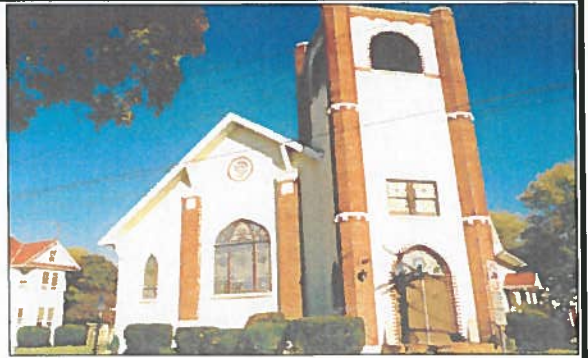


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“Four Ways God Leads His People”

Article by John Piper

Founder & Teacher, desiringGod.org

I see at least four methods that God uses to lead us in his will. I put them in four “D’s” to help me remember them.

1) Decree: God sovereignly decrees and designs circumstances so that we end up where he wants us to be even if we don’t have any conscious part in getting there. For example, Paul and Silas found themselves in jail, and the result was the salvation of the jailer and his household ([Acts 16:24-34](#)). This was God’s plan, but not Paul’s. God does this often - putting us in places that we did not plan or decide to be. This is the leading of decree. It is unique above the other three leadings because it includes them (since God’s decrees include all our decisions) and because it happens infallibly (since “no purpose of [God’s] can be thwarted,” [Job 42:2](#)). The other three leadings of God involve our being *consciously* led.

2) Direction: This is simply what God does for us by giving us the commands and teachings of the Bible. They direct us specifically what to do and what not to do:

One example is the Ten Commandments:

Don’t steal. Don’t kill. Don’t lie.

Or the Sermon on the Mount:

Love your enemies.

Or the Epistles:

Be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Put on humility.

This is the leading of direction. God reveals his directions in the Bible.

3) Discernment: Most of the decisions we make are not spelled out specifically in the Bible. Discernment is how we follow God’s leading through the process of spiritually sensitive application of biblical truth to the particularities of our situation. [Romans 12:2](#) describes this: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” In this case God does not declare a specific word about what to do. But his Spirit shapes the mind and heart through the word and prayer so that we have inclinations toward what would be most glorifying to him and helpful to others.

(continued on next page)

4) Declaration: This is the least common means of God's leading. He simply declares to us what we should do. For example, according to Acts 8:26, "An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, 'Arise and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza.'" And according to Acts 8:29, "The Spirit said to Philip, 'Go up and join this chariot.'"

* * * * *

Notice three implications. First, we should always rest in the *decrees* of God. They will always be for our good if we love him and are called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28). This should remove worry from our lives and put us at peace as we seek the "directed," "discerned" and "declared" leading of the Lord.

Second, there is the implication that God's leading of *decree* may bring about acts that are contrary to his leading of *direction*, *discernment* or *declaration*. In other words, he may *direct*, "You shall not kill," but *decree* the murderous death of

his Son (Acts 4:28). There are mysteries here, but it is manifest in dozens of places in the Bible that God wills that some things come to pass which he forbids in his word.

Finally, our confidence that we are tracking accurately with God in each of these leadings increases as we move from the bottom to the top of this list. Subjectively perceived *declarations* from God are the least common and most easily abused of all the ways God leads. Our confidence that we have known the will of God in this method will not be as great as in the other methods which relate directly to God's written word. *Discerning* what to do on the basis of biblical principle when we do not have a specific command for our exact decision will yield less confidence than when we have an explicit *direction* in the Bible. And the truth that God is sovereign and guides all things is the rock bottom confidence under all others. It is a good place to rest.

December Seniors Luncheon

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas - the weather is cold outside, Christmas carols are playing on the radio, holiday merchandise is in the stores, glittering lights are on display throughout the town, holiday greeting cards are being received, and we've already had a taste of snow falling. Christmas is just around the corner.

