

7 Ways to KNOW God's VOICE For Your Life and Business



Plus 3 Biblical Tests That Clarify Everything

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CHAPTER ONE: Be Transformed by the Renewing of Your Mind

I was completely undone.

In 1994, we went to Guatemala to hold a Bible Incorporated Seminar at a big hotel. We were on a tight budget and hoping for a successful event, but three big things happened that greatly impacted our end result.

First, I had ordered 500 beautiful workbooks to be printed locally and delivered to the venue the morning of the event. The printer showed up with 5000 books, insisting that was what we ordered and demanded payment in full, or we couldn't have any workbooks.

Second, when we got inside the hotel, I was informed that the posters all over the city said, "Lunch Included", but were supposed to say, "Lunch NOT Included".

With 250 attendees showing up at a world class hotel we either had to explain that it was a typo (and appear to not be keeping our word) or buy 250 people a nice catered lunch.

That was pricy!

Third, as the day progressed, we offered the recording of the event for sale and our local team was to take payment and shipping info so we could mail them out. When the day was over, I was informed that virtually everyone in attendance bought.

I was so relieved! We put the cash box in a safe at the hotel and didn't even count it until after we got back to our room. When we opened that box, there was almost no money in it. Our local team had apparently mistaken the instructions and instead of taking payment from attendees, they simply took their contact info..

We were devastated. Not only had we lost all the revenue from the recordings, (our only hope of recovering our losses) but we now had to contact folks and try

to salvage the sale. The problem was that I didn't speak Spanish, my local team had vanished, and my American team insisted that wasn't their job! We were facing financial ruin and the potential destruction of our ministry's reputation.

That night, I stepped out onto a balcony overlooking the city, desperate for His direction. Should we cut our losses and go home? Should we try to fulfill the orders somehow?

In that moment of crisis, I needed something that would change how I make decisions for the rest of my life. In the weeks that followed, God didn't just give me an answer - He gave me a framework for discerning His will that has guided every major decision since.

Why This Matters More Than Ever

We're living in unprecedented times. The business landscape changes daily. What worked yesterday may be obsolete tomorrow. Traditional wisdom fails us when facing decisions our fathers never dreamed of.

Yet God's will remains constant. His principles are timeless. His guidance is available to every believer who genuinely seeks it.

The problem isn't that God is hiding His will from us. The problem is that most of us don't know how to recognize His voice above the noise of our culture, our fears, and our own desires.

Think about it... How many business decisions have you made based on fear rather than faith? How many opportunities have you missed because you couldn't discern God's timing? How many times have you chosen the "safe" path only to discover it led nowhere?

I've been there. We all have.

But what if I told you there's a better way? What if you could know with confidence that your next major decision aligns with God's perfect will for your life and business?

The Seven Ways Plus Three Tests

Over the past three decades of business and ministry, I've discovered seven reliable ways to discern God's will, plus three biblical tests that serve as your final filter for any decision.

The seven ways are:

1. **Transform Your Mind** - Learn to think God's thoughts (Romans 12:2)
2. **Get Intimate with God Through Prayer** - Develop a relationship, not just a ritual (Psalm 37:4)
3. **Let Scripture Be Your GPS** - Use God's Word as your navigation system (Psalm 119:105)
4. **Seek Wise Counsel** - Iron sharpens iron (Proverbs 15:22)
5. **Read the Signs** - Recognize God's providence at work (Proverbs 16:9)
6. **Listen to the Spirit's Voice Within** - Develop spiritual sensitivity (John 16:13)
7. **Trust and Wait** - Exercise faith that moves mountains (James 1:4)

The three tests that filter every decision:

1. **Does it require compromise?** (1 Thessalonians 5:22)
2. **Is it producing Godly fruit or confusion and destruction?** (Matthew 7:16)
3. **Is it born of faith - or fear, greed, or pride?** (Romans 14:23)

How to Use This Book

This isn't just another "how-to" book. It's a field manual for hearing God's voice in the marketplace. Each chapter builds on the previous one, but you can also jump to whatever section addresses your most pressing need.

Whether you're facing a career change, considering a business partnership, evaluating an investment opportunity, or simply wanting to align your daily decisions with God's purposes, these principles will guide you.

I've seen them work for startup entrepreneurs, ministry leaders and marketplace professionals, for young adults just starting out and seasoned veterans looking for their next chapter.

The key is not just to read these principles but to apply them. God's will isn't a mystery to be solved but a relationship to be lived.

By the time you finish this book, you'll have a proven framework for making decisions that honor God, serve others, and fulfill your divine destiny. You'll know how to recognize His voice, trust His timing, and walk confidently in His perfect will.

Let's begin...

Chapter 1: Transform Your Mind - Think God's Thoughts

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." - Romans 12:2

The first and most fundamental way to know God's will is to think like He thinks.

This sounds simple, but it's revolutionary. Most of us make decisions based on worldly wisdom, cultural norms, or personal preferences. We ask questions like: "What will make me the most money?" "What's the safest option?" "What will others think?"

God asks different questions: "What will bring Me glory?" "What will serve others best?" "What aligns with My eternal purposes?"

The Battle for Your Mind

Your mind is a battlefield. Every day, you're bombarded with messages about what success looks like, how to make decisions, and what really matters in life.

The world says: "Look out for number one." "Get yours while you can." "If it feels good, do it." God says: "Seek first My kingdom." "Give and it will be given to you." "Trust Me even when it doesn't make sense to you."

These aren't just different philosophies - they're completely different operating systems. You can't run God's software on the world's hardware.

That's why Paul says we must be *"transformed by the renewing of your mind."* The Greek word for "transformed" is metamorphoo - the same word used to describe a caterpillar becoming a butterfly. It's not just change; it's complete transformation.

What Mind Renewal Actually Looks Like

Mind renewal isn't about positive thinking or mental exercises. It's about replacing worldly thought patterns with biblical ones. Here's how it works in practice:

Instead of thinking: "I need to protect my interests first" **Think:** "How can I serve others while trusting God to meet my needs?" **Instead of thinking:** "I can't afford to take this risk" **Think:** "What is God calling me to do, and how can I step out in faith?" **Instead of thinking:** "Everyone else is doing it this way" **Think:** "What does God's Word say about this situation?"

For example, one day I was studying Proverbs 2:3-5 which says, *"Yes, if you cry after knowledge, and lift up your voice for understanding; If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt you understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God."* Psalm 111:10 adds, *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."*

Well, I was wanting to learn an effective marketing model for online business and I knew of one very worldly man who looked to be very successful with his model, so I thought I would try to find out how he did what he did.

No sooner had I started to look for that, when I decided instead, to take that passage in Proverbs 2 and fully expand some of the key words. When I dug into the Greek and got the full meaning, everything changed. Here is how it read after I fully amplified it...

*"If you cry out for the ability to think **strategically and analytically** with the capacity to **see the WHY behind things**, so you can discern between options or nuances... And if you lift up your voice asking for the ability to **analyze and reason** with a **mind skilled at processing complex or layered issues** ; If you seek this as you would silver, and search for this as for hidden treasures; Then you will be able to perceive, separate mentally, and **distinguish between things**, and grasp the meaning of the reverential awe of God which is the beginning of the ability to skillfully navigate life **with mastery and expertise and acquire the intimate, experiential knowing of God.**"*

I then cried out for that ability to think like that and to process complex or layered issues. Right then and there, He directed my attention to natural light and its role in photosynthesis, which in itself is a value conversion process.

For me, God seldom explains things to me. He usually directs my thinking in a certain direction, and I must study and learn. After all, Proverbs 25:2 says, *"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter."*

What I discovered about marketing through the science of photosynthesis and how a tree attracts and deflects certain frequencies was profound in its application to marketing. It's something I teach in the Jesus School of Business. But the point is that instead of just copying someone else's approach to the market, I decided to go to the Word and ask God to show me His ways, and He did.

When I wanted a model for growing a business, I studied how Jesus grew His Father's business which is summed up in Matthew and is a powerful strategy.

This transformation of thinking like God thinks, doesn't happen overnight. It's a daily choice to align your thoughts with God's thoughts, your ways with His ways.

The First Test: Does It Require Compromise?

"Abstain from all appearance of evil." - 1 Thessalonians 5:22

Here's your first filter for every decision: Does this opportunity, partnership, or strategy require you to compromise your integrity or violate biblical principles?

God's will never require you to sin. Never. If you have to lie, cheat, manipulate, or violate your conscience to make something work, it's not from God.

This seems obvious, but you'd be amazed how many Christians rationalize compromise when the stakes are high enough. They tell themselves:

"It's not that big a deal"

"Everyone does business this way"

"I'll make it right later"

"The reward is too big to pass up"

But God's standard is clear: "*Abstain from all appearance of evil.*" Not just evil itself, but even the appearance of evil.

Business Applications

In the marketplace, this test eliminates many options immediately:

Partnerships that require you to misrepresent your products or services.

Marketing strategies that manipulate or deceive customers.

Financial arrangements that aren't completely transparent.

Competitive practices that harm others unnecessarily.

Employment situations that compromise your values.

God's will for my life includes being His ambassador in the marketplace. Any opportunity that requires me to hide my faith fails the first test.

The Transformation Process

Renewing your mind is like reprogramming a computer. You have to identify the old code (worldly thinking patterns) and replace it with new code (biblical truth).

Here's a practical process:

Step 1: Identify Worldly Thought Patterns Pay attention to your automatic thoughts when facing decisions. What assumptions are you making? What fears are driving you? What desires are motivating you?

Step 2: Find the Biblical Alternative For every worldly thought pattern, find the corresponding biblical truth. Use a concordance or Bible app to search for relevant verses.

Step 3: Meditate and Memorize Don't just read the verses - meditate on them. Memorize key passages. Let God's Word saturate your thinking.

