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:20).

God gave two great commandments. Paraphrase these two commandments on the lines below each verse. *And He said to him, “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND”* (Matthew 22:37).

“The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF’” (Matthew 22:39).

C. THE NATURE OF GOD’S WILL

God’s sovereign will and commanded will are better understood in light of their respective characteristics. Study the following table and be ready to test your understanding of God’s *sovereign* will and His *commanded* will. A teaser—do you ever attribute something to “the sovereignty of God” that, in essence, is the responsibility of man?

VERSE OF THE WEEK



Ephesians 5:17

*So then do not be foolish,
but understand what
the will of the Lord is.*



God is not removed from our day-to-day existence, but is here to care and to guide.





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Budd values how Scripture is faithfully applied to the realities of governing.

“If it weren’t here, what would fill the vacuum would be less significant—a secular worldview,” he says. “We want biblical truth to have a place in the political marketplace of ideas. These are foundational truths that guide us as individuals and leaders. We carry them with us throughout the week, and they leave a lasting—even permanent—imprint.”

Quoting a familiar reminder, he adds, “Only what’s done for Christ will last.” The study, he says, continually points leaders back to doing their work for the purposes of Christ.

When asked what he would say to a colleague who might be hesitant about attending, Senator Budd’s response is simple and welcoming.

“People come from all different backgrounds and both parties. It’s a refreshing time together. I’d say come and give it a try. There’s no obligation to return—but those who come once usually come back.”

Senator Budd also expressed sincere appreciation for those who make this ministry possible.

“I’d just like to thank the

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SOVEREIGN WILL

COMMANDED WILL

Secret, known only as revealed through history or revelation

Revealed in the Bible

Cannot be resisted or thwarted

Can be resisted or disobeyed

Encompasses both good and evil

Involves only that which is good; holy

Comprehensive; controls all aspects of life, time, and history

Specific; provides principles for living

The believer is not commanded to know or discover what God has not revealed

Believers are exhorted to know, understand and obey all that God has revealed

Write out the part of the verse that conveys God’s will. *Circle the appropriate letter.* (Key: **S** = Sovereign, **C** = Commanded)

For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

S **C**

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

S **C**

Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14)

S **C**



“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter” (Matthew 7:21).

S C

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6).

S C

“For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11).

S C

Christianity best defined is not a religion; rather, it is a personal relationship with Christ. Incumbent in a personal relationship is exactly that—a personal relationship. If that understanding is correct, then it follows that a believer should presuppose that God has a special plan for his life and that He will guide him all the way. How do we best understand and discern that personalized guidance from above?

D. THE RESPONSE TO GOD’S WILL

How should we respond to God’s sovereign will?

Trust in the LORD with all your heart

And do not lean on your own understanding.

In all your ways acknowledge Him,

And He will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5–6).

Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right (1 Peter 4:19).

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supporters who make it possible for Capitol Ministries to serve here in Washington,” he said. “It’s a lot of travel and hard work, and I’m very grateful to the whole team and everyone who supports this ministry.”

For anyone sensing a call to bring biblical discipleship to leaders at the local level, Senator Budd points to Capitol Ministries as a trusted model.

“The quality of the materials is unmatched,” he explains. “They reflect decades of ministry at local, state, and national levels. You don’t have to reinvent the wheel—lean into Capitol Ministries, use the tools and structure they’ve developed with great skill and care.”





MINISTRY UPDATE

“This is a Dynamite Idea!” — How One Man Brought Bible Study to His City Hall



“When I came across Capitol Ministries, I thought, ‘This is a dynamite idea!’” says Tom McDonald, an 89-year-old retired military Colonel and former businessman. “I’ve long championed the idea that the best way for the church to engage in the political arena is teaching the Bible and making disciples.” Now living in Cumming, Georgia, Tom leads Capitol Ministries Bible studies in his community.

“The point is, it’s vitally important for the church members to be positively involved in the political establishment,” Tom explains. “How else can we help keep public servants on the straight and narrow and hold them accountable according to

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Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that” (James 4:13–15).

How should we respond to God’s commanded will?

So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17).

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 29:29).

How does the previous passage in particular summarize the differentiation of God’s sovereign will and God’s commanded will?

“You shall therefore love the LORD your God, and always keep His charge, His statutes, His ordinances, and His commandments” (Deuteronomy 11:1).

God instructs, we obey.

*Good and upright is the LORD;
Therefore He instructs sinners in the way.
He leads the humble in justice,
And He teaches the humble His way.*



All the paths of the LORD are lovingkindness and truth

To those who keep His covenant and His testimonies (Psalm 25:8–10).

III. GOD’S GUIDANCE

Because of His great love, God has predestined, called, justified, and will glorify all believers. He also guides day-by-day; He is intimate with the upright!

A. THE MEANING OF GUIDANCE

Guidance is God’s active role in our lives, accomplishing His purposes. Note the following words used in the Bible to describe guidance. Write down how the verse conveys the meaning of each word:

- 1. *Lead* (“to shepherd; to bear or carry”)

But He led forth His own people like sheep

And guided them in the wilderness like a flock (Psalm 78:52).

And see if there be any hurtful way in me,

And lead me in the everlasting way (Psalm 139:24).

- 2. *Guide* (“to show, to help understand”)

He restores my soul;

He guides me in the paths of righteousness

For His name’s sake (Psalm 23:3).

With Your counsel You will guide me,

And afterward receive me to glory (Psalm 73:24).

