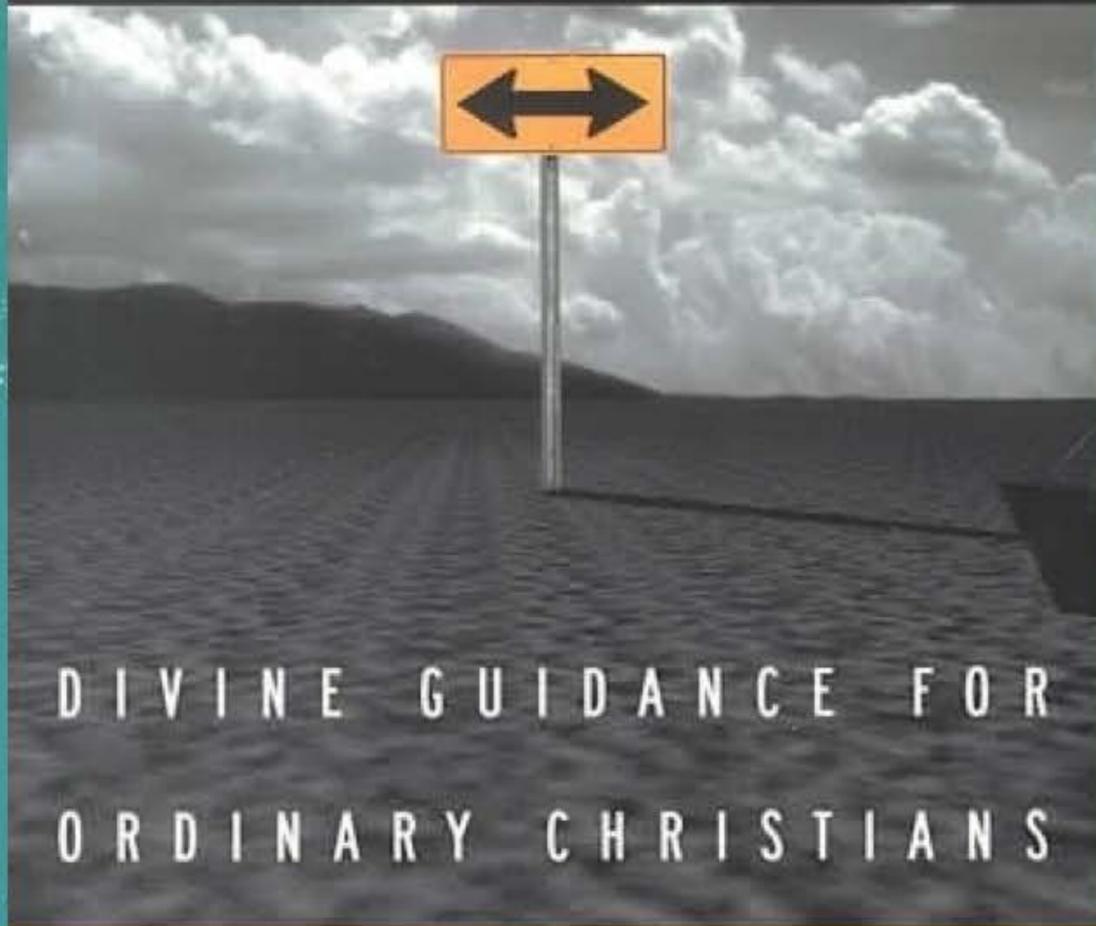




RESOURCES FOR CHANGING LIVES



DIVINE GUIDANCE FOR  
ORDINARY CHRISTIANS

# STEPBYSTEP

JAMES C. PETTY



SEARCHING FOR GOD'S WILL:  
A FRESH LOOK AT  
HOW GOD LEADS US



Week 2:  
Problems With the Traditional View,  
and Towards a Biblical Model of  
God's Will

Ken Christy



# Problems With the Traditional View of God's Will



A Better Way



Also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

Ephesians 1:11



“All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven *And among* the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’

Daniel 4:35



In the exercise of His will  
He brought us forth by  
the word of truth, so that  
we would be a kind of  
first fruits among His  
creatures.