Step 4: Practice the New Pattern When the old thought pattern surfaces, consciously replace it with the biblical truth. This takes practice and persistence.

Step 5: Seek Accountability Share your commitment to biblical thinking with trusted friends or mentors who can help you stay on track.

Real-World Example

Let me share how this played out in my own business experience. I was out doing a training call with a new salesman at a company who sold CNC (Computerized Numerical Control) manufacturing equipment.

When we arrived at one of his calls, the owner came out to inform us that he had just purchased from the competition the day before and had taken delivery, claiming it was \$15,000 less for the "very same thing".

The salesman turned around to walk out the door realizing we were too late, but I asked if we could see the equipment he had purchased in operation.

My worldly mind would have said: "This is a waste of time. The sale is lost. Move on to the next prospect."

But I had been learning to think God's thoughts. Instead of giving up, I felt prompted to continue the conversation and learn more about his business needs.

The owner was only too glad to show off his new \$53,000 investment. While speaking with him and learning about his business, the Holy Spirit spoke to me completely out of the blue. He told me we were going to walk out with the sale for my client's equipment which represented a \$68,000 investment.

That seemed so crazy to me that I literally laughed out loud in the middle of a serious business conversation. But because I was learning to trust God's perspective over my own, I continued the conversation.

By asking the right questions and truly listening to his needs, we uncovered that he had made a terrible mistake buying from the competitor. The equipment he purchased couldn't actually do what he needed for his business.

The end result was that he returned the equipment he had just purchased and bought from my client instead. That day we walked out with a signed agreement and a check. That would never have happened if I was still thinking with a worldly mindset.

The Key Questions for Mind Transformation

When facing any decision, ask yourself these questions:

1. **What would Jesus do in this situation?**
2. **How does this align with biblical principles?**
3. **What would love look like here?**
4. **How can I serve others through this decision?**
5. **What would bring God the most glory?**

These questions will gradually transform how you think about everything from daily tasks to major life decisions.

Common Obstacles to Mind Renewal

Obstacle 1 – Cultural Pressure: The world will constantly pressure you to conform to its thinking patterns. You'll be called naive, impractical, or unrealistic for thinking biblically. **Solution:** Remember that God's ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). What looks foolish to the world is often wisdom to God.

Obstacle 2 – Past Failures: You may have tried to think biblically before, and it didn't work out as expected. This can create doubt about God's wisdom. **Solution:** Understand that God's timing is perfect, even when ours isn't. What looks like failure in the short term may be protection or preparation for something better.

Obstacle 3 – Immediate Gratification: Biblical thinking often requires patience and delayed gratification, while worldly thinking promises quick results. **Solution:** Focus on eternal rewards rather than temporary gains. Remember that God's blessings are worth waiting for.

The Fruit of Transformed Thinking

When you consistently think God's thoughts, several things happen:

Clarity Increases: Decisions become clearer because you're using God's value system rather than the world's confused priorities.

Peace Multiplies: You experience supernatural peace because you're aligned with God's will rather than fighting against it.

Wisdom Grows: You begin to see situations from God's perspective, which gives you wisdom beyond your years or experience.

Influence Expands: People are drawn to the wisdom and peace that flows from biblical thinking.

Results Improve: While this isn't the primary goal, God blesses what He ordains and if you're doing what He ordains, you'll be blessed.

The transformation of your mind is the foundation for knowing God's will. Without it, the other six ways will be filtered through worldly thinking and lose their power.

When your mind is renewed, when you're thinking God's thoughts, you become a powerful force for His kingdom in the marketplace. You make decisions that honor Him, serve others, and fulfill your divine destiny.

This is where knowing God's will begins - with a mind that has been transformed by His truth.

Chapter 2: Get Intimate with God Through Prayer - Your Direct Line to Heaven

"Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart." - Psalm 37:4

Prayer isn't a religious duty you check off your daily list. It's your direct communication line with the Creator of the universe, and it's the most underutilized business tool in your arsenal.

Most people treat prayer like a cosmic vending machine: insert request, expect immediate results. But knowing God's will through prayer is about developing an intimate relationship where you learn to recognize His voice, understand His heart, and align your desires with His purposes.

Prayer as a Business Strategy

I know that sounds strange, but hear me out. Prayer isn't just about asking God to bless your plans - it's about discovering His plans and positioning yourself to participate in them.

When you pray about business decisions, you're not trying to convince God to support your agenda. You're seeking to understand His agenda and find your place in it.

This completely changes how you approach opportunities, partnerships, and challenges. Instead of asking, "God, please make this work," you're asking, "God, what are You doing here, and how can I join You?"

For example, back in 1988 I had started a business and it was floundering badly.

One Sunday night at church the pastor was preaching and said, "Instead of asking God to bless what you're doing, why don't you ask God what He's blessing and do that?!"

So, right there in the church pew, I asked God what He was blessing and He responded, "Psalm 68:11" which reads, *"The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it."*

Stunned, I asked... You want me to publish Your Word??? Aren't there already a lot of Bibles? As I prayed on it, I said, Give me an idea, and I'll do it.

Within a few days, I had the idea to self-publish The Bible Incorporated book which became one of the best-selling Christian business books of all time.

The Third Test: Is It Born of Faith or Fear?

"Everything that does not come from faith is sin." - Romans 14:23

Before we dive deeper into prayer, let's establish the third test for discerning God's will: Is this decision born of faith, or is it driven by fear, greed, or pride?

God's guidance always leads to faith-based decisions. His voice produces confidence, peace, and a sense of rightness, even when the path seems challenging.

Fear-based decisions feel urgent, desperate, and driven by worst-case scenarios. They're reactive rather than responsive. Greed-based decisions are motivated by "getting yours" rather than serving others or advancing God's kingdom.

Pride-based decisions are about proving yourself, impressing others, or maintaining your reputation rather than doing what's right.

Here's how to tell the difference:

Faith-based decisions: - Bring peace, even in uncertainty - Focus on serving others - Trust God with the outcomes - Are motivated by love and obedience - Consider long-term kingdom impact.

Fear/Greed/Pride-based decisions: - Create anxiety and urgency - Focus on self-protection or self-advancement - Try to control all variables - Are motivated by insecurity or selfishness - Consider only short-term personal gain.

Developing Intimacy Through Prayer

True intimacy with God through prayer develops over time and involves several key elements:

1. Consistency Over Intensity

You don't need to pray for hours to develop intimacy with God. You need to pray regularly. Better to have a brief, genuine conversation with God every day than to have one marathon prayer session per week. Start with just 10-15 minutes daily. Focus on quality, not quantity.

2. Two-Way Communication

Most people treat prayer like a monologue - they talk to God but never listen for His response. Real intimacy requires dialogue. After you share your concerns, requests, and gratitude with God, spend time in silence. Listen. Pay attention to thoughts that seem to come from outside your normal thinking patterns. Notice Scripture verses that come to mind. Be aware of impressions or promptings.

3. Honesty Over Religiosity

God already knows what you're thinking and feeling. You don't need to clean up your prayers or use religious language. Be honest about your fears, doubts, frustrations, and desires. David's psalms are full of raw emotion - anger, fear, confusion, joy. God can handle your honesty. In fact, He prefers it to religious pretense.

A Real-World Prayer Example

Let me share how this played out in my own experience. I was flying back to Nashville from the West Coast and was looking forward to the long flight because it gave me several hours of non-interrupted time for working on a proposal I wanted to get done.

I was seated in an aisle seat at the bulkhead which was ideal for leg room and minimal interruptions. A man in his thirties and his mother in her sixties took the two seats to my immediate left. I had hoped for more elbow room but opened my laptop and began working before they had even closed the door to the plane.

I was sending a nonverbal message to the passengers next to me, that I wanted to be left to my work. But as I was talking with the Lord while sitting in my seat, He said something to me about talking to them about being "born again".

I hate to admit this, but I was so focused on my business agenda and self-imposed time pressures, that I literally turned around and looked at all the passengers

filling the plane behind me and told the Lord, they looked like they all needed to be born again. I then resumed my work, ignoring what He had just spoken to me.

The man next to me then turned and asked if I was working. I thought to myself, "What does it look like?" I curtly replied, "Yes."

He then asked me what kind of work I did. I told him I taught Biblical principles and strategies for sales and business, hoping that short sentence would end the conversation.

It did not.

He then asked me, "Are you what they call, a born again Christian?"

"Yes", I replied.

Then he asked me, "What does it mean to be born again?"

I guess my level of disobedience had its limits. I closed my computer and for the rest of the long flight, he and his mother eagerly asked me about my faith. They were hungry to know more. Someone had obviously planted the seed. I merely watered that time, and trusted God to bring the increase.

Although I was in the end, happy to be a witness, I was also disappointed that I got no work done towards future client acquisition.

When I got off the plane, my wife handed me a letter that had come in from a Fortune 100 company, with whom I had no previous contact. They invited me to come and speak to their mid-level managers at corporate headquarters in New Jersey.

That was an account I would never have even had on my prospect list, let alone expect to secure, and here it was, handed to me on a platter when my flight touched down. I did absolutely nothing to get that account. It was just given to me.

This experience taught me that walking with God and doing what He asks is in fact the shortest path to success, even when it looks like a detour. The key is to not make up your own detours, but rather be on the lookout for His invitations and take them.

Practical Prayer Strategies for Business

Morning Briefing: Start each day by asking God what He wants you to focus on. Don't just present your agenda - ask for His. You might be surprised by what He highlights as important. The answer comes more from your gut than a random thought in your brain.

Decision Checkpoints: Before making any significant decision, pause and pray. Even a 30-second prayer can provide clarity and peace. Ask: "God, what do You think about this?"

For example, when I placed my first order for 25,000 leather bound Bible Incorporated books with the printer, they asked me if I was certain I wanted that many books. After all, I was told, the average book in America never sells more than 5000 copies, and I had no distribution outlet. I was just a guy with a basement big enough to store the books.