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Scripture? The vision that God gave Ralph Drollinger is starting to bear much fruit.”

As Tom dove deeper into the mission of Capitol Ministries, he knew he had been called to bring appropriate studies from the Word to the city leaders.

“I decided I had to be part of what Ralph is doing and what needs to be done—not just in America.”



Ready to take action, Tom faced a challenge. He was relatively new to the city of Cumming and didn’t know anyone at city hall.

“I put together several folders explaining the ministry,” he recalls. “I figured if I visited the City Hall, I might locate the Mayor’s office and ask for a short visit.”

Tom walked into the four-story city hall, planning to start from the bottom and simply

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familiarize himself with the building and its departments. What he didn't realize was that God was already working behind the scenes.



“I pushed the elevator button to go up, and as the doors opened, a man stepped in and said hello. We started chatting. He asked, ‘Are you looking for someone?’ I said, ‘Well, I don’t know much about Cumming, but I was hoping to ask the mayor and city council if they’d allow me to present a Bible study.’ The man smiled and said, ‘Well, I’m the mayor.’”

Tom laughs as he remembers the moment: “If that’s not a divine appointment, I don’t know what is.”

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3. *Direct* (“to establish or prepare; to make straight”)

*The mind of man plans his way,
But the LORD directs his steps* (Proverbs 16:9).

May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ (2 Thessalonians 3:5).

A. THE NATURE OF GUIDANCE

The following chart outlines ways in which God guides people directly or indirectly.

DIRECT GUIDANCE	INDIRECT GUIDANCE
Spoken revelation of God	God’s Word
Visions	Conscience or conviction
Dreams	Providence (circumstances controlled by God)
Prophet/apostle	Wisdom and counsel

Direct guidance was experienced during the Old Testament and early New Testament time periods. Today God primarily guides indirectly. The Holy Spirit is active in all areas of indirect guidance as part of His ministry in the believer.

B. GUIDANCE THROUGH GOD’S WORD

How does the psalmist describe God’s Word?

*Your word is a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path* (Psalm 119:105).



C. GUIDANCE THROUGH CONVICTION

How was Paul stimulated to action in Athens? *Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols* (Acts 17:16).

D. GUIDANCE THROUGH GOD'S PROVIDENCE

About what can the believer be confident regardless of the circumstances? *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose* (Romans 8:28).

E. GUIDANCE THROUGH GOD-GIVEN WISDOM

Read Proverbs 2:1–11. What four things will wisdom allow you to discern (v. 9)?

- ¹*My son, if you will receive my words
And treasure my commandments within you,*
 - ²*Make your ear attentive to wisdom,
Incline your heart to understanding;*
 - ³*For if you cry for discernment,
Lift your voice for understanding;*
 - ⁴*If you seek her as silver
And search for her as for hidden treasures;*
 - ⁵*Then you will discern the fear of the LORD
And discover the knowledge of God.*
 - ⁶*For the LORD gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.*
 - ⁷*He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,*
 - ⁸*Guarding the paths of justice,
And He preserves the way of His godly ones.*
 - ⁹*Then you will discern righteousness
And justice and equity and every good course.*
 - ¹⁰*For wisdom will enter your heart
And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;*
 - ¹¹*Discretion will guard you,
understanding will watch over you.*
-

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The mayor was surprisingly open to the idea and gladly accepted the Capitol Ministries folder. Moreover, that very evening, he shared Tom's vision with the city council—and they agreed to participate.

“Is that not amazing?” Tom says. “I went on to teach 52 Bible studies using *Oaks in Office* by Ralph Drollinger to the mayor, the city administrator, and several council members.”

Tom does not hide his delight in being able to lead the Bible studies. “I am sincerely grateful to Mayor Troy Brumbalow for supporting this ministry and providing a time and space for us to gather and grow in God's Word,” he says.

As part of his daily routine, Tom begins each morning by reading the Bible. He has a deep love for God and His Word and makes it a priority to study it every day.

Tom also expressed his gratitude to Ralph Drollinger for the excellent Bible studies he prepares for local government leaders.

“These studies are an incredible resource,” Tom said. “They're deeply appreciated by those of

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us who meet regularly with our local officials. They provide a strong biblical foundation for meaningful discussions. The need for churches to get involved in political matters is something I've always supported. Over the last 60 years, as the church has pulled back its influence, our culture has slipped into decline. The church didn't rise up and say, 'Enough! Let's remember who we are—the nation founded on freedom to pursue individual moral endeavors and faith in the God of the Bible.' It's time for the people of America to get back to God and the values that shaped this country."

If you would like to support the ministry efforts in Cumming, Georgia, please scan the QR code below to learn more and give.



IV. APPLICATION

List one area in which you are wrestling with a decision and need guidance in the coming year.

Relative to the four areas/kinds of direction God has made available to you per this study, evaluate your thinking and decision based on each form of His indirect guidance, and list several steps you plan to take to follow God's direction.

What are some applicable principles from God's commanded will that come into play in terms of direction and guidance from scriptural passages?

Are the convictions of your conscience based on biblical principles? If so, what does your conscience inform you is the right thing to do?

What are the extenuating circumstances surrounding the situation? Importantly, do the extenuating circumstances stem from another's obedience or disobedience to the Word of God? Accordingly, does the decision you need to make stem from the sovereign will of God or the irresponsibility of man? (Don't facetiously categorize



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