James 1:18



“Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; *I am God*, and there is no one like Me,

Isaiah 46:9–10



Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';

Isaiah 46:9–10



Your eyes have seen my  
unformed substance; And in  
Your book were all written  
The days that were ordained  
*for me*, When as yet there  
was not one of them.

Psalm 139:16



“For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

Acts 4:27–28



to do whatever Your hand and  
Your purpose predestined to  
occur.

Acts 4:27–28



Do not love the world nor  
the things in the world. If  
anyone loves the world,  
the love of the Father is  
not in him.

1 John 2:15–17



For all that is in the world,  
the lust of the flesh and  
the lust of the eyes and  
the boastful pride of life,  
is not from the Father, but  
is from the world.

1 John 2:15–17



The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

1 John 2:15–17



And do not be conformed to  
this world, but be  
transformed by the renewing  
of your mind, so that you may  
prove what the will of God is,  
that which is good and  
acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:2



Now the God of peace, who  
brought up from the dead  
the great Shepherd of the  
sheep through the blood of  
the eternal covenant, *even*  
Jesus our Lord,

Hebrews 13:20–21



equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 13:20–21



“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.

Deuteronomy 29:29



1. It's **COMMUNICATION**: It is **FULLY REVEALED** in Scripture



All Scripture is inspired  
by God and profitable for  
teaching, for reproof, for  
correction, for training in  
righteousness;

2 Timothy 3:16–17



so that the man of God  
may be adequate,  
equipped for every good  
work.

2 Timothy 3:16–17



2. It's **ORIGIN** or **NATURE**: It is the expression of **GOD'S CHARACTER**



So then, the Law is  
holy, and the  
commandment is holy  
and righteous and  
good.

Romans 7:12



3. It's SCOPE: It touches EVERY ASPECT AND MOMENT OF LIFE



Rejoice always; pray  
without ceasing; in  
everything give thanks;  
for this is God's will for  
you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18



For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

Colossians 1:9–10



so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Colossians 1:9–10



for you were formerly  
darkness, but now you are  
Light in the Lord; walk as  
children of Light (for the fruit  
of the Light *consists* in all  
goodness and righteousness  
and truth),

Ephesians 5:8–17



trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;

Ephesians 5:8–17



for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.

Ephesians 5:8–17



For this reason it says,  
"Awake, sleeper, And arise  
from the dead, And Christ will  
shine on you." Therefore be  
careful how you walk, not as  
unwise men but as wise,

Ephesians 5:8–17



making the most of your  
time, because the days are  
evil. So then do not be  
foolish, but understand what  
the will of the Lord is.

Ephesians 5:8–17



**“No one can serve two masters;  
for either he will hate the one and  
love the other, or he will be  
devoted to one and despise the  
other. You cannot serve God and  
wealth.**

**Matthew 6:24–34**



“For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on.* Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”

Matthew 6:24–34



“Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?”

Matthew 6:24–34



“And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life?  
“And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these.

Matthew 6:24–34



“But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith!

Matthew 6:24–34



“Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ “For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

Matthew 6:24–34



“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:24–34



Whether, then, you eat  
or drink or whatever  
you do, do all to the  
glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31



So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

Romans 14:19



As each one has received  
a *special* gift, employ it  
in serving one another as  
good stewards of the  
manifold grace of God.

1 Peter 4:10



“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.”