I put my hand over the phone and shot a quick prayer to the Lord and it seemed to me that He was fine with it, so I confirmed my first order of books, despite having no way of selling them.

All I had left to do after placing the order, was sell enough of them before the bill came due, to pay for them! It's a longer story, but everything worked out just fine and we were sold out of our first print run in about eight months.

Problem-Solving Prayer: When facing challenges, don't just ask God to fix the problem. Ask Him to show you what He wants you to learn, how He wants you to grow, or what He wants to accomplish through the situation.

For example, in a much earlier business, I bought copy paper wholesale and then called on businesses with copiers and sold it to them. However, I placed an initial order of five tons and the bill was coming due with most of the paper still in a public storage facility.

I asked God for an idea to sell the paper and He gave me a promotional idea which worked very well and actually led to me selling the company to a national supplier for a small, but tidy profit.

Opportunity Evaluation: When new opportunities arise, pray about them before getting excited or making commitments. Ask God to show you His perspective on the opportunity and your role in it.

Shortly after I started Hidden Manna Publishing, I got a call from the president of the company I had previously worked for. They were opening a new branch office and offered me the position of branch manager, a role that would have paid me more than I had ever made.

However, a quick silent prayer while listening to him, confirmed the fact that I was to continue on the course of publishing and let what would have previously been seen as a dream opportunity, pass me by.

We continued with publishing, writing and selling hundreds of thousands of books, changing lives for eternity and impacting the marketplace for Christ.

Relationship Prayer: Pray for the people you work with, do business with, and serve. Ask God to show you how to love them better and serve their needs more effectively.

For example, before I started Hidden Manna Publishing, I was the sales trainer for a large copier company. I had arranged a meeting with one of the salesmen midafternoon and returned for our appointment. However, he didn't arrive until end of day.

I was a little perturbed because I had arranged my schedule to meet him for a review and some coaching. When asked why he was a couple hours late, he said he had just been driving around.

I called him into my office intending to reprimand him strongly when the Lord spoke to me one simple word... "Mercy".

I said, "Mercy? He doesn't deserve mercy!" And the Lord said, "Neither did you, but before he leaves your office today, he will be born again and then you are free to leave your job."

Well sure enough, I changed my tone and tack with him, and about an hour later, prayed with him to receive Christ.

Learning to Recognize God's Voice

One of the biggest challenges in prayer is learning to distinguish God's voice from your own thoughts, emotions, or desires. Here are some guidelines:

God's voice typically: Aligns with Scripture - Brings peace, even when challenging - Focuses on serving others - Calls you to growth and faith - Has an eternal perspective - Produces good fruit over time

Your own voice typically: Contradicts Scripture or ignores it - Creates anxiety or pressure - Focuses on self-interest - Keeps you in your comfort zone - Has a short-term perspective - Produces mixed or negative results

The enemy's voice typically: Directly contradicts Scripture - Creates fear, condemnation, or confusion - Focuses on destruction or division - Calls you to sin or compromise - Has a destructive perspective - Produces bad fruit consistently

The Role of Desire in Prayer

Psalm 37:4 says, "*Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.*" This doesn't mean God will give you whatever you want. It means that as you delight in Him, your desires will align with His.

When you're truly intimate with God, you begin to want what He wants. Your desires become His desires. This is one of the most reliable ways to know God's will - when your deepest desires align with biblical principles and serve others' good.

But be careful not to confuse desires with lusts. Desires that come from intimacy with God are: - Align with His purpose for your life - Aligned with Scripture - Sustainable over time - Produce peace and joy - Consider eternal impact

Hypothetical Example: The Partnership Decision

Imagine you're considering a business partnership that could significantly expand your company. The numbers look good, the market opportunity is real, and your advisors are encouraging you to move forward.

But as you pray about it, you keep feeling uneasy. The potential partner has a reputation for aggressive tactics that, while legal, seem to contradict your values.

When you apply the third test - "Is this born of faith or fear?" - you realize your motivation is partly fear of missing out (FOMO) and partly greed for the potential profits.

Through prayer, God shows you that this partnership would require you to compromise your integrity (failing the first test) and would likely produce confusion and damaged relationships (failing the second test).

Instead of the partnership, God leads you to a smaller but more aligned opportunity that serves your customers better and allows you to maintain your values. While the immediate financial gain is less, the long-term fruit is much greater.

Common Prayer Mistakes in Business

Mistake 1: Praying Only in Crisis - Many people only pray about business when things go wrong. This is like only talking to your spouse when you need something. **Solution:** Make prayer a regular part of your business routine, not just an emergency measure.

Mistake 2: Trying to Convince God - Some people use prayer to present their case to God, trying to convince Him that their plan is best. **Solution:** Come to prayer with open hands and an open heart, ready to receive God's direction even if it's different from your preference.

Mistake 3: Expecting Immediate Answers - We live in an instant-gratification culture, and we often expect God to work on our timeline. **Solution:** Be patient. God's timing is perfect, even when it doesn't match your schedule. In John 16:12, Jesus recognized that the disciples weren't ready to hear what He wanted them

to know. However, He promised that the Holy Spirit would come later and guide them.

Mistake 4: Ignoring God's Answers - Sometimes we pray for guidance but then ignore what God shows us because it's not what we wanted to hear. **Solution:** Commit to obey whatever God shows you, even before you pray.

The Fruit of Intimate Prayer

When you develop true intimacy with God through prayer, several things happen in your business life:

Supernatural Wisdom: You begin to see situations from God's perspective, which gives you wisdom beyond your experience or education.

Divine Connections: God orchestrates relationships and opportunities that you could never have arranged yourself.

Perfect Timing: You find yourself in the right place at the right time more often than seems coincidental.

Increased Influence: People are drawn to the peace and wisdom that flow from your relationship with God.

Supernatural Provision: God provides resources, ideas, and solutions in ways that exceed your natural abilities.

Prayer isn't just about getting answers from God - it's about getting God Himself. When you have Him, you have access to all His wisdom, power, and resources.

The business world is hungry for the kind of wisdom, integrity, and peace that come from intimate relationship with God. When you develop this intimacy through prayer, you become a powerful force for His kingdom in the marketplace.

Remember, you're not just building a business - you're building God's kingdom. And that requires staying connected to the King through consistent, intimate prayer.

Chapter 3: Let Scripture Be Your GPS - God's Navigation System

"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." - Psalm 119:105

If prayer is your communication line with God, then Scripture is His instruction manual for life and business. It's not just a collection of ancient stories and moral teachings - it's God's living word that provides practical guidance for every decision you face.

Too many Christians try to live a compartmentalized life. They put God first and family second, then figure out where to put friends, fitness, and financial matters. But there's a better way to structure your life - like a wagon wheel with God as the hub from which everything flows, rather than an org chart where He's relegated to a compartment or time slot.

The Second Test: Is It Producing Godly Fruit?

"By their fruit you will recognize them." - Matthew 7:16

Before we dive deeper into using Scripture as guidance, let's establish the second test for discerning God's will: Is this decision producing Godly fruit, or is it creating confusion and destruction?

God's will always produces good fruit over time. This doesn't mean everything will be easy or immediately successful, but the overall trajectory will be positive and life-giving.

Godly fruit includes: Peace in your heart and relationships - Stronger character and integrity - Increased ability to serve others - Sustainable success that honors God - Positive impact on those around you - Growth in wisdom and spiritual maturity.

Destructive fruit includes: Constant anxiety and stress - Compromised integrity or damaged relationships - Decreased ability to serve others effectively - Short-term gains that create long-term problems - Negative impact on family, employees, or customers - Spiritual stagnation or regression.

Scripture as Your Business GPS

Just as a GPS provides turn-by-turn directions for reaching your destination, Scripture provides principle-by-principle guidance for navigating business decisions.

Here's how it works:

1. Establish Your Destination: Before you can navigate anywhere, you need to know where you're going. What has the Lord put in your heart? You have a unique identity, created for purpose. Ephesians 2:10 says, *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”*

You may not have the whole picture, but you can at least know the direction you're to head. God called Abraham to leave his country and head to a place he would show him later. So he headed north. That's about all he knew, but he went in faith knowing that God would lead him as he went.

2. Identify Your Current Location: A GPS is useless unless it knows where you are. Scripture helps you honestly assess your current situation - your strengths, weaknesses, resources, and challenges.

3. Calculate the Best Route: There are usually multiple ways to reach any destination. Scripture helps you choose the path that honors God and serves others best.

4. Provide Course Corrections: When you get off track (and you will), Scripture helps you recognize the deviation and get back on the right path.

5. Navigate Around Obstacles: Every journey has obstacles. Scripture gives you wisdom for dealing with challenges, setbacks, and opposition.

Biblical Business Models

Scripture is full of business principles and examples. Consider these biblical entrepreneurs:

Joseph - Rose from slavery to become the equivalent of a Fortune 500 CEO by applying wisdom, integrity, and strategic planning during both abundance and crisis.

Daniel - Maintained his integrity in a corrupt political system while excelling in his professional responsibilities, ultimately becoming one of the most trusted advisors in the kingdom.

Lydia - Built a successful textile business while using her resources to advance God's kingdom and serve others.

The Proverbs 31 Woman - Managed multiple business ventures while maintaining her family relationships and serving her community.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were all livestock breeders. Isaac was also a successful farmer. I could talk about Boaz, Elisha, David and Solomon and many more, including most of the disciples of Jesus. They were all engaged in commerce.

These weren't just religious people who happened to be in business - they were business people who applied biblical principles to achieve success that honored God.

Practical Application: Using Scripture for Decision-Making

Here's a step-by-step process for using Scripture to guide your business decisions:

Step 1: Pray for Wisdom - Ask God to give you wisdom and understanding as you search His Word. James 1:5 promises that God gives wisdom generously to those who ask.

