

Who Do You Turn to For Solutions?

The tenet's apartment was overrun with roaches, spiders, flies etc. He decided to go to war against the insect invasion and take back his home. "If one bug bomb was good," he thought, "two dozen are better." He set them off and left. When he returned, the bugs were gone and so was his apartment and everything he owned. He told the police and firemen on the scene what had happened. He promised to turn to an exterminator to solve any future bug problems.

When facing a question about morals, worship, the church, etc. every Christian should first consider what God wants. After all, He is the expert. However, many people, when proposing their ideas about an aspect of religion, will ask, "What do you think about it?" Someone else will respond, "Well, in my opinion..." Everyone will listen to the words of wisdom coming from a mere man and the next thing you know the idea is implemented without ever once consulting the Word of God.

Throughout the Scriptures there are examples of men who decided to handle situations according to their own wisdom without seeking God's Will. Ahaziah, one of the Kings of Israel, was injured by falling through the lattice of his palace. He sent out messengers, "Go, inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury." God sent Elijah to the messengers, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?' Now therefore, thus says the Lord: 'You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" (2 Kings 1:2-4). By failing to consult the true God of Israel Ahaziah would not recover.

Ahaziah was not the only King of Israel to make this mistake. The very first King of Israel, Jereboam was faced with a problem. Although God gave him ten of the twelve tribes to rule over as long as he was faithful, Jereboam feared losing his people to Jerusalem when they went up to the Temple to worship. Instead of consulting God, Jereboam decided to build two golden calves. He set these up at Dan and Bethel. He told the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here

are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" (1 Kings 12:26-33). All the kings of Israel were led astray from God by following his example. Eventually, Jereboam's failure resulted in the ten tribes being taken away into Assyrian Captivity.

Even King David, who was called a "man after God's own heart," failed to consult God's Will and made a mess of His life and cost the lives of others. When the Philistines carried away the ark in a battle, David had the privilege of returning it. He decided to have an ox cart carry the ark back to Israel. Instead, he should have consulted God's Word. He would have found that the correct manner of transporting the ark was to have the Levites to carry it upon poles. When the ox cart started to tip, one of David's men, Uzzah, reached up to steady the ark and was struck dead. This all could have been avoided if David had only sought and followed God's Will (2 Sam. 6:3-11). Later, David was in his palace when he saw a bathing beauty. He gave into his lust and called for Bathsheba. He committed adultery with her and soon she was pregnant with his child. Instead of turning to God repenting and confessing, David decided to handle things his way. The end result was the murder of Uriah, Bathsheba's husband. As a punishment, the baby died and the sword would not depart from David's house (2 Sam. 11,12). Finally, toward the end of David's life he decided it would be wise to number the people of Israel. This also was a violation of God's Will. True, all the other kings of all the other nations were doing it. It was a logical and practical thing for a monarchy to do. However, God sent a plague that took the lives of 70,000 (2 Sam. 24). All of these tragedies could have been avoided if David had only sought out the Will of God.

The failure of God's leaders in not checking with Him before they act goes all the way back to Aaron. Moses was up on Mount Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments. Down below the Israelites, following Aaron's lead, were breaking the Ten Commandments. Moses had been gone too long for the impatient Israelites. Aaron was fearful of a riot on his hands. So he gathered up their gold jewelry and fashioned a golden calf for them to worship. Sure enough, this plan kept the Israelites happy, busy, and content to stay at Mt. Sinai instead of running back to Egypt, yet it was a violation of God's Will. Aaron should have turned to God to deal with the

problem (Ex. 32).

At last, we come to an example from the pages of the New Testament. Jesus told a parable of a farmer who was so blessed with a bumper crop that he needed a solution. So he made a decision, "saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry'" (Luke 12:17-19). This sounds like a great plan for any wise business man. However, "God said to him, 'You fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'" (Luke 12:20). If only he was smart enough to first consult what God would have wanted him to do with his financial windfall.