Matthew 28:19–20a

# COMPARING GOD'S SOVEREIGN & MORAL WILLS

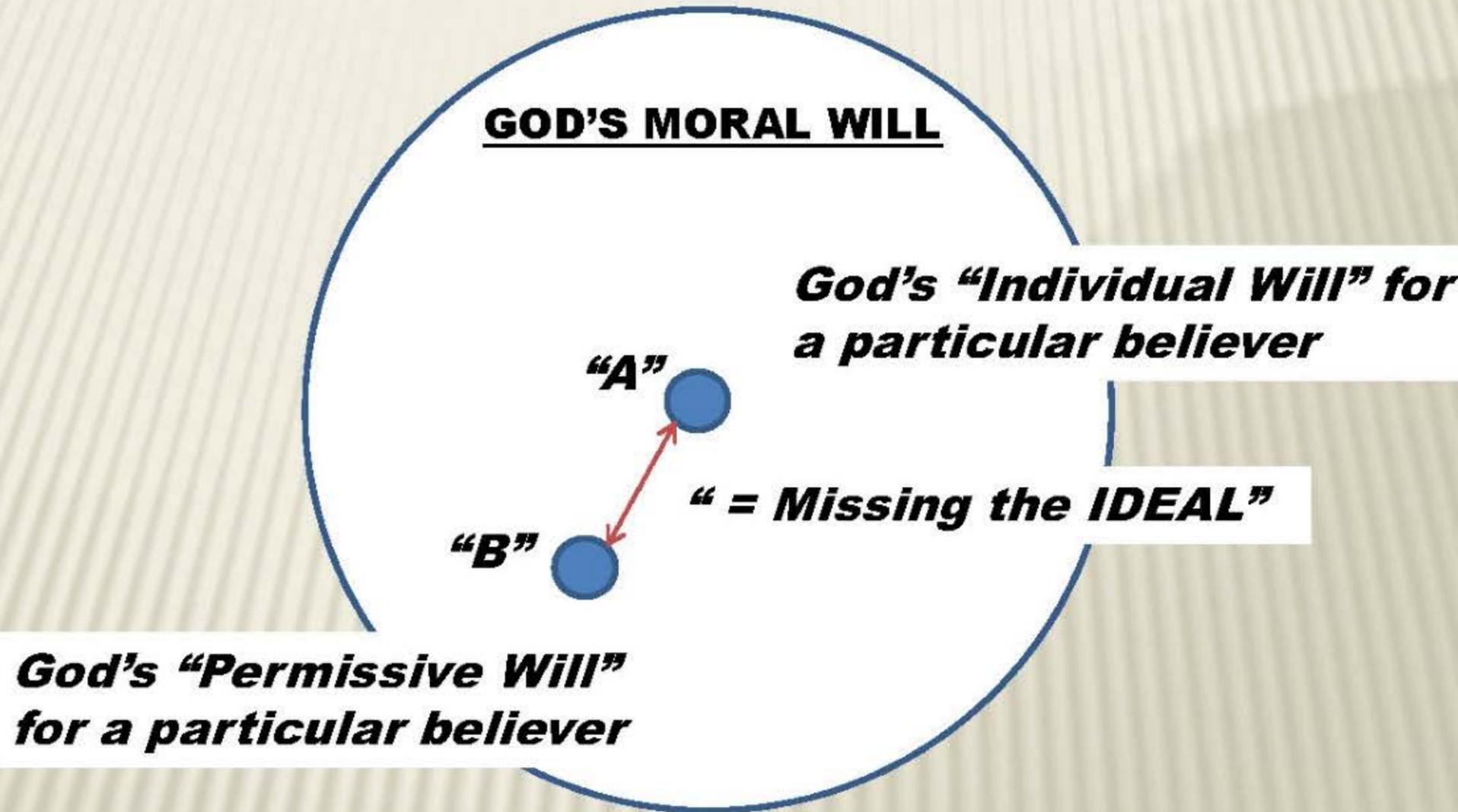
## **God's SOVEREIGN will**

1. **God's secret plan – determines everything that happens in universe**
2. **Mostly hidden**
3. **Cannot be learned before**
4. **Cannot be “missed” should be humbly accepted**
5. **INDIRECTLY ideal plan: Though it includes evil acts & foolish decisions, it will ultimately lead to God's glory**

