



BIBLE

STUDENT BOOK

▶ **9th Grade | Unit 9**

BIBLE 909

God's Will for My Life

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God's Will for My Life

Introduction

Almost every young person, at one time or another, has asked himself the question, "What does God expect of me?" Knowing the answer to this question, as it is revealed in the Word of God, will give a Christian confidence in pursuing the path that will please the Lord. Doing what God expects will more fully prepare you to participate in and enjoy the eternal realm. The purpose of this LIFE PAC® is to help you to know how to find God's will for your life, how to develop and keep God's goals for you, and how to evaluate and use the talents and gifts God has given you.

God's will might be simply understood in a twofold way. First, God has a *general* will, which embraces all mankind everywhere. Second, God has a *specific* will for all believers in Christ. Jesus spoke of His Father's will for mankind in general when He said (John 6:40), "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life...." He clarified this statement in John 17:3, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Before you can know the specific will of God for your life, you must first know the true and living God through Jesus Christ. If you have never experienced God in this personal way, now would be an excellent time to receive Jesus Christ into your life as your Lord and Savior!

The specific will of God for the individual believer is stated comprehensively by Paul in Ephesians 3:17-19: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." The *breadth* is that God's great love has completely surrounded us. The *length* reaches back before the foundations of the world and stretches into eternity. The *depth* of God's love is seen in His reaching down to save us from sin. The *height* of God's love raises us to the highest level possible and enables us to be seated with Christ in heavenly places. To fully enjoy and experience the comprehensive benefits that God in Christ Jesus has made available to you, you must be obedient to His will. As you discover in this LIFE PAC what God expects of you, determine that you will do that which He desires for your life.

Objectives

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFE PAC. When you have finished this LIFE PAC, you should be able to:

1. State three areas of guidance in knowing God's will.
2. Describe briefly the three aspects of the heart as related to God's will.
3. Indicate how God's Word guides us.
4. Describe three ways that God uses providence to help us know His will.
5. Explain the need for goals and how they can help you to lead a glorifying, fulfilling, and productive life.
6. Specify the kind of goals you should have in the personal, career, and ministry areas of your life.
7. Explain how goals can be attained.
8. Describe how God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit gives gifts to believers.
9. Tell how your talents or gifts may be evaluated by yourself, by the Lord's leading, and by others.
10. Relate how the gifts may be used from the period of beginning zeal, through continuing faithfulness, and unto progressive maturity.

1. HOW TO FIND GOD'S WILL FOR YOUR LIFE

Jesus loved to teach the truths of God's Word by using objects from nature and **incorporating** them into a story or parable. Similarly, God has incorporated into nature and life principles that parallel spiritual truths. One such principle is the means that God uses to guide us in determining His will for our lives. The principle is observed in the way that ships navigate from open water, through a narrow channel, and into the safety of an inland harbor. A vessel coming from the open ocean may first encounter a lighted outer marker buoy that shows the beginning of a deep water channel. As the ship proceeds, one or more lighted channel markers may be observed. These channel markers keep the ship on course so that it will not become grounded on a shoal. Finally, a distinctly marked harbor light assures the vessel that it has safely reached the port. The ship in the illustration must align itself so that each of the three lights can be seen in a straight line with one just below the other. The harbor light would blink above the channel marker light, and the outer buoy marker would blink below the channel marker. If the ship were allowed to drift to one side or the other, the three blinking lights would be out of alignment—a visible warning to the ship's navigator. After passing

the outer marker, the ship must still keep the two remaining marker lights in line, one under the other.

To demonstrate this principle to yourself, set three pencils on end about a foot apart, with the tallest in the rear, followed by a shorter one, and the smallest one in front. Stand two feet in front of the shortest pencil and watch with one eye closed as you move to the left and then to the right in front of the three pencils. Note how they become misaligned as you move out of the channel!

