



Maranatha Baptist Church  
Equip University  
Christian Living Track  
Fearing and Following God

## Class 12 – Tools: Circumstances, Feelings, and Wisdom

### Introduction

What goes wrong when we assume that God normally guides us in mystical, sensational ways?

### Circumstances

#### Wrong Ways to “Read” Circumstances

- Oversensitivity to “open” and “shut” doors.
- Bad circumstance equals bad decision.
- Ignoring “open” or “closed” doors.

#### Right ways to use circumstances.

See circumstances as the good acts of a sovereign God.

What does that mean for our decisions?

1. It means we can trust God’s plan.
2. It means we can learn from our circumstances.

*Whate'er my God ordains is right,  
He never will deceive me  
He leads me by the proper path,  
I know He will not leave me  
I take, content,  
What He hath sent  
His hand can turn my griefs away  
And patiently I wait His day*

3. We develop humility and contentment.

Instead of lazy complacency, pursue openhanded ambition (1 Corinthians 7:21).

## Feelings

### Wrong Ways to Use Feelings

- Assuming that an inner prompting is definitely the Holy Spirit.
- Not acting until we feel an inner "peace."

### Right Ways to Use Feelings

- Intuition.
- Leadings prompted by the Spirit (with appropriate skepticism as to the accuracy of our subjective sense).
- Desires (Psalm 37:4).

Understanding our desires is important for a few reasons.

1. God gives us great freedom within what is right.
2. We can often serve Him better doing what we want.
3. Desires reveal idolatry.
4. God can sanctify our desires so they guide us well.

How to use your feelings when making a decision:

1. Recognize your feelings can be wrong.
2. Discuss your motives with those who know you well.
3. Use appropriate vocabulary to describe your feelings.
4. Correct for your natural biases.

## Wisdom

Wisdom is knowing God's ways and truth, and acting in the light of what God has said to be true.

How do we pursue wisdom?

- Fear God.
- Seek wisdom the ways God has said it can be found.
- Obey.

## Additional Resources:

- Ed Welch, *When People Are Big and God Is Small*
- Lou Priolo, *Pleasing People: How not to be an Approval Junkie*
- Ed Welch, *Running Scared: Fear, Worry and the God of Rest*
- John Murray, *The Fear of God: The Soul of Godliness*
- Kevin DeYoung, *Just Do Something*
- Tony Payne & Philip Jensen, *Guidance and the Voice of God*
- James Petty, *Step By Step*

## Class Outline:

1. What is the fear of man?
2. What is the fear of God?
3. How do we fear man? We fear that people will expose us.
4. How do we fear man? We fear that people will reject us.
5. How do we fear man? We fear that people will harm us.
6. A new vision for life: loving God and loving neighbor
7. Anxious or Restful?
8. God's Providence
9. God's Will
10. Faithfulness
11. Tools of the Trade Part 1: God's Word, Prayer, Counsel
12. Tools of the Trade Part 2: Circumstances and Feelings
13. Panel Discussion—Fearing and Following the Lord