

Spirit-Filled Pastor: Can I Ask God for Confirmation?

There are many incidents of God giving people a sign throughout the Bible. Although I believe God still does this, I also believe that we must be careful.

Asking for a sign can be misleading if other factors are not taken into consideration.

In Genesis, we find an incredible example of asking God for confirmation. Abraham told his servant to find a wife for his son, but not from the Canaanites (which was the easy route), but to go back to Abraham's country to look there.

When the servant arrived at his destination, he prayed that God would give him a sign—that the woman for Isaac would allow him and his camels to drink from her container (Gen. 24:12-14). Seems a little risky to me, but God honored his request. Here is why.

It's Worth the Wait

Many speculate that this journey could have taken three weeks to reach his destination. In this, we find a very important principle: It's worth the wait to do what is right. He wanted to find a bride who shared a love for God. This reveals another very important truth: The principle of being equally yoked.

Many believers ask for confirmation while disobeying clear teachings of Scripture. For example, a couple living together asks God for confirmation if they should marry, or a businessman asks for confirmation on a business venture that will compromise his integrity, or a family asks God for confirmation to buy a house way above their financial means.

In all these situations, asking for confirmation would go against God's Word: "Get wisdom! ... Love her, and she will keep you. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding" (Prov. 4:5-7). Before making a decision, ask, "Is this wise and does it line up with God's Word?" Our pursuit of God's will must begin with obedience.

Don't be Fleeced by Throwing out a Fleece

In Judges 6:36-40, we read about the concept of "throwing out a fleece." Gideon said that he would place a wool fleece on the floor: "If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand..." And it happened. Gideon rose early the next day and wrung out the water.

Still not convinced, Gideon asked for more confirmation: "Allow me one more test with the fleece, but this time make the fleece dry and let the ground be covered with dew." And the Lord honored his request: "Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew."

What are we to make of this? How does it apply to us today? I believe we can ask for confirmation from time to time if certain conditions are met:

1. You're truly seeking God's will through prayer and the application of His Word (e.g., you're living in obedience rather than disobedience).
2. You're waiting on Him and repenting of besetting sin and wrong attitudes, if warranted.
3. You're using wisdom and applying principles that align with His Word, His character and His nature.
4. You're prepared to obey regardless of the answer.
5. You're not double-minded, wishy-washy and always looking for a "word" or a "sign."
6. You're not asking for confirmation on things that oppose

His Word.

7. You'll keep trusting God even if there is no answer.

Gideon's situation included all the points above: He needed the courage to fight evil and was truly seeking God. He was already walking in obedience by breaking down the horrendous altar of Baal (Judg. 6:28-32). He trusted God and was prepared to obey. And the job of delivering Israel—what he wasn't sure about—all lined up with God's Word.

An Example of When I Needed Confirmation

Although I don't ask for confirmation often, I definitely need one before beginning the *Westside Christian Fellowship Radio Network*.

In August 2017, the local radio stations that we broadcasted on informed me they were in the process of selling. At that moment, I felt God prompting me with the thought, "Why don't you buy the stations?" Although I considered it a crazy idea, especially because they weren't available at the time, I began to pray.

Months later, I emailed the manager of the stations to see how everything was going. I was surprised to find that they hadn't sold yet. Again, I prayed for direction, "Lord, we can't buy these stations and try to wing it. We need a person who can help oversee the programming. God, I don't know if this is You, so I'm going to let the idea go."

The Exception Not the Rule

It seemed like buying a few stations in our area was God-honoring. We also had the budget to branch out and our leadership team was fully on board with this idea. All of these things are extremely important when it comes to God's will. For example, if the leadership had been divided or we didn't have the finances to purchase the stations, it may not have been a good idea. Granted, sometimes decisions are made

in God's will when not everyone agrees, and God will sometimes require you to step out in faith and trust Him for the finances, but this is often the exception rather than the rule.

Just a few days later, Phil, a *Christian radio station manager* who I had never met, stopped by the church office and said he was considering moving to our area from Minnesota. Talk about confirmation! To say we were surprised is an understatement; we were shocked. This confirmation fueled an intense eight-month season of prayer.

I Trust God. It's Me I'm Not Sure About

Still skeptical, I wanted additional proof that I was on the right track. I fully trusted God but I didn't fully trust me. God knows our heart and I believe He will give us confirmation when needed. At other times, He may ask that we simply step out in faith and trust Him.

A few months after Phil's visit, I was driving to a meet-and-greet for our church. I prayed, "Lord, it seems like You are directing us to buy these radio stations, but they are still not available. If you want me to continue to pray, please let me meet someone who was helped by our program before it went off the air."

One of the first people I met at the meet-and-greet was a man named Walt, who said, "I was listening to your program a year ago and it really helped me. Whatever happened to that station?" I smiled and embraced God's confirmation. Again, I trust Him fully, but I don't always trust *my* "feelings." That's why waiting on God is so important.

Pray, stay and obey

Finally! Almost one year to the date of my first inquiry, we were told we could purchase the stations because the original buyer backed out, and the *Westside Christian Fellowship Radio*

Network was born.

You too can be led by God's Spirit if you *pray, stay and obey*: Pray for confirmation, apply the points previously mentioned, use wisdom, wait on God, seek godly counsel and make sure your decision is based on the Word of God. God loves to lead those who are willing to follow. {eoa}

Special Note: To watch the sermon, "Can I Ask God for Confirmation," subscribe here. The sermon will be dated 6/26/22.

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