Step 2: Identify Relevant Principles - Look for biblical principles that apply to your situation. Use a concordance or Bible app to search for topics related to your decision.

Step 3: Study the Context - Don't just grab isolated verses. Study the context to understand what God is really saying. Look at the surrounding passages, the original audience, and the broader biblical teaching on the topic.

Step 4: Apply the Principles - Ask yourself: "How do these principles apply to my specific situation?" "What would obedience to these principles look like in practical terms?"

Step 5: Test Against Other Scripture - Make sure your application doesn't contradict other clear biblical teachings. Scripture interprets Scripture.

Step 6: Seek Confirmation - Look for confirmation through prayer, wise counsel, and circumstances. God rarely contradicts Himself across these different channels.

Key Business Principles from Scripture

Integrity in All Dealings *"The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity."* - Proverbs 11:3 Your reputation is your most valuable business asset. Scripture consistently emphasizes the importance of honesty, transparency, and keeping your word.

Excellent Service *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."* - Colossians 3:23 Excellence isn't about perfection - it's about giving your best effort in everything you do. When you work as unto the Lord, your standard of service rises dramatically.

Wise Financial Management *"The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."* - Proverbs 21:5 Scripture teaches both the importance of planning and the danger of get-rich-quick schemes. Sustainable wealth is built through diligence, wisdom, and patience.

Generous Leadership *"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap."* - Luke 6:38 Generosity isn't just about money - it's about giving your time, expertise, and resources to serve others. Leaders who give first receive the most loyalty and support.

Peter J. Daniels, the illiterate brick layer who got saved, taught himself to read and write and became a very wealthy philanthropist told me that as a new Christian, he wanted to see how much money one man could give away in his life. He attributes a lot of his success to his very generous giving.

Wise Counsel *"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."*
- Proverbs 15:22 No one succeeds alone. Scripture emphasizes the importance of seeking advice from wise, experienced people who share your values.

Real-World Example: The International Training Opportunity

Let me share how Scripture guided a major business decision in my own experience.

I was invited by an international life insurance company to train their sales teams in two different countries, a few days apart. I was known as a Christian sales trainer who taught Biblical wisdom for succeeding in sales, but I was instructed to not make any overt references to Scripture.

Before arriving there however, the Lord told me of His plan, that He wanted me to start a fire in those countries. Not sure exactly what that meant, I traveled there and shared with the company president what I felt God had given me to do.

As I prayed about this situation, I felt God's leading to go there and do something I had never done before. After all, Scripture teaches us in **Matthew 5:14-16** - *"You are the light of the world... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."* This passage informs me that I'm called to be a light wherever I go, not to hide my faith when it becomes inconvenient.

Then of course, there's **Acts 1:8** - *"You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* This showed me that God's plan includes taking the gospel to the ends of the earth, including through business opportunities.

Sometimes that requires wisdom which leads me to **1 Corinthians 9:22** - *"I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some."* This gave me wisdom for how to approach the situation - being sensitive to the context while still being faithful to my calling.

The company president was a Christian and told me that out of the 45 sales reps in the next day's training, only about 15 were actually believers. I asked if it would

be alright, if at the end of the training, I could give an invitation for folks to receive Christ.

He replied hesitatingly in the affirmative, as neither one of us had ever seen or done an invitation to receive Christ in a corporate sales training setting.

At the end of the day of training, I shared an amazing illustration about how God wanted to take up residence in them and let them know I would pray with any of them that wanted to invite God to live in them.

The president closed out the meeting by reminding everyone when and where to turn in their expense receipts and what time the Monday sales meeting would start, etc. He then added, "If anyone wants Michael to pray with them, he will be over here at the side of the room."

Not exactly "with every head bowed and every eye closed" with "Just As I Am" playing softly on the piano. But apparently God doesn't have to have a church setting to accomplish what He wants.

The entire room of 45 salespeople stood up as one person and came to the front to receive prayer and invite the Lord to live in them. As I prayed with them individually, the president sat on the front row, with tears streaming down his face. His entire sales team dedicated their life to God!

Even the video contractor who recorded the meeting asked if he could come forward for prayer. I had never seen anything like it before, especially in a corporate setting.

That scene would repeat itself a couple days later when we got to the next country. Somehow, God used that simple illustration to settle in their hearts the reality of God and their need, indeed their secret desire, to be cleansed and receive the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Scripture passages that guided me proved true - God did want to use this business opportunity to advance His kingdom and reach people who might never step foot in a church.

Common Mistakes in Using Scripture for Business

Mistake 1: Proof-Texting - Taking verses out of context to support decisions you've already made. **Solution:** Study passages in their full context and let Scripture shape your decisions rather than using it to justify them.

Mistake 2: Ignoring Difficult Passages - Focusing only on verses that support what you want to do while ignoring passages that challenge you. **Solution:** Let Scripture examine your motives and methods, even when it's uncomfortable.

Mistake 3: Spiritualizing Everything - Looking for hidden meanings in every verse instead of applying clear biblical principles. **Solution:** Start with clear, direct biblical teachings before looking for deeper applications.

Mistake 4: Paralysis by Analysis - Getting so caught up in studying that you never take action. **Solution:** Remember that Scripture is meant to guide action, not replace it.

Building Your Biblical Business Library

To effectively use Scripture as your GPS, you need to be familiar with key passages that relate to business and decision-making. Here are some essential areas to study:

Wisdom Literature (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes) These books are packed with practical wisdom for business, relationships, and decision-making.

Jesus' Parables (Matthew, Mark, Luke) Many of Jesus' parables use business illustrations to teach spiritual principles. Study them for both spiritual and practical insights.

Paul's Letters (Romans through Philemon) Paul provides practical guidance for living out faith in daily life, including work and business relationships.

Old Testament Business Stories (Genesis, 1 & 2 Kings, Daniel) Study the lives of biblical entrepreneurs and leaders to learn from their successes and failures.

The Authority of Scripture

Here's what sets Scripture apart from every other business book or advice source: it's the Word of God. As Isaiah 55:11 says, *"So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."*

When you base your decisions on biblical principles, you're not just following good advice - you're aligning yourself with the will and purposes of the Creator of the universe.

This doesn't mean every decision will be easy or every outcome immediately positive. But it does mean you can have confidence that you're on the right path, even when the way seems difficult.

Hypothetical Example: The Competitive Situation

Imagine you discover that a competitor is spreading false information about your company to win business. Your natural instinct might be to retaliate with negative information about them.

But as you search Scripture for guidance, you find passages like: **Romans 12:17-21** - *"Do not repay anyone evil for evil... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."* **Proverbs 11:9** - *"With their mouths the godless destroy their neighbors, but through knowledge the righteous escape."* **1 Peter 3:9** - *"Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing."*

These passages guide you to respond with integrity rather than retaliation. Instead of attacking your competitor, you focus on clearly communicating your own value proposition and serving your customers excellently.

Over time, your integrity becomes apparent to the market, and customers begin to trust you more than your competitor. You win business not by tearing others down, but by building yourself up through excellent service and honest communication.

The Fruit of Scripture-Guided Decisions

When you consistently use Scripture as your GPS for business decisions, you'll experience:

Increased Confidence: You can make decisions with confidence because they're based on eternal principles rather than shifting market conditions. In a very real sense, selling is the transference of confidence. When you lack confidence, your prospects will lack confidence in your offer.

Better Outcomes: While not every decision will be immediately successful, the long-term trajectory will be positive because you're following God's wisdom.

Stronger Character: Making decisions based on biblical principles builds integrity and character that serves you in every area of life.

Greater Influence: People respect leaders who have clear, consistent principles that guide their decisions.

Eternal Impact: Your business becomes a platform for advancing God's kingdom and serving others.

Scripture isn't just an ancient book - it's God's living word that provides practical guidance for every aspect of life, including business. When you learn to use it as your GPS, you'll find that it guides you not just to success, but to significance.

Remember, you're not just building a business - you're building God's kingdom. And that requires following His navigation system, not the world's.

Let Scripture Inform Your Conscience... .

God primarily communicates with believers through their conscience. It's a built-in moral compass that needs to know where true north is.

Once your conscience is aligned with True North (Scripture) it's no longer about feelings or external signs, but this inner sense of knowing, aligned with the Word, that gives divine direction.

Sensitize your conscience to Scripture. When you regularly feed on the Word and marinate your mind in it and obey what you read, your conscience becomes a reliable indicator for life's choices.

“Let your conscience be your guide” works if you haven’t seared your conscience by practicing what you know to be wrong. God gave us a conscience to guide us and our responsibility is to pay attention to it and train it to be attuned to God’s Word.

Make Scripture reading a daily habit to shape your moral instincts. When your conscience cautions you, obey right way. When you go against your conscience and sin anyway, confess your sin to God and turn back to Him. If you delay in this, your conscience will lose its sharpness. The sharper your conscience is, the less you have to look at signs or even the dubious counsel of other equally uninformed people.

As your conscience is trained, you make decisions more quickly and with confidence. Successful people make decisions quickly and change them rarely while unsuccessful people make decisions slowly and change them often.

Chapter 4: Seek Wise Counsel - Iron Sharpens Iron

"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed." - Proverbs 15:22

No one succeeds alone. Behind every great business leader is a network of wise advisors who provide perspective, accountability, and guidance. But not all counsel is created equal, and knowing how to seek, evaluate, and apply wise counsel is crucial for discerning God's will.

The fourth way to know God's will is through the wise counsel of people who share your values, have relevant experience, and aren't afraid to tell you the truth - even when it's not what you want to hear.

The Difference Between Advice and Counsel

Advice is what everyone gives freely. It's usually based on opinion, limited experience, or what worked for someone else in a different situation. **Counsel** is what wise people give carefully. Godly counsel is based on biblical principles, relevant experience, and a genuine concern for your best interests.

The most expensive advice is free advice from unqualified people. The most valuable counsel often comes from people who have walked the path you're considering and can help you avoid their mistakes.