God has given us three markers to guide and keep us in the center channel of His will. The first outer marker is our own heart's desire. The second channel marker is God's Word. The third harbor marker is His **providence**, or circumstances arranged by Him on our behalf. All three of God's navigational lights must be perfectly aligned for us to be in the center of His will. If any light is out of alignment, you will know that you are getting off course. In this section of the LIFEPAC, you will study each of the three markers that will help you to safely navigate into the channel of God's will for your life. This simple threefold principle of guidance can be a lifelong help to you.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. State three areas of guidance in knowing God's will.
2. Describe briefly the three aspects of the heart as related to God's will.
3. Indicate how God's Word guides us.
4. Describe three ways that God uses providence to help us know His will.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

coincide (kō in sīd'). To take up the same space; to be identical; to agree.

comparable (com' pur u bul). Worthy of comparison; being of equal regard.

complexity (kum plek' su tē). The state or quality of being complicated.

confirmation (con fur mā' shun). Something that confirms, proves, or verifies.

incorporate (in kôr' pu rāt). To add or combine something to something else.

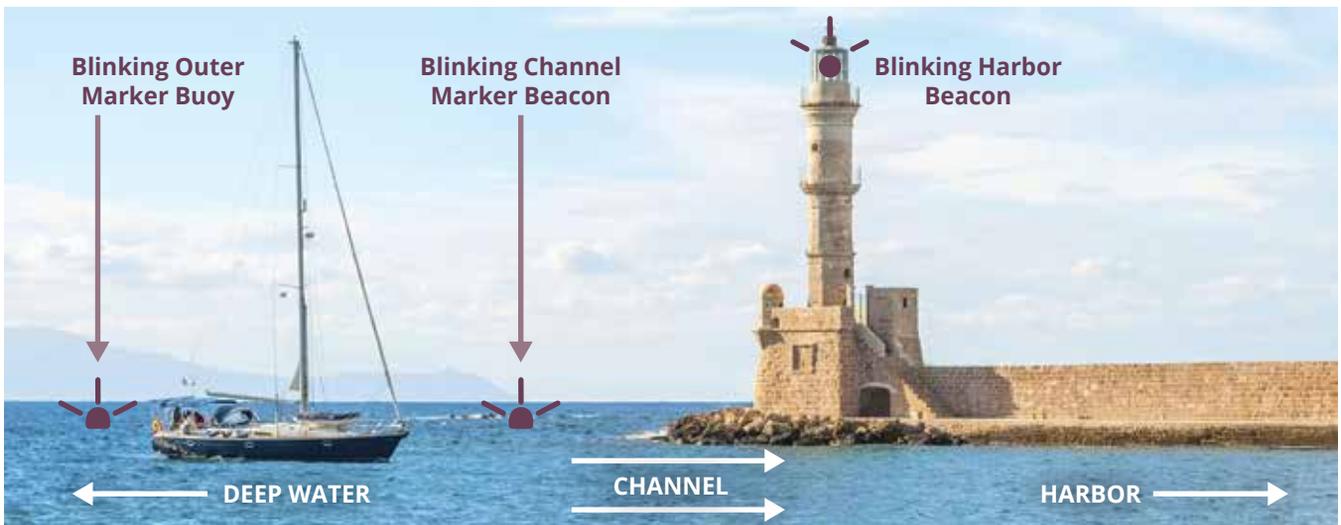
instrumentality (in stru men tal' u tē). The quality of serving as a means.

precedence (pres' u duns). The act of going before in order or importance.

providence (prov' u duns). The care or benevolent guidance of God.

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

Pronunciation Key: **h**at, **ā**ge, **cā**re, **fā**r; **l**et, **ē**qual, **tē**rm; **i**t, **ī**ce; **h**ot, **ō**pen, **ō**rder; **o**il; **o**ut; **c**up, **u**it, **rū**le; **ch**ild; **l**ong; **th**in; / **ʒ**/ for **th**en; / **ʒ**h/ for **m**ea**s**ure; / **u**/ represents /**a**/ in **a**bout, /**e**/ in **t**aken, /**i**/ in **p**encil, /**o**/ in **l**emon, and /**u**/ in **c**ircus.



| God's Navigational System

THE DESIRE OF THE HEART

The physical organ of the heart is often referred to figuratively when speaking of the real you which lives in your body. The desire to do God's will must originate within the desires of your own heart. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." When you are concerned about doing God's will, you must examine your heart's desires and motives to see if they are good or evil. The task of examining your heart can be compared to aligning your ship with the outer navigational marker.