In contrast, there are other men who wisely checked with God instead of rushing foolishly to implement their solutions or ideas. Moses was constantly confronted with the murmuring and belly aching of the Israelites in the wilderness. They cried out for food and God sent manna. Yet they still complained that they had nothing but manna and no meat to eat. Borrowing from modern vernacular they were complaining, "Where's the beef?" So, Moses took the problem to God who made them eat nothing but meat for a whole month (Num. 11). Moses' only solution was to think about slaughtering all the animals they had but even that would not have fed the people. God's solution was to send a large covey of quail to cover the camp.

Moses' successor, Joshua, was also confronted with problems while leading God's people. By following God's plan the walls of Jericho came tumbling down. However, the smaller town of Ai proved to be too much for Israel. At their defeat, Joshua and the elders of the people turned to God with the problem. The reason for their defeat proved to be sin in the camp. Achan had taken contraband from Jericho and hid it in his tent. Only when he was disciplined with stoning did victory return to Israel (Josh. 7).

Many years later Hezekiah, a good king of Judah, was faced with a siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrians. They sent a letter demanding the surrender of Judah. Hezekiah took the letter in prayer to the Lord. God sent an angel that night against the Assyrians' camp leaving 185,000

Assyrian soldiers dead the next morning (2 Kings 19:14ff). Unlike King Ahaziah of Israel when Hezekiah was facing death he turned to God and was giving fifteen more years of life (2Kings 20:1-7).

After the Babylonian destruction of Israel, groups of Jews began to return from the seventy years of captivity. Nehemiah was still in exile serving the King of the Medo-Persian Empire as a cupbearer. When his brother told him that the walls of Jerusalem still lay in ruin, Nehemiah turned to God for help. God heard his prayers and soon Nehemiah was governor of Judah. He set about to rebuild the walls, but was faced with constant opposition from without and from within. Yet, each time he turned to God who in the end blessed him. The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt under his leadership in a mere fifty-two days (see Neh. 1-6).

Who or what do you turn to for solutions? Do you turn to situation ethics to solve the problems in your marriage and decide under the circumstances to divorce even though it is contrary to God's Will (Matt. 19:9)? Do you turn to the experts for advice, like lawyers, doctors and psychiatrists? A lawyer may tell you to sue a brother in Christ (1 Cor. 6:1-7). A psychiatrist may tell you to improve your marriage with pornography? A doctor may tell you to start drinking or have an abortion. First, you should STOP! Check with God before you blindly follow their advice (Matt. 15:14).

Perhaps, you turn to popular trends and fashions. You can always argue, "Everybody is doing it these days." You can answer the problem of teenage sex by saying, "They are just going to do it anyway." Are you willing to let the world out vote God. Does God have a right to vote on these matters? As a Christian in God's Kingdom you are not under a democracy, but a theocracy. Only God has a right to cast a vote. Do you turn to astrology, psychics, etc? Maybe you just turn to you favorite preacher?

Here is a novel idea. Why not turn to the Bible like the Bereans did after hearing the preaching of Paul? *"These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so"* (Acts 17:11). Why not have a *"Thus saith the Lord"* behind all you say, do, and plan? (2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Peter. 1:3).

It would be an excellent idea if every Christian could learn the hard lesson of turning to

God first when seeking solutions to the problems of life. You want the local church to grow? Turn to the Gospel instead of the Social Gospel. Seeking a wife or husband? Turn to God in prayer. He has the most extensive and powerful search engine in the universe to find you a spouse. Look to God's Word for the characteristics you need to find in a future mate. Can't decide on a occupation? Consult the Bible before making a decision on whether to be a bartender or a masseuse or an abortion doctor. Deciding on moving you family to a new town? Remember Lot and remember his wife. Trying to decide whether you are going to spank your kids or not? Check out Proverbs 13:24; 22:15. Maybe Solomon is wiser than all those child experts. Want to improve worship services? Don't poll the community or the congregation to see what they like. Read John 4:23,24. Want to know how to be saved? Great! Start by turning off the televangelists and read the book of Acts.

Trying to solve problems without God's guidance is only to invite more trouble. Self-discipline yourself into the habit of always turning to God and consulting His Will before you make any decision.

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Service Times

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Bible Study.....9:30 am
Worship Service.....10:30 am
Worship Service.....5:00 pm

Wednesday
Bible Study.....7:30 pm

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