Calvary is kicking off the 2018 holiday season with our Seniors Christmas Luncheon. We cordially invite our seniors to attend on **Tuesday, December 4th**. Lunch will start promptly at 12:00 noon. On the menu is roast beef, potatoes, vegetable, and cake for dessert.

Enjoy lunch while some festive holiday music is playing. And be sure to bring along your Christmas spirit as we will be having a sing-a-long of Christmas carols.

Please let us know you are attending by signing the sign-up sheet at the church, or call the church office and leave a message (516-223-4070).

Joy to the World.
The Lord is Come.
With. Harmonized by T. C. O'K.

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come, Let earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare him room, And heaven and nature
prepare his nest, And
sing, And heaven and nature sing, And heaven, And
heaven and nature sing, And heaven and nature sing, And

Merry Christmas to all!

Season Of Advent



Advent begins on Sunday, December 2nd, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. Join us for worship each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. as we celebrate the Advent season.

1st Sunday of Advent December 2nd "Hope & Expectation"

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). Matthew 1:22-23

2nd Sunday of Advent December 9th "Peace"

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

3rd Sunday of Advent December 16th "Joy"

And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." Luke 2:10

4th Sunday of Advent December 23rd "Love"

In this the love God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:9-10

Christmas Eve Service December 24th Lighting the Christ Candle

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11

Special Events In December

Decorating the Church

Many hands are needed to help decorate the church on Monday, December 2nd. We will begin around 7:00 p.m. to assemble the Christmas tree, put up the wreath, hang the garland and bows, set up the nativity scene, and put all the final touches in place for the holiday season.

Christmas Dinner and a Show

We invite you to join us for our Christmas dinner and special pageant on Sunday, December 16th.

The pot-luck dinner starts at 5:15 p.m. A sign-up sheet is at the church. Please let us know you are coming and what you can bring. You can also call Barbara at 516-223-4210.

At 6:30 p.m. there will be a pageant held upstairs in the auditorium. "Let's Keep God's Love In Christmas" is the title of the play. Mrs. Bartlett is an adult with years of experience in the theater. She worries that the spirit of Christmas has been lost in all the glitz, glitter, and commercialism, and she believes that when Christ was born, love was born. She is determined to put God's love back into Christmas so that children will understand the true meaning of the occasion.

So please join us for what's sure to be a memorable evening.

Christmas Caroling

Help spread some song and cheer this holiday season and join us for Christmas caroling on Friday, December 21st. We will meet at the church at 6:30 p.m. and carpool to some of our elderly and shut-ins from the church family. Afterwards we will return to the church to warm up and enjoy some refreshments.



Christmas Eve Service

Calvary's annual Christmas Eve Service will be held Monday, December 24th, at 7:30 p.m. We welcome you to attend this traditional service. The choir will be singing, instruments will be playing, scriptures will be read, the pastor will be giving a Christmas message, and everyone will light their candles and sing Christmas carols together. Come celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior with us!



My Christmas

By Karen Colton

Christmas Day is nearing,
my cards are on their way,
The gifts are wrapped, cookies baked,
my house is a display,
The parties have been organized,
the tinsel's on the tree,
"What is it, Lord? What's that you say?
You'd like a word with me?
Well, all right, if You're sure
it won't take very long.
The Christmas play is shortly
and I must learn this new song."
"My child," God said, "I love you
and you know how much I care.
I've sure missed hearing from you
and the time we usually share.
For I've watched you as you hustled
and bustled to and fro,
Overworked and overwrought
and I've longed to tell you so.

Christmas is a time of peace,
a time of love and joy,
Not baubles, bangles, food and drink
or your son's brand new toy.
I want for you to have gifts, your tree,
your friends, your fun -
But, also to remember that
for you I gave My Son.
So you could live and love and hope
and have all of life's best.
Let Jesus fill your Christmas
and you're sure to have the rest."
"Oh, Lord, will You forgive me
as unto You I call?
For I see now Christ is Christmas,
the meaning of it all.
And as I spend this Christmas time
enjoying everything,
I'll not let my heart be swayed
from honoring Christ, my King."