Evil desires. God's Word tells us (Jeremiah 17:9) that, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" The Psalmist said (Psalm 139:23-24), "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Even after a person is saved from the penalty and power of sin, he is not yet removed from the presence of sin. The apostle Paul stated that he battled continually against sin in his members which caused him many times to fall short of perfect obedience to the law of God.



| The Deceitful Heart

Read Romans 7:15–25;
James 4:1–10;
Philippians 4:8; 2:5, 13,
and 15; and Romans 6:18–22.



James rebuked those believers who allowed sin to gain such ground in their lives that they were asking God for things that were against His will. He exhorted them to cleanse their hands of sinful deeds, to purify their hearts from wrong desires, and to humble themselves so that they could return to the channel of God's perfect will. We must then examine our motives and heart's desires in seeking to know God's will for our lives.

Natural desires. Paul related to the Philippians that some things in this life are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and worthy of praise. A person's desire to pursue such vocations as sports, music, medicine, electronics, science, business, homemaking, or other truly honorable life styles, is good and worthy of praise. The natural desires to pursue such areas may not be in conflict with God's will. God may have given gifts and talents in these fields to bring glory to Him through their development and use. James tells us (James 1:17) that "every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights..." God is the giver of all gifts and talents. Unbelievers, as well as Christians, have been blessed by God with natural talents and abilities. Paul reminds us in Romans 6, that although a Christian formerly may have used his bodily members as instruments for serving sinful purposes, he now is to dedicate them to God for holy purposes. When trying to discern God's will, one must distinguish between what may be our own good and natural desires and those given by God to direct us concerning life's decisions. Do you want to do a particular thing because of your natural desires and preferences or because God has directed your desires? A course of action may not in itself be bad, but this fact does not necessarily make

it the will of God for you. Likewise, something that is good in itself does not necessarily indicate that you should pursue it as God's will for your life. You must seek to know if the good you desire is God's specific will for you.

Godly desires. God promises to help you in both knowing and performing His will. You can be sure (Philippians 2:13) that "...it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The Lord has said to the Christian who desires to know His will (Psalm 32:8), "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Before God can guide you into the center of His will, you must completely trust in, and rely upon, His guidance. Proverbs 3:5-6 states, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." God wants you to take great pleasure and joy in allowing Him to guide you in your decisions so that your choices will **coincide** with His desires. The Psalmist understood this principle of God when he wrote (Psalm 37:4-5), "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit

thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."

Godly desires come only from God Himself. Paul wrote to the Philippians to remind them to let the mind of Christ dwell in them. When you are willing to give up your own desires and ambitions for the desires which God has for you, then you will begin to experience God working in you to desire and do what He wills. A believer who follows this course of action can claim the promise of 1 John 5:14-15, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." As you are completely willing to give your own personal desires into the Lord's hands, He is willing to give to you those desires that are pleasing to Him and suited to you. Then He can bless you and guide you in fulfilling His desires, which have now become your desires too! Your own personal and natural desires might possibly be those God has also chosen for you. However, only as you are able to yield your own desires to His perfect will for your life, can you be assured that your desires are also godly desires.



Answer true or false.

- 1.1 _____ A young person cannot fully know God's will.
- 1.2 _____ God has a specific plan for the lives of all those who know Him personally.
- 1.3 _____ We must determine to be obedient in doing God's will.
- 1.4 _____ The desire to do God's will must begin in your head.
- 1.5 _____ Natural and godly desires are always the same thing.



Complete these statements.

- 1.6** The will of the Father is that every one who a. _____ on the Son has b. _____ life.
- 1.7** Paul stated that we should be able to comprehend with all saints what is the a. _____, b. _____, c. _____, and d. _____ of God's love in Christ to us.
- 1.8** Out of the _____ proceed the issues of life.
- 1.9** A Christian is saved from the penalty and power of sin, but is not yet removed from the _____ of sin.
- 1.10** Philippians tells us that it is God that worketh in us both to a. _____ and to b. _____ of His good pleasure.

