

Principle Number 5 – Reflection, Prayer & Confirmation 02/01/12 (pm)

1. Reflection

- What are others saying?
- What is the situation and timing?
- Is there provision?

What are others saying?

Many times, God communicates and confirms His will for us through others. As you contemplate your decision, consider what others have been saying to you. They will see in you and encourage you to follow God's promptings.

What is the situation and timing?

2 Corinthians 13:1 This is the third time I am coming to you. Every fact is to be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Proverbs 24:16 For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, But the wicked stumble in *time of* calamity.

Many times, the situation and/or timing can provide guidance as we attempt to know God's will for us. However, the situation and timing can also be misleading if not brought into balance.

Realize that not all restraint or opposition is from the devil. God will often oppose those whose ways are reckless before Him.

We must understand that sometimes we must speak to our circumstances - sometimes our circumstances speak to us.

Is there provision?

The question is not one of prosperity but of provision.

Prayer

Seven Steps of Focused Prayer:

Jesus teaches that prayer is focused. Although Jesus says we are actually to say this prayer, He does not suggest that this become a rigid ritual, but that it is to be used as a guide to prayer:

This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." (Matthew 6:9-13)

Our Father:

To begin, we must silence the activity of our noisy environment and soul, thinking about Who God is and who we are in relationship to Him – we are His children, He is our Father.

Hallowed be Your Name:

Enter His presence through praise and worship; as you think about Him, speak to Him of His goodness and virtue.

Your Kingdom come:

Ask for the establishment of God's rule today in the lives and circumstances of those in authority (government at all levels, those in places of leadership, the church, etc.), your family, your loved ones, those in need of prayer as you remember them in meditation, as well as yourself.

Give us:

Pray daily asking for God's provision as He sees fit – learn to be content with whatever he provides; invite the Holy Spirit daily, moment-by-moment, to empower you for worship, witness, and warfare (Galatians 5:16). Ask God for direction regarding your situation.

And forgive us:

Ask God to forgive you knowing that God will only forgive our sins as we forgive others who have sinned against us; if you have something you've been holding against another brother or sister in Christ, it is imperative that you go to that person and mend the relationship, ask God to forgive you – and be at peace – regardless of the outcome, knowing that you've done all you can to bring healing and restoration to the relationship.

And do not lead us:

Ask for God's strength to stand in His might; put on the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20); pray for a hedge of protection about yourself and your loved ones.

For Yours is the kingdom:

Thank God for sharing His kingdom, power and glory with you.

Confirmation

We all need more spiritually mature brothers and sisters speaking into our lives. If we desire our faith to be strengthened, we should not shrink from opportunities where our faith may be tried, and therefore, through trial, be strengthened.

Proverbs 24:3 By wisdom a house is built, And by understanding it is established;

Many of us have had good, godly counsel that has changed our lives. Counsel is not prophecy. It is usually a recommendation and should be considered only as such.

Proverbs 11:14 Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory.

Proverbs 24:6 For by wise guidance you will wage war, And in abundance of counselors there is victory.

Proverbs 15:22 Without consultation, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors they succeed.

In 2 Chron. 10, the Lord raised up Jeroboam against Rehoboam, the successor to Solomon. Here, we see a man consulting with the elders, rejecting their counsel, consulting with a

group of young, inexperienced friends, and taking their counsel. As a result, the kingdom was divided.

Why do Christians today who are in trouble go to others who are just like themselves for prayer and advice? Listening to ungodly counsel will always bring division and corruption.

“Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” (1 Cor. 15:33)

We all tend to shy away from godly counsel. Could it be that we really don't want to hear what someone else might say? Or is it that we don't want to hear an opposing viewpoint? We must remember that God's counsel is always redemptive in nature.

The people we associate with will shape our attitudes. If we run with negative people we will soon become negative. Likewise, if we associate with godly, joy-filled people, we will soon find ourselves becoming just like them. Don't walk away from negative, critical people – RUN!

The Bible says that if you can't receive godly counsel, you are not wise.

Proverbs 9:9 Give *instruction* to a wise man and he will be still wiser, Teach a righteous man and he will increase *his* learning.

Jeremiah 7:24 “Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in *their own* counsels *and* in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.

Psalms 1:1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

The friends we choose determine to a great extent our destiny and success in life - godly counsel is a prerequisite for prosperity in its broadest sense. Godly counsel is the mirror that can show us deception. We all need help to see our blind spots. We are to live examined lives.

Lamentations 3:40 Let us examine and probe our ways, And let us return to the Lord.

God doesn't give counsel to hurt us but to change us. Changing churches does not solve a problem. If you leave with a problem because you don't agree with the counsel of the elders, you take the problem with you. It will rise up again wherever you go.

Proverbs 27:9 Oil and perfume make the heart glad, So a man's counsel is sweet to his friend.

We are never to be controlled by another person. It is in a multitude of counsel where safety is found.

Finally, anytime there is pressure or an attempt to hurry your decision, just say NO! God is never in a hurry with the decisions He is placing before you. The bigger the decision, the more time is required for direction.