## **God's MORAL will**

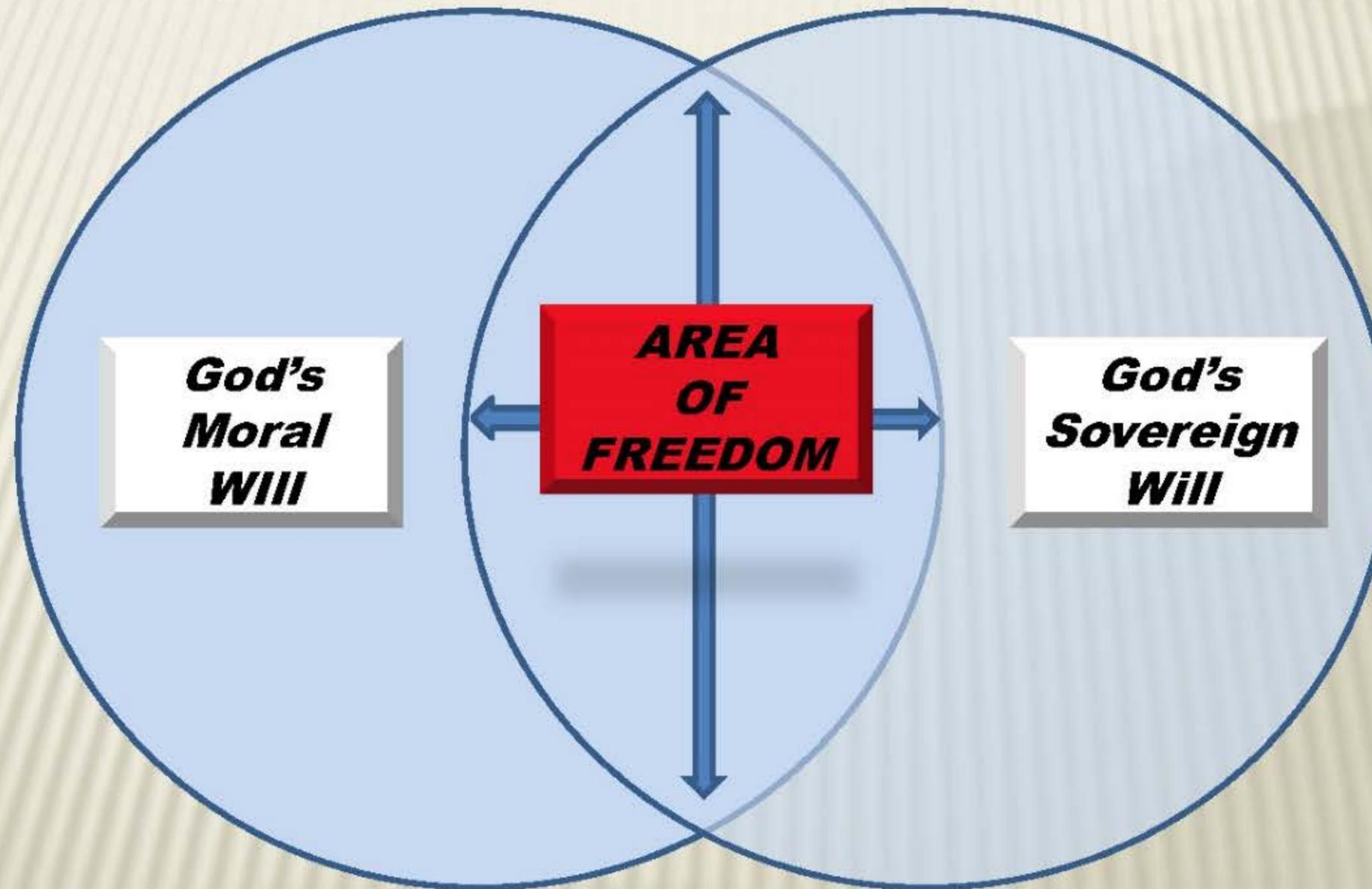
1. **God's revealed commands in the Bible that teach how men ought to believe & live**
2. **Totally revealed**
3. **Must be learned for guidance**
4. **Can be “missed” through ignorance or disobedience**
5. **DIRECTLY ideal pattern: Includes only those behaviors & attitudes that conform to God's character, thereby glorifying Him**