Who Should You Listen To?

Not all opinions are equal. Here's how to identify people whose counsel you should seek:

They Have Relevant Experience Look for people who have succeeded in areas similar to what you're facing. If you're starting a business, seek counsel from successful entrepreneurs. If you're facing a personnel issue, talk to experienced managers.

They Share Your Values Counsel from people who don't share your biblical values will often lead you away from God's will. Seek advisors who understand your commitment to integrity, service, and kingdom principles.

They Have a Track Record of Wisdom Look at the fruit of their decisions over time. Do they make wise choices? Do they have healthy relationships? Do they handle success and failure well?

They Care About Your Success The best counselors are those who have your best interests at heart, not their own agenda. They should be willing to tell you hard truths and challenge your assumptions.

They're Not Afraid to Disagree Yes-men aren't counselors - they're enablers. You need people who will push back on your ideas, ask tough questions, and help you see blind spots.

Building Your Advisory Team

Think of wise counsel as building an advisory team for your life and business. Here are the key roles you need: **The Mentor** Someone who has achieved what you're trying to achieve and is willing to share their experience and wisdom. **The Coach** Someone who helps you improve your skills, overcome obstacles, and reach your potential. **The Accountability Partner** Someone who holds you accountable to your commitments, values, and goals.

The Industry Expert Someone who understands your specific industry, market, or profession. **The Spiritual Advisor** Someone who helps you see situations from God's perspective and keeps you aligned with biblical principles. **The Contrary Advocate** Someone who challenges your assumptions, pokes holes in your plans, and helps you think through potential problems.

How to Seek Counsel Effectively

1. Come Prepared Don't waste your counselor's time with vague questions. Come with specific situations, clear questions, and relevant background information.

2. Listen More Than You Talk You're seeking their wisdom, not trying to convince them of your position. Ask questions and really listen to their responses.

3. Ask Follow-Up Questions Don't just accept surface-level advice. Ask "Why?" "What if?" and "How?" to get deeper insights.

4. Consider the Source Weigh the counsel based on the counselor's experience, wisdom, and track record in similar situations.

5. Look for Patterns When multiple wise counselors give you similar advice, pay attention. God often confirms His will through the consistent counsel of multiple advisors.

6. Filter Through Scripture All counsel should be filtered through biblical principles. If the advice contradicts Scripture, don't follow it regardless of who gives it.

Real-World Example: The CEO Ministry Connection

Let me share how seeking wise counsel led to a major breakthrough in my own business. I was in my office at home, when out of the blue, the Holy Spirit quickened to me that I needed to immediately stop what I was doing and call a particular CEO who headed up a Christian CEO ministry that I wanted to make inroads with.

People had been suggesting for years that I reach out to him, but I was really waiting for God's timing. When it came, the CEO who had never heard of me, took my call and we quickly discovered we were both going to be traveling to Atlanta the next week. But before making that call, I had already sought counsel from several trusted advisors about how to approach this relationship. Their counsel included:

From my mentor: "Don't try to sell him anything on the first call. Focus on building relationship and finding ways to serve him."

From an industry expert: "Research his ministry thoroughly before you call. Know what they do, who they serve, and what challenges they face."

From my accountability partner: "Make sure your motives are right. Are you seeking this relationship to serve God's kingdom or just to advance your business?"

From a spiritual advisor: "Pray about the timing. God's timing is perfect, but our timing is often off."

Instead of pitching my services, I asked questions about his ministry and looked for ways to serve. Instead of rushing the relationship, I waited for God's timing.

The result was that he asked me to speak at their annual convention in Jamaica and other cities over the next few years. That opened a flood of opportunities that resulted in new business opportunities for me and many more folks coming to know Jesus.

Without the wise counsel I received beforehand, I might have approached that conversation differently and missed the opportunity entirely.

Common Mistakes in Seeking Counsel

Mistake 1: Seeking Counsel Only in Crisis Many people only seek advice when they're in trouble. By then, their options are limited and their judgment may be clouded by stress. **Solution:** Build relationships with wise counselors before you need them. Seek regular input on your decisions and direction.

Mistake 2: Shopping for the Answer You Want Some people keep asking different people until they find someone who tells them what they want to hear. **Solution:** Commit to following wise counsel even when it's not what you prefer. If multiple wise advisors give you the same advice, take it seriously.

Mistake 3: Following Counsel Without Verification Taking advice without filtering it through Scripture, prayer, and other sources of wisdom. **Solution:** Use counsel as one input in your decision-making process, not the only input. Verify important advice through multiple sources.

Mistake 4: Ignoring Counsel Because It's Difficult Sometimes wise counsel requires difficult changes or sacrifices that we'd rather avoid. **Solution:** Remember that the right path isn't always the easy path. Good counsel often challenges us to grow and change.

The Role of Counsel in Discerning God's Will

Wise counsel serves several important functions in discerning God's will:

Provides Perspective When you're close to a situation, it's hard to see it clearly. Wise counselors can provide objective perspective that you might miss.

Reveals Blind Spots We all have blind spots - areas where our judgment is impaired by emotions, past experiences, or personal biases. Good counselors help identify these blind spots.

Confirms or Challenges Direction When you think you know God's will, wise counsel can either confirm that direction or challenge you to reconsider.

Offers Alternative Solutions Experienced counselors can suggest options you might not have considered, expanding your range of choices.

Provides Accountability Good counselors will hold you accountable to follow through on decisions and commitments.

Hypothetical Example: The Partnership Opportunity

Imagine you're considering a partnership that could double your business overnight. The financial projections look great, and you're excited about the growth potential.

You seek counsel from your advisory team:

Your mentor asks probing questions about the partner's character and track record. Through this conversation, you discover some concerning patterns in how they've treated previous partners.

Your accountability partner challenges your motives, helping you realize that part of your excitement is driven by pride and the desire to impress others rather than serve customers better.

Your industry expert points out market trends that could make the partnership less valuable than it appears on paper.

Your spiritual advisor helps you see that the partnership would require you to compromise some of your values around customer service and employee treatment.

Based on this counsel, you decide to pass on the partnership. Six months later, you learn that the potential partner is facing legal troubles that would have destroyed your business if you had moved forward.

The wise counsel saved you from a decision that looked good on the surface but would have been disastrous in reality.

Building Relationships Before You Need Them

The key to effective counsel is building relationships with wise advisors before you need their advice. Here's how:

Serve First Look for ways to serve potential advisors before asking for their help. Offer your expertise, make introductions, or simply be a good friend.

Be Consistent Stay in regular contact with your advisors. Don't just reach out when you need something. **Show Appreciation** Thank your counselors for their time and wisdom. Let them know how their advice helped you.

Follow Through When you ask for counsel, follow through on what you commit to do. This builds trust and makes advisors more willing to help in the future.

Reciprocate As you gain experience and wisdom, be willing to serve as a counselor to others.

The Limits of Human Counsel

While wise counsel is invaluable, it has limits:

Counselors Are Human Even the wisest advisors can be wrong. Their advice should be weighed against Scripture, prayer, and other sources of guidance.

Context Matters What worked for your counselor in their situation may not work for you in yours. Principles transfer better than specific tactics.

Timing Is Everything Good advice at the wrong time can be as harmful as bad advice. Consider the timing of counsel as well as its content.

You're Ultimately Responsible While you should seek and consider wise counsel, you're ultimately responsible for your decisions. Don't use counsel as an excuse to avoid taking responsibility.

The Fruit of Wise Counsel

When you consistently seek and follow wise counsel, you'll experience:

Better Decisions: Multiple perspectives lead to more informed choices.

Faster Learning: You can learn from others' experiences instead of making every mistake yourself.

Stronger Relationships: The process of seeking counsel builds deep, meaningful relationships.

Increased Wisdom: Exposure to wise people makes you wiser over time.

Greater Success: Plans developed with wise counsel are more likely to succeed.

Clearer Direction: Counsel helps clarify God's will by providing multiple perspectives on your situation.

Remember, seeking wise counsel isn't a sign of weakness - it's a sign of wisdom. The most successful people in business and ministry are those who surround themselves with wise advisors and listen to their counsel.

As Proverbs 27:17 says, *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."* Let wise counsel sharpen you into the leader God has called you to be.

Chapter 5: Read the Signs - Recognizing God's Providence at Work

"In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps." - Proverbs 16:9

What looks like luck to the world is often God's providence to the believer. The fifth way to know God's will is learning to recognize His hand in your circumstances and cooperating with His direction.

God is constantly at work in the world, orchestrating events, opening doors, closing others, and arranging "coincidences" that are anything but coincidental. When you're walking in God's will, you'll find yourself in the right place at the right time more often than seems statistically possible.

As I have said many times, "God can't steer a parked car!" When you look back at your life, you can likely see many times when things worked out for you without your foreknowledge. You were just going along with your day, and a divinely orchestrated event happened.

In Ecclesiastes 9: 11 we read, "I returned and saw under the sun that — The race *is* not to the swift, Nor the battle to the strong, Nor bread to the wise, Nor riches to men of understanding, Nor favor to men of skill; But **time** and chance happen to them all."

However the word translated as "time" is not really a word. It is more like a marker. It is known as the Aleph Tav (first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet and appears roughly 10,000 times in the Old Testament and is only translated roughly 200 times.

Basically what Solomon is saying at the end of that verse is not about luck. It's about God's divinely orchestrated timing. Solomon is saying that God's timing trumps even skill, speed, strength, wisdom and understanding, as important as those traits are.

For example, years ago I was exhibiting my books at the National Religious Broadcasters convention in Nashville. While there, I ran into an old acquaintance

who, last time I saw him, was working for Proctor and Gamble. But now, he was the Vice President of Business Development with INSP television satellite network. On the spot, he invited me to record some teachings so they could package it and offer it on the satellite network in the form of an infomercial, and included a handsome royalty advance.