Write the correct letter and answer on each line.

- 1.11** If we _____ ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desires of our heart.
a. discipline b. discover c. delight d. distinguish
- 1.12** God has a _____ will which embraces all mankind, and a specific will for all who know Him personally.
a. vindictive b. judgmental c. pleasant d. general
- 1.13** The Lord desires that we might be filled with all the _____ of God.
a. knowledge b. fullness c. wisdom d. righteousness
- 1.14** Every good and perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the _____ of lights.
a. Father b. Lord c. Benefactor d. Lover



Complete these activities.

1.15 Name the three navigational lights in the ship-harbor illustrations and the three aspects to which each correspond in knowing God's will.

a. _____ = _____

b. _____ = _____

c. _____ = _____

1.16 Name the three types of desires that you can have in your heart.

a. _____ b. _____

c. _____

1.17 List from Philippians 4:8 the six virtuous and praiseworthy "whatsoever's" upon which believers are urged to think.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

f. _____

1.18 Write out either Proverbs 3:5 and 6 or Psalm 37:4 and 5 from memory. _____

THE WORD OF GOD

God honors His Word and has given it as a perfect revelation of His divine will. The writer of Hebrews says (Hebrews 4:12), “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Since your own heart may deceive you, the desires of your heart should be checked against the Word of God to see if they both agree. The Word also says (Deuteronomy 19:15) that at the mouth of two or three witnesses shall a matter be established. These witnesses would be **comparable** to the three navigational markers previously described. The Word of God is the second witness, or channel marker in discovering God's will for your life. The Bible will help to keep you on course and in the center of His will.

Written guidance. Almost every item of any **complexity** purchased today comes with an owner's operation manual which often includes repair instructions. God's Word is His operation and repair manual for man's own well-being on the earth. Since God created mankind, He knows how men should live and operate for maximum enjoyment of life and for His glory.



| The Word of God

Read Psalm 119:9, 11, 15, 16, and 105; Ephesians 4:11–16; Proverbs 11:14 and 15; and Proverbs 15:22.



Before leading the entire nation of Israel into the Promised Land, Joshua was commanded by God (Joshua 1:8) to meditate day and night in the law of the Lord. Joshua's guidance of Israel was to be based upon divine wisdom imparted by God's Word. Job stated (Job 23:12) that he regarded God's Word as a greater necessity than his daily food. The Kings of Israel were also commanded to study and meditate in God's Word to guide their own lives, as well as those over whom they ruled. The Psalmist likened God's Word to a lamp, or a modern flashlight, which shown in the darkness and revealed the pathway ahead. He also stated that the Word could cleanse or correct the direction of a person and bring him back into the center of God's will. God has revealed the greatest part of His will for you in His Word. We would be foolish to ask God's permission to act in a way contrary to His will when He has already given us clear instructions in His own operation manual, the Bible. Since God has revealed a definite *yes* to some things and a definite *no* to others, we must check all things with His written Word.

As you seek to know God's will concerning problems and decisions, go immediately to God's Word for guidance. A concordance—one that is located in the back of many Bibles—will help to locate those Scriptures that are related to the matter under consideration. Your teacher can help you to familiarize yourself with the proper use of a concordance. Select a word or thought that best describes the situation about which you need guidance, and locate references from the Bible under that word. Read the entire context in which you find the verse so that you are sure that it applies in principle to your problem. As you read, ask the

Holy Spirit to guide you. Remember, the Word of God is like a compass that can guide you into the security of God's will.