# TRADITIONAL VIEW: "THE CENTER OF GOD'S WILL"

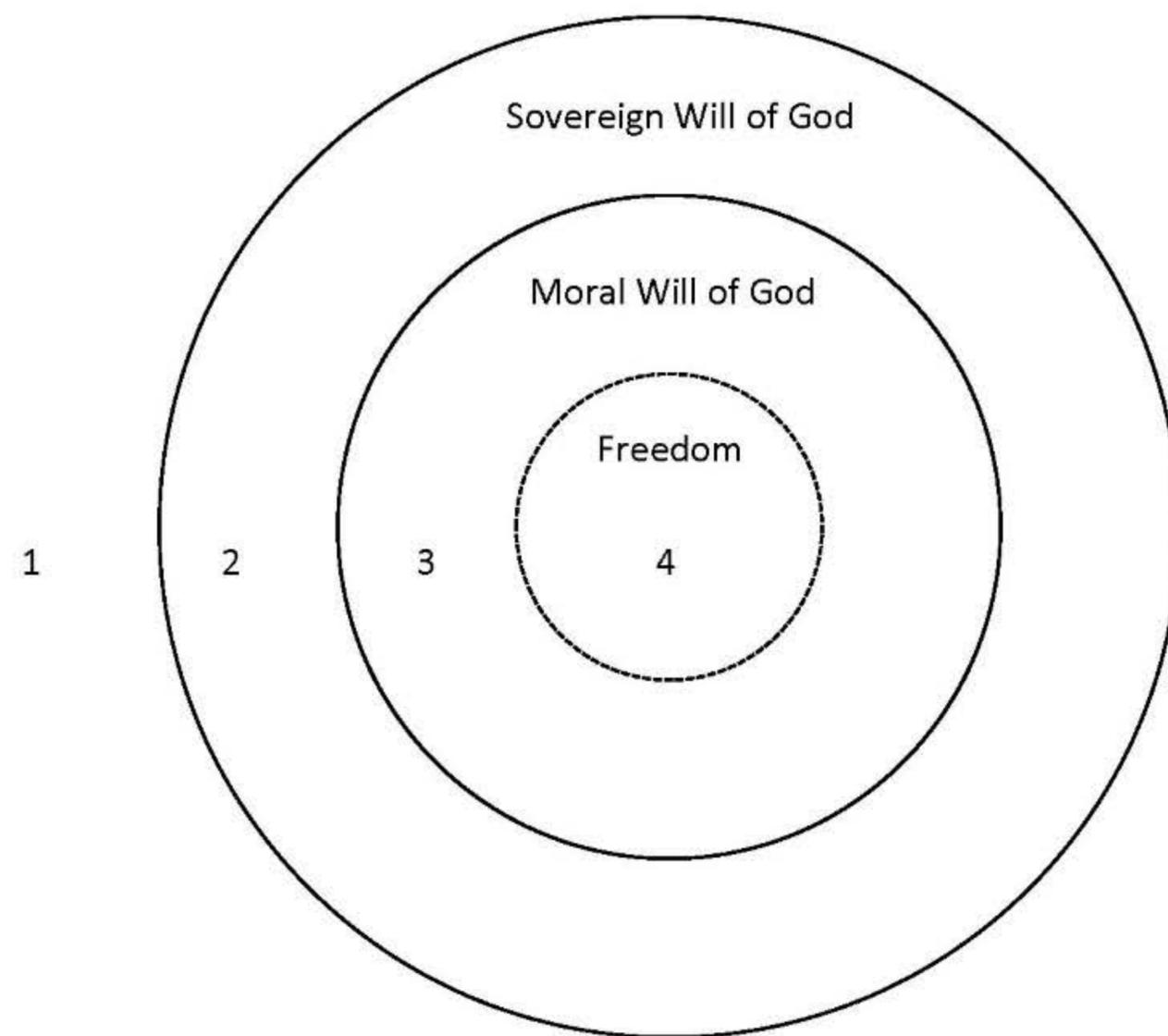


# GAINING A BIBLICAL MODEL FOR DECISION-MAKING

## RELATIONSHIPS AMONG ASPECTS OF GOD'S WILL



## Interrelationships Between the Various Aspects of God's Will





**PRINCIPLE 1: OBEDIENCE:** Where God commands, we must obey. In moral areas, God guides by scriptural commands and principles.