This was God's timing and I had no part in planning it. I was however, "driving" so to speak, and God steered me right into a huge opportunity without me knowing in advance.

Understanding Divine Providence

Providence is God's ongoing involvement in the world. It's not just that He created everything and then stepped back - He's actively involved in directing the course of history and individual lives.

This doesn't mean everything that happens is God's will. We live in a fallen world where sin, poor choices, and spiritual warfare create chaos and suffering. But it does mean that God is working within these circumstances to accomplish His purposes.

As Romans 8:28 promises, *"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."*

Types of Signs to Watch For

Open Doors These are opportunities that appear unexpectedly or develop more easily than you anticipated. When doors open supernaturally, it's often a sign that God is making a way for you.

Closed Doors Sometimes God's protection looks like rejection. A deal that falls through, a job you don't get, or a partnership that doesn't work out may be God protecting you from something harmful.

Divine Appointments These are "chance" encounters with people who provide exactly what you need - information, connections, encouragement, or opportunities.

Perfect Timing When multiple elements come together at just the right moment, it's often a sign of God's orchestration.

Supernatural Provision Resources, ideas, or solutions that appear when you need them most, often from unexpected sources.

Repeated Themes When the same message, opportunity, or challenge keeps appearing from different sources, pay attention.

Learning to Read the Signs

Reading God's signs requires spiritual discernment. Here's how to develop this skill:

1. Stay Alert Pay attention to what's happening around you. Many people miss God's signs because they're too focused on their own agenda to notice His activity.

2. Look for Patterns God often works through patterns and themes. If you keep encountering the same message or opportunity from different sources, it may be significant.

3. Consider the Timing God's timing is always perfect. When something happens at just the right moment, consider whether it might be providential.

4. Evaluate the Fruit Signs from God typically lead to good fruit - opportunities to serve others, grow in character, or advance His kingdom.

5. Seek Confirmation Don't base major decisions on signs alone. Look for confirmation through Scripture, prayer, and wise counsel.

Common Mistakes in Reading Signs

Mistake 1: Seeing Signs Everywhere Some people become so focused on looking for signs that they see them in every coincidence or circumstance. **Solution:** Look for signs that align with Scripture, prayer, and wise counsel. Not every coincidence is a sign from God.

Mistake 2: Ignoring Obvious Signs Others are so skeptical of supernatural guidance that they miss clear signs of God's direction. **Solution:** Stay open to God's leading while maintaining biblical discernment.

Mistake 3: Making Signs Say What You Want Sometimes we interpret circumstances to support what we already want to do. **Solution:** Be honest about your motives and desires. Ask God to help you see His signs clearly, even if they point in a different direction than you prefer.

Mistake 4: Waiting for Perfect Signs Some people become paralyzed waiting for absolutely clear signs before making any decision. **Solution:** Remember that faith often requires acting with incomplete information. Look for reasonable confirmation, not perfect certainty.

The Role of Faith in Reading Signs

Reading God's signs requires faith. You have to believe that:

God Is Active He's not a distant deity who set the world in motion and walked away. He's actively involved in your life and circumstances.

God Cares About Details He's not just concerned with "spiritual" matters. He cares about your business, relationships, and daily decisions.

God Communicates He wants to guide you and will provide the direction you need when you need it.

God's Ways Are Higher His signs might not make sense from a human perspective, but they're always wise and good.

Hypothetical Example: The Unexpected Opportunity

Imagine you've been struggling to grow your consulting business. You've been praying for breakthrough and seeking God's direction for expansion.

Then several things happen in quick succession:

A potential client calls out of the blue asking about services you've never offered but have always wanted to develop. You "accidentally" sit next to an expert in that field on a flight, and he offers to help you get started. You discover that a

competitor in that space is retiring and willing to sell his client list at a reasonable price. Your accountant mentions a tax incentive that makes the expansion financially attractive.

Each of these could be coincidence, but together they form a pattern that suggests God is opening a door for you to expand in this new direction.

You still need to do your due diligence, seek wise counsel, and make sure the opportunity aligns with Scripture and your calling. But the convergence of circumstances suggests that God may be orchestrating this opportunity.

Cooperating with God's Providence

Recognizing signs is only half the battle - you also need to cooperate with God's direction. This means: **Being Flexible** Your plans may need to change when God opens unexpected doors or closes expected ones. **Acting Quickly** Some opportunities have a limited window. When God opens a door, be ready to walk through it promptly.

You may be looking at the opportunity of a lifetime, but the lifetime of the opportunity may be short. Remember the wise and foolish virgins. The wise virgins were ready and were admitted to the banquet. The foolish ones missed the opportunity simply because they weren't prepared.

Trusting the Process God's ways often don't make sense from a human perspective. Trust that He knows what He's doing, even when you don't understand.

Staying Faithful Continue to be faithful in small things while God prepares you for bigger opportunities. Abraham Lincoln said, "I will prepare and some day my chance will come." Benjamin Disraeli famously stated, "The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his opportunity when it comes".

The Difference Between Signs and Fleeces

Some people confuse reading God's signs with "putting out fleeces" - asking God to confirm His will through specific circumstances. **Signs** are circumstances that God initiates to guide you. **Fleeces** are tests that you create to determine God's will.

While God sometimes honors fleeces (as He did with Gideon), it's generally better to look for signs that He initiates rather than tests that you create.

Balancing Signs with Other Guidance

Signs should be one part of your decision-making process, not the only part. They work best when combined with: **Scripture** - Do the signs align with biblical principles? **Prayer** - Do you have peace about following the signs? **Wise Counsel** - Do trusted advisors see the same patterns you're seeing? **Common Sense** - Do the signs make practical sense in your situation?

The Fruit of Reading Signs

When you learn to recognize and follow God's signs, you'll experience:

Divine Timing - You'll find yourself in the right place at the right time more often. **Supernatural Opportunities** - Doors will open that you could never have opened yourself. **Increased Faith** - Seeing God's hand in your circumstances builds trust in His guidance. **Greater Effectiveness** - You'll accomplish more by working with God's timing than against it. **Deeper Relationship** - Recognizing God's activity draws you closer to Him.

A Word of Caution

While God does work through circumstances, be careful not to: **Become Passive** - Reading signs doesn't mean you stop taking initiative or making plans. **Ignore Responsibility** - You're still responsible for making wise decisions and working diligently. **Expect Magic** - God's providence usually works through natural means, not supernatural miracles. **Blame God for Everything** - Not every circumstance is a sign from God. Some things are just the result of living in a fallen world.

Remember, God's signs are like breadcrumbs on a trail - they guide you step by step, but you still have to walk the path. When you learn to recognize His providence at work, you'll find that He's been guiding you all along, even when you didn't realize it.

The key is staying alert, staying faithful, and staying flexible as God orchestrates the circumstances of your life to accomplish His purposes through you.

Chapter 6: Listen to the Spirit's Voice Within - Your Internal Compass

"When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth." - John 16:13

The sixth way to know God's will is through the Holy Spirit's inner witness - that quiet voice within that confirms or warns, encourages or redirects. This is perhaps the most personal and intimate way God communicates with His children.

The Holy Spirit is not just a theological concept - He's a person, the third member of the Trinity, who lives within every believer. He's your internal compass, always pointing you toward God's will and away from paths that would harm you or others.

Jesus said His departure would be more beneficial because He would send the *Comforter*—the Holy Spirit—into believers (John 16:7), and He would convict (or convince) the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. We need that level of guidance and it is available within us 24/7.

Understanding the Spirit's Communication

The Holy Spirit communicates differently than human voices. He doesn't shout or demand attention. Instead, He speaks through:

Inner Impressions Thoughts that seem to come from outside your normal thinking process, often accompanied by a sense of peace or urgency. They seem to arise out of your inner being, what some people call, their gut.

Supernatural Peace or Unease A deep sense of rightness about a decision, or conversely, an unexplained discomfort about a direction that looks good on paper.

Illuminated Scripture Bible verses that suddenly have new relevance to your situation, often verses you've read many times before but now see in a new light.

Gentle Promptings Urges to take specific actions - make a phone call, visit someone, change direction - that don't seem to come from your own planning.

Conviction About Sin The uncomfortable but loving awareness that you're moving away from God's will or compromising your integrity.

Learning to Recognize the Spirit's Voice

One of the biggest challenges in hearing the Holy Spirit is learning to distinguish His voice from your own thoughts, emotions, or desires. Here are some guidelines:

The Spirit's voice typically: - Aligns perfectly with Scripture - Brings peace, even when the message is challenging - Focuses on serving others or glorifying God - Calls you to growth, faith, or righteousness - Has an eternal perspective - Produces good fruit over time - Comes with a sense of gentle authority

Your own voice typically: - May contradict or ignore Scripture - Creates anxiety, pressure, or urgency - Focuses primarily on self interest - Keeps you in your comfort zone - Has a short-term perspective - Produces mixed results - Comes with uncertainty or second-guessing

The enemy's voice typically: - Directly contradicts Scripture - Creates fear, condemnation, or confusion - Focuses on destruction, division, or deception - Calls you to sin or compromise - Has a destructive perspective - Produces consistently bad fruit - Comes with accusation or condemnation

Developing Spiritual Sensitivity

Like any relationship, your ability to hear the Holy Spirit improves with time and attention. Here's how to develop greater sensitivity:

1. Quiet Your Mind The Spirit's voice is often quiet and gentle. You need to create space in your mind and schedule to hear Him.

2. Practice Listening Set aside time regularly just to listen. Don't always come to prayer with a list of requests - sometimes just sit quietly and pay attention.

3. Test the Spirits 1 John 4:1 tells us to "*test the spirits to see whether they are from God.*" Compare what you're hearing with Scripture and seek confirmation through other means.

4. Start Small Begin by listening for the Spirit's guidance in small decisions. As you learn to recognize His voice in minor matters, you'll be better prepared to hear Him in major ones.