Giving Thanks!

The church family gathered together to celebrate Thanksgiving on Sunday, November 18th. Everyone enjoyed the dinner and time spent praising God and giving thanks for the many blessings He has given to us.

As always, the food was delicious. We do appreciate the many good cooks we have at the church. I heard numerous people asking others for the recipe of a dish they enjoyed. We thank the Fellowship Committee for their hard work in setting up and for cleaning up as well. We especially thank Ralph for preparing the ham.

During the worship service in the morning and in the evening many in the church personally expressed their gratitude to God especially for helping them through a difficult time this past year. Very touching moments and heart-felt sentiments that brought tears to our eyes.

After the evening service who could resist the many pies that were on display. It truly was a great evening.



His Name at the Top



I had the nicest Christmas list,
The longest one in town,
Till Daddy looked at it and said,
"You'll have to cut it down."

I knew that what he said was true
Beyond the faintest doubt,
But was amazed to hear him say,
"You've left your best friend out."

And so I scanned my list again,
And said, "Oh, that's not true!"
But Daddy said, "His name's not there,
That Friend who died for you."

And then I clearly understood,
'Twas Jesus that he meant:
For Him who should come first of all
I hadn't planned a cent!

I'd made a Christmas present list,
And left the Savior out!
But, oh, it didn't take me long
To change the list about.

And tho' I've had to drop some names
Of folks I like a lot,
My Lord must have the most - because
HIS NAME IS AT THE TOP!

How well do you know your Christmas songs?

Do you think you know a lot of Christmas songs? How many of the following songs can you identify by the first initial of the words of the first line of the song?

Example: O C A Y F - O Come All Ye Faithful

1. H Y A M L C _____
2. T F N T A D S _____
3. S N H N A I C A I B _____
4. H T H A S G T T N K _____
5. D T H W B O H F L L L L L L L L _____
6. O H N T S A B S _____
7. D T T S I A O H O S _____
8. W T K O O A _____
9. I D O A W C J L T O I U T K _____
10. J T T W T L I S _____
11. F T S W A J H S _____
12. C T T M P R P P P _____
13. A W H H O H S S O T P _____
14. G R Y M G L N Y D _____
15. A I A M N C F A B _____
16. O L T O B H S W S T L _____
17. W W Y A M C _____

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BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER

1st Ken Combs
1st Lauren Nicolich
6th Trevor Watts
10th Donald Brower
10th Noelle Nehring
11th Daishaun Elliott
15th Anthony Alex Ramos
20th Stephanie Verity
21st Diane Benedetto
24th Helen Johnson
24th Wren Waldvogel
25th Sean Deedy
27th David Manuel
31st Dylan Rose

JANUARY

1st Martha Mietenkorte
4th Gregory Dapice
5th Magalie Alcindor
6th Fitz Alcindor (Sr.)
8th Matthew Lucchesi
9th Lorna Bigby
9th Steven Elcock
14th Dorothy Brown
16th Bob Benedetto
18th Raynell Falden (Bigby)
22nd Erin Waldvogel
24th Magalie Alcindor
24th Vincent Rotolo
24th Tim Waldvogel
24th Finch Waldvogel
27th Dave Senita
29th Roy Knoernschild
29th Allison Linhart
30th Ralph Rose
31st Chris Watts

**Happy
Birthday!**

ANNIVERSARIES

DECEMBER

26th Carmine & Mary Jo Dapice
31st Jim & Terry Tucci

JANUARY

4th Charles & Barbara Lucchesi
24th Matt & Karen Linhart

The True Spirit of Christmas

"What is Christmas?" I asked my soul,
and this answer came back to me:
"It is the Glory of heaven come down
in the hearts of humanity -
Come in the spirit and heart of a child,
and it matters not what we share
At Christmas; it is not Christmas at all
unless the Christ Child be there."