**PRINCIPLE 2: FREEDOM:** Where there is no command or clear principle, God gives us freedom (AND RESPONSIBILITY) to choose.



**PRINCIPLE 3: WISDOM:** Where there is no command, God gives us wisdom sufficient for every decision.



**PRINCIPLE 4: HUMBLE TRUST:** When we have done our best to wisely choose what is right, we must trust that the sovereign God will work all the details together for GOOD (God's glory and our good).



GOD'S SOVEREIGN WILL IS...

CERTAIN  
DETAILED  
PERFECT  
HIDDEN  
SUPREME

# TRADITIONAL VIEW: COMPARING/CONTRASTING GOD'S INDIVIDUAL & SOVEREIGN WILLS

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## **INDIVIDUAL WILL**

1. **Detailed plan for all decisions in believer's life**
2. **Believer can find & know it**
3. **Believer is expected to find it**
4. **Believer can miss it by failure to discover or obey it**
5. **Includes only the good & ideal**
6. **Decision-making requires discovering it**
7. **DIRECTLY ideal plan:**
  - **In harmony with Scripture**
  - **Decision is always ideal**
  - **Brings glory to God**

## **SOVEREIGN WILL**

1. **Detailed plan for all events in the universe**
2. **Hidden ... cannot be found or known**
3. **Believer is not expected to find it**
4. **It always comes to pass, so believer cannot miss it**
5. **Includes both good & evil**
6. **Will be discovered only after it happens**
7. **INDIRECTLY ideal plan:**
  - **Includes evil acts & foolish decisions**
  - **Ultimately leads to God's glory**

# TRADITIONAL VIEW: COMPARING/CONTRASTING GOD'S INDIVIDUAL & MORAL WILLS

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## ***INDIVIDUAL WILL***

1. **Detailed plan for all decisions in believer's life**
2. **Believer is expected to find & do it**
3. **Believer can miss it by failure to discover or obey it**
4. **Is revealed to believer's heart – cannot be found in Bible**
5. **Holy Spirit reveals it through inward impressions by many means**
6. **Gives specific directives for one specific believer**

## ***MORAL WILL***

1. **Body of general commands & principles for life**
2. **Believer is expected to find & do it**
3. **Believer can miss it by failure to discover or obey it**
4. **Revealed to apostles & prophets – can be found completely in Bible**
5. **Holy Spirit revealed it in past by many means**
6. **Directives are generally for all believers**

# FOUR DISTINCTIVE WAYS IN WHICH GOD GUIDES

	MORAL GUIDANCE	WISDOM GUIDANCE	SOVEREIGN GUIDANCE	SPECIAL GUIDANCE
<b>SPHERE</b> of Guidance	In <b>MORAL</b> Conduct	In <b>"NON-MORAL"</b> Decisions	In <b>ALL</b> things	In <b>UNIQUE</b> cases
<b>NATURE</b> of Guidance	God <b>DIRECTLY</b> Guides believers	God <b>MEDIATELY</b> Guides believers	God <b>SECRETLY</b> Guides believers	God <b>SUPERNATURALLY</b> Guides believers
<b>MEANS</b> of Guidance	By <b>REVEALED:</b> -Commands -Principles	By <b>ACQUIRED</b> Wisdom	By <b>SOVEREIGN</b> <b>CONTROL</b> Over all events	By -Divine Voice -Dreams -Miracles
<b>GOVERNING</b> <b>PRINCIPLE</b> God Uses	According to His <b>MORAL WILL</b> (Bible)	According to <b>SPIRITUAL</b> <b>EXPEDIENCY</b> (Gain His objectives, best way, best time)	According to His <b>SOVEREIGN</b> <b>WILL</b>	According to <b>SPECIAL</b> <b>REVELATION</b>