5. Obey What You Hear The more you obey the Spirit's promptings, the clearer His voice becomes. Disobedience dulls your spiritual hearing.

Business Applications of Spiritual Sensitivity

The Holy Spirit's guidance isn't limited to "spiritual" matters - He cares about every aspect of your life, including your business. Here are some practical applications:

Hiring Decisions Beyond resumes and interviews, the Spirit can give you insight into a person's character, fit with your team, and potential for growth.

Strategic Direction When facing major business decisions, the Spirit can provide wisdom that goes beyond market research and financial projections.

Customer Relations The Spirit can guide you in how to serve customers better, resolve conflicts, and build lasting relationships.

Timing The Spirit often provides guidance about when to act, when to wait, and when to change course.

Opportunities The Spirit can help you recognize which opportunities align with God's purposes and which are distractions.

Hypothetical Example: The Difficult Employee

Imagine you have an employee who is technically competent but creates tension in your team. From a business perspective, the logical solution might be to terminate their employment.

But as you pray about the situation, you feel the Spirit prompting you to have a deeper conversation with this person. You sense that there might be personal issues affecting their behavior.

Following this prompting, you discover that the employee is going through a difficult divorce and struggling with depression. Instead of firing them, you provide support, connect them with counseling resources, and adjust their workload temporarily.

Over time, this employee becomes one of your most loyal and productive team members. They also become a powerful testimony to other employees about your company's values and commitment to people.

What looked like a business problem was actually an opportunity to demonstrate God's love and build a stronger team culture.

Common Obstacles to Hearing the Spirit

Obstacle 1: Busyness Our culture is so noisy and fast-paced that we rarely create space to hear the Spirit's quiet voice. **Solution:** Build regular quiet time into your schedule. Even five minutes of silence can make a difference.

Obstacle 2: Unconfessed Sin Sin creates static in our spiritual communication. It's hard to hear the Spirit clearly when we're harboring disobedience. **Solution:** Maintain short accounts with God. Confess sin quickly and completely.

Obstacle 3: Self-Reliance When we're confident in our own abilities, we may not feel the need for spiritual guidance. **Solution:** Remember that God's wisdom is always superior to human wisdom, regardless of your experience or expertise.

Obstacle 4: Fear of Being Wrong Some people are so afraid of misinterpreting the Spirit's voice that they don't listen at all. **Solution:** Start with low-risk decisions and build confidence over time. Remember that God is patient with your learning process.

Obstacle 5: Wanting to Hear Something Specific Sometimes we want the Spirit to confirm what we've already decided rather than truly seeking His guidance. **Solution:** Come to prayer with open hands and an open heart, willing to hear whatever God wants to say.

The Role of Community in Spiritual Discernment

While the Spirit speaks to individuals, He also works through the body of Christ. Here's how community helps with spiritual discernment:

Confirmation When multiple mature believers sense the same direction from the Spirit, it can provide confirmation.

Accountability Trusted friends can help you evaluate whether what you're hearing aligns with Scripture and produces good fruit.

Protection Community helps protect you from deception or self-delusion by providing objective perspective.

Encouragement When the Spirit's guidance requires difficult obedience, community provides the support you need to follow through.

Balancing Spirit-Led and Strategic Thinking

Some people create a false dichotomy between being "Spirit-led" and being strategic. But the Spirit often works through good planning, wise analysis, and strategic thinking.

The key is to:

Invite the Spirit into Your Planning Ask for His guidance as you analyze data, consider options, and make plans. **Hold Plans Loosely** Be willing to adjust or abandon plans when the Spirit provides new direction.

Use Both Natural and Spiritual Wisdom God gave you a mind to use. Combine careful analysis with spiritual sensitivity. **Test Everything** Make sure your "spiritual" impressions align with Scripture, wise counsel, and practical wisdom.

The Fruit of Spirit-Led Living

When you learn to consistently follow the Holy Spirit's guidance, you'll experience:

Supernatural Wisdom You'll make decisions that are wiser than your natural knowledge or experience would suggest.

Perfect Timing You'll find yourself doing the right thing at the right time more consistently.

Increased Effectiveness You'll accomplish more by working with the Spirit than you could through human effort alone.

Greater Peace Even in difficult circumstances, you'll have peace knowing you're following God's guidance.

Deeper Intimacy with God Hearing and obeying the Spirit draws you into closer relationship with the Father.

Powerful Witness People will be drawn to the wisdom, peace, and love that flow from Spirit-led living.

A Word of Balance

While the Spirit's guidance is crucial, remember:

Don't Become Weird Spirit-led living should make you more effective and loving, not strange or impractical.

Don't Neglect Responsibility Following the Spirit doesn't mean never following good business practices or common sense.

Don't Become Passive The Spirit guides active people. Keep taking initiative while staying sensitive to His direction.

Don't Ignore Other Guidance The Spirit's voice should be confirmed by Scripture, wise counsel, and circumstances.

Learning to hear and follow the Holy Spirit's voice is one of the most valuable skills you can develop. He's your internal compass, always pointing you toward God's will and away from paths that would harm you or others.

In a world full of competing voices and conflicting advice, the Spirit's voice provides clarity, peace, and direction. When you learn to recognize and follow His guidance, you'll find that He leads you not just to success, but to significance.

Chapter 7: Trust and Wait - Faith That Moves Mountains

"Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." - James 1:4

The seventh and final way to know God's will is through patient trust and faith.

This might seem passive, but it's actually one of the most active and challenging aspects of following God's guidance.

Waiting on God isn't about sitting idle until He drops opportunities in your lap. It's about continuing to work diligently while trusting His timing, maintaining faith when circumstances look discouraging, and persevering through seasons of preparation.

Why God Makes Us Wait

God's timing is perfect, but it rarely matches our timeline. Understanding why God makes us wait helps us cooperate with His process rather than fight against it:

We're Not Ready Sometimes we need more preparation, character development, or skill building before we can handle what God has planned.

The Opportunity Isn't Ready God may be preparing circumstances, people, or markets that need to align before His plan can unfold.

He's Protecting Us What looks like delay may actually be protection from dangers we can't see.

He's Teaching Us Dependence Waiting teaches us to rely on God rather than our own abilities or timing.

He's Building Our Faith Seasons of waiting stretch our faith and prepare us for greater challenges ahead.

He's Developing Our Character Patience, perseverance, and trust are character qualities that can only be developed through experience.

The Difference Between Faith and Presumption

Not all action is faith, and not all waiting is trust. Here's how to tell the difference:

Faith: - Acts on God's guidance and timing - Waits for clear direction before moving - Trusts God with outcomes - Perseveres through difficulties - Maintains peace in uncertainty - Produces lasting fruit

Presumption: - Acts without seeking God's guidance - Forces timing based on human impatience - Tries to control all outcomes - Gives up when things get difficult - Creates anxiety and pressure - Produces temporary or harmful results

Practical Waiting: What to Do While You Wait

Waiting on God doesn't mean being passive. Here's how to wait actively and productively:

- 1. Continue Working Diligently** Keep doing excellent work in your current responsibilities. God often promotes people who are faithful in small things.
- 2. Prepare for the Next Season** Use waiting periods to develop skills, build relationships, and strengthen your character.
- 3. Serve Others** Look for ways to serve people around you. God often opens doors through service opportunities.
- 4. Study and Learn** Invest in your personal and professional development. The more prepared you are, the more God can use you.
- 5. Build Your Network** Develop relationships with people who share your values and might be part of God's plan for your future.
- 6. Maintain Your Spiritual Disciplines** Keep praying, reading Scripture, and staying connected to God. These disciplines sustain you through difficult seasons.

Real-World Example: Walking with God in Business

Let me share how this principle of trusting and waiting has played out throughout my business career.

It's like walking with a close friend all day. Not always talking, but always being ready to listen. And then not ignoring His unmistakable voice, but drinking it in and communing with Him, and following through on what He says.

I could literally fill books with examples of doing just that. Walking with God in such a way as to hear Him or perhaps see something He wants me to see, and then acting on it.

Sometimes these promptings have an urgency to them, that if you don't act on right away, you'll miss the opportunity. For example, I was at home one evening with my wife. Out of the blue I had a prompting to drive to a nearby island.

As we drove along the main road, I noticed an older man walking on a side street and I had a sudden knowing that he was the reason I was drawn to the island. I turned down that street, struck up a conversation with him and heard his sad story. We prayed together and he promised he would seek God further upon getting home.

The Seasons of Waiting

Different seasons require different types of waiting:

Preparation Seasons Times when God is developing your skills, character, or relationships for future opportunities.

Transition Seasons Periods between one phase of life or business and the next, when direction may be unclear.

Testing Seasons Times when your faith, commitment, or character are being tested and refined.

Breakthrough Seasons Periods just before major opportunities when it's crucial to maintain faith and not give up.

Rest Seasons Times when God wants you to recover, reflect, and renew your strength for what's ahead.

Common Mistakes in Waiting

Mistake 1: Becoming Passive Some people use "waiting on God" as an excuse for laziness or avoiding responsibility. **Solution:** Stay active in your current responsibilities while waiting for new direction.

Mistake 2: Forcing Timing Others become impatient and try to make things happen in their own timing. **Solution:** Remember that God's timing is perfect, even when it doesn't match your preferences.

Mistake 3: Losing Faith Extended waiting periods can cause people to doubt God's promises or give up on His plan. **Solution:** Focus on God's faithfulness in the past and His promises for the future.

Mistake 4: Comparing Yourself to Others Seeing others succeed while you're waiting can create discouragement and envy. **Solution:** Remember that God has a unique plan and timing for each person.

Hypothetical Example: The Delayed Promotion

Imagine you've been working toward a promotion for two years. You've done excellent work, received positive feedback, and been told the position is yours "when the timing is right."

But months pass, and nothing happens. You start to wonder if you should look for opportunities elsewhere or if God is calling you to something different. During this waiting period, you:

Continue excelling in your current role. Use the extra time to complete an advanced degree, volunteer to lead a challenging project that develops new skills, build relationships with colleagues in other departments, maintain your integrity and positive attitude despite frustration and finally, the promotion comes through, but it's bigger than originally discussed because the company restructured while you were waiting.

Your additional education, project experience, and relationships position you perfectly for the expanded role. What felt like delay was actually preparation for a better opportunity than you originally expected.

The Role of Community in Waiting

Waiting is easier when you don't do it alone:

Encouragement Others can remind you of God's faithfulness when your faith wavers.

Accountability Friends can help you stay productive and faithful during waiting periods.

Perspective Others can help you see God's work in your situation when you're too close to see it clearly.

Prayer Support Having others pray for you provides spiritual strength during difficult seasons.

Maintaining Faith During Delays

Here are practical strategies for maintaining faith when God's timing doesn't match your expectations:

Remember Past Faithfulness Keep a record of how God has been faithful to you in the past. Review it when you're tempted to doubt.

Focus on Character Development Ask what God wants to teach you or develop in you during this season.

Serve Others Getting your focus off your own situation by serving others often provides perspective and purpose.

Stay in God's Word Scripture is full of promises about God's faithfulness and perfect timing.

Celebrate Small Victories Acknowledge progress and growth, even when the big breakthrough hasn't come yet.

The Fruit of Patient Trust

When you learn to trust God's timing and wait patiently for His direction, you'll experience:

Deeper Faith Waiting seasons stretch your faith and prove God's faithfulness in new ways.

Stronger Character Patience, perseverance, and trust are character qualities that serve you throughout life.

Better Preparation Waiting periods often provide preparation you didn't know you needed.

Perfect Timing God's timing is always better than your timing, even when you can't see it at the moment.

Greater Appreciation Blessings that come after patient waiting are often more appreciated than those that come easily.

Increased Influence People respect leaders who demonstrate patience and trust in difficult circumstances.

A Final Word on Waiting

Waiting on God isn't about being passive or avoiding action. It's about aligning your timing with His, trusting His wisdom over your impatience, and maintaining faith when circumstances don't match your expectations.

Remember, God is never late, never early, but always on time. His timing takes into account factors you can't see and purposes you may not understand. When you learn to trust His timing, you'll find that His delays are often His protection, and His "no" is often His way of preparing you for a better "yes."

The seventh way to know God's will - trusting and waiting - requires the most faith but often produces the greatest fruit. When you combine patient trust with the other six ways of discerning God's will, you'll have a comprehensive framework for making decisions that honor God and fulfill your divine destiny.

Chapter 8: Conclusion: Walking in God's Perfect Will

We've covered a lot of ground together. Seven ways to discern God's will, three tests to filter every decision, and countless practical applications for your life and business.

But all of this information is worthless unless you apply it. God's will isn't a theory to understand - it's a life to live.

The Integration Challenge

The biggest challenge most people face isn't learning these principles - it's integrating them into their daily decision-making process. It's easy to read about transforming your mind, but harder to actually think God's thoughts when you're facing a difficult business decision.

It's inspiring to read about prayer as a business strategy, but challenging to actually pause and pray before making important choices.

It's encouraging to read about Scripture as your GPS, but it requires discipline to actually study God's Word and apply its principles to your specific situation.

The key is to start small and build these practices into your routine gradually. Don't try to implement everything at once. Pick one or two areas to focus on first, then add others as these become natural.

Your Next Steps

Here's how to begin implementing what you've learned:

This Week: - Choose one of the seven ways to focus on this week - Apply the three tests to a decision you're currently facing - Share these principles with someone who could benefit from them

This Month: - Establish a regular time for seeking God's guidance on business decisions - Begin building relationships with wise counselors - Start a journal to track how God guides you through circumstances

This Quarter: - Evaluate a major decision using the complete framework - Teach these principles to your team or family - Look for opportunities to help others discern God's will

This Year: - Make these principles your standard operating procedure for all major decisions - Develop a reputation as someone who seeks and follows God's guidance - Use your business as a platform for advancing God's kingdom

The Promise

God wants to reveal His will to you more than you want to know it. He's not playing hide and seek with His guidance - He's actively working to direct your steps and accomplish His purposes through you.

When you commit to seeking and following His will using these biblical principles, you can expect:

Clearer Direction: You'll have confidence in your decisions because they're based on God's wisdom.

Better Results: While not every decision will be immediately successful, the long-term trajectory will be positive.

Greater Peace: You'll have supernatural peace even in difficult circumstances because you know you're following God's plan.

Increased Influence: People will be drawn to the wisdom and integrity that flow from God-directed living.

Eternal Impact: Your life and business will make a difference that lasts beyond your lifetime.

A Personal Challenge

I want to challenge you to make a commitment. Not just to read this book, but to live it. Not just to understand these principles, but to apply them. Choose one major decision you're facing right now and commit to using the complete framework:

1. Transform your mind by thinking God's thoughts about the situation
2. Get intimate with God through prayer about this decision
3. Let Scripture be your GPS by studying relevant biblical principles
4. Seek wise counsel from people who share your values
5. Read the signs by looking for God's providence in your circumstances
6. Listen to the Spirit's voice within for inner confirmation or warning
7. Trust and wait for God's perfect timing

Then apply the three tests: - Does it require compromise? - Is it producing Godly fruit? - Is it born of faith or fear/greed/pride? Make your decision based on this process, then watch how God honors your commitment to follow His will.

The Bigger Picture

Remember, this isn't ultimately about building a successful business or making good decisions. It's about partnering with God to advance His kingdom on earth.

Your business isn't just a way to make money - it's a platform for demonstrating God's character, serving others, and making an eternal impact.

Your decisions aren't just about personal success - they're about positioning yourself to be used by God for His purposes.

When you align your will with God's will, you become a powerful force for good in the world. You join the ranks of believers throughout history who have used their businesses, influence, and resources to advance God's kingdom.

The Final Word

As we close, let me remind you of the promise that started this journey: *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."* - Proverbs 3:5-6

God has a plan for your life and business. He wants to guide you into that plan more than you want to find it. When you commit to seeking and following His will using these biblical principles, you can trust that He will make your paths straight.

The seven ways and three tests aren't just techniques - they're invitations into deeper relationship with the God who loves you, has a plan for you, and wants to accomplish great things through you.

Your journey of knowing and following God's will starts now. Take the first step, and trust Him for the rest. He's been waiting for you to ask. He's ready to guide. Are you ready to follow?

Quick Reference Guide – The 7 Ways to Know God's Will

1. **Transform Your Mind** (Romans 12:2) - Think God's thoughts, not the world's
2. **Get Intimate with God Through Prayer** (Psalm 37:4) - Develop two-way communication
3. **Let Scripture Be Your GPS** (Psalm 119:105) - Use God's Word as your navigation system
4. **Seek Wise Counsel** (Proverbs 15:22) - Build an advisory team of wise, godly people
5. **Read the Signs** (Proverbs 16:9) - Recognize God's providence in your circumstances
6. **Listen to the Spirit's Voice Within** (John 16:13) - Develop sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's guidance
7. **Trust and Wait** (James 1:4) - Exercise patient faith in God's perfect timing

The 3 Biblical Tests

1. **Does it require compromise?** (1 Thessalonians 5:22) - The Integrity Test
2. **Is it producing Godly fruit?** (Matthew 7:16) - The Results Test
3. **Is it born of faith or fear/greed/pride?** (Romans 14:23) - The Motivation Test

Decision-Making Checklist - Before Making Any Major Decision:

Have I transformed my thinking about this situation? Have I prayed specifically about this decision? Have I searched Scripture for relevant principles? Have I sought counsel from wise, godly advisors? Have I looked for signs of God's providence? Have I listened for the Spirit's inner witness? Have I waited for God's timing rather than forcing my own?

Apply the Three Tests:

□ Does this require me to compromise my integrity or biblical values? □ Is this producing (or likely to produce) good fruit in my life and others'? □ Is this decision motivated by faith, or by fear, greed, or pride?

If all tests pass: Move forward with confidence, trusting God with the results.

If any test fails: Step back and reconsider. Either the opportunity isn't from God, or you need more time to evaluate it properly.

Key Scriptures for Decision-Making

Proverbs 3:5-6 - Trust in the LORD with all your heart

Romans 12:2 - Be transformed by the renewing of your mind

Psalms 37:4 - Delight yourself in the LORD

Psalms 119:105 - Your word is a lamp to my feet

Proverbs 15:22 - Plans fail for lack of counsel

Proverbs 16:9 - The LORD establishes our steps

John 16:13 - The Spirit will guide you into all truth

James 1:4 - Let perseverance finish its work

1 Thessalonians 5:22 - Abstain from all appearance of evil

Matthew 7:16 - By their fruit you will recognize them

Romans 14:23 - Everything that does not come from faith is sin

Prayer Template for Decision-Making

"Father, I come to You seeking wisdom about [specific decision]. Help me to think Your thoughts about this situation rather than relying on worldly wisdom. Show me what Your Word says about this decision. Bring to mind relevant Scriptures and principles that apply. Connect me with wise counselors who can provide godly perspective. Help me to listen well and weigh their advice carefully. Open my eyes to see Your hand at work in my circumstances. Help me recognize the signs of Your providence. Speak to my heart through Your Holy Spirit. Give me peace about the right direction and unease about wrong paths. Help me to wait for Your timing rather than forcing my own. Give me patience to let Your plan unfold. I commit to following Your will even if it's different from my preference. Use this decision to advance Your kingdom and serve others. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Remember: The goal isn't just to know God's will, but to want it more than your own. When your heart is aligned with His, following His guidance becomes natural and joyful.

"For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose." - Philippians 2:13 May God bless you as you seek and follow His perfect will for your life and business.