Oral guidance. God has provided ministries within the church to guide, teach, and build up Christians in the faith. When you are faced with a serious decision about which you have searched God's Word, the Lord will often give you further guidance or **confirmation** through the **instrumentality** of others. The Holy Spirit may take any part of a message preached, a Bible lesson taught, a conference or camp meeting, or a simple conversation and suit it to your particular situation or need. God will often direct such forms of guidance to you that you might further know that He loves, hears, and knows your needs. The guidance obtained in this manner must be checked against the written Word of God, because the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God always agrees. As a means of confirming the written message, the Holy Spirit will often use men and women to speak the Word of God to you and bring it to bear on your particular problem. When the apostle Paul came to Berea and preached in the Jewish synagogue, the Bereans went immediately to the Scriptures to check what Paul preached concerning Jesus. He commended them for their wisdom and use of the Word of God (see Acts 17:10-12). Thus, the word which Paul preached orally was supported by the written Word. The guidance you receive should also be supported by the written Word. The written Word can confirm the spoken word, and the spoken word can confirm the written Word. However, the written revelation of God always takes **precedence** in every situation. Anything that is contrary to God's Word is sin.

Personal guidance. God has stated in His Word that there is much safety in seeking guidance through counselors. Often the advice of more than one person is necessary to be assured of unbiased counsel. Safe counsel can be gained by choosing several Christians who are spiritually mature and whose opinions are



| Owner's Manual

respected. God knows that some decisions in life are of such magnitude that clarification can be obtained through other Christians. The Holy Spirit can minister to you through others when necessary.

Life's major decisions often include a vocational possibility, the choice of a marriage partner, or an educational decision. In choosing a marriage partner, your strong feelings and emotional involvement may make an objective decision difficult. The Word of God might not appear to be giving you a green light or red light on the matter. At this point, the objective advice of other mature Christians concerning your choice is invaluable. God may choose to give you direction through them, since they can view the situation with your best interests in mind apart from emotional attachment.

To benefit from such guidance, through godly counselors, you must be honestly willing to listen to their advice. Remember that opinions, advice, or counsel are not direct commands, but merely provide added insight. You must decide what to do with it. Thus, the second main navigational beacon for guidance is God's Word, whether by the written revelation, the spoken word, or personal counsel based on the Word. You may well benefit from all three, but in the final analysis the decision remains between you and the Lord. If you will stay in the proper channel, you will arrive at God's will more quickly.



Write the correct letter and answer on each line.

- 1.19** The written revelation of God must always take _____ in every situation.
 a. a back seat b. a minor role c. a small part d. precedence
- 1.20** God has provided _____ within the church to guide, teach, and build up Christians in their faith.
 a. ministries b. programs c. classrooms d. advisors
- 1.21** The Lord will often give you further guidance or _____ through the instrumentality of others.
 a. discipline b. confrontation c. confirmation d. deception

Complete these statements.

- 1.22** Three possibilities of guidance discussed in this section are a. _____ guidance, b. _____ guidance, and c. _____ guidance.
- 1.23** God has revealed the greatest part of His will in His _____.
- 1.24** You can locate Scriptures that are related to a problem you may have with the help of a. _____.
- 1.25** Safe counsel is usually assured if you seek guidance from several _____ Christians.

Match these items.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1.26 _____ Hebrews | a. checked Paul's message with the Scriptures |
| 1.27 _____ second channel marker | b. the desire of your heart |
| 1.28 _____ Joshua | c. was told to meditate on God's Law |
| 1.29 _____ the psalmist | d. says the Word of God discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart |
| 1.30 _____ context | e. God's Word is more important than food |
| 1.31 _____ Bereans | f. the sections before and after a verse which determine its exact meaning |
| 1.32 _____ first channel marker | g. the providence of God |
| 1.33 _____ Job | h. described the Word of God as a lamp |
| | i. the Word of God |
| | j. oral guidance |

SELF TEST 1

Write the correct letter and answer in the blank (each answer, 2 points).

- 1.01** The Scriptures state that out of the _____ proceed the issues of life.
a. tongue b. mind c. heart d. thoughts
- 1.02** God has a general will which embraces all mankind and a _____ will for all who know Him personally.
a. vague b. specific c. different d. pleasant
- 1.03** In every situation the _____ revelation of God must always take precedence.
a. spoken b. oral c. written d. general
- 1.04** You may find it difficult trusting the desire of your heart for guidance because of your _____ involvement.
a. intellectual b. willful c. emotional d. parents'
- 1.05** Further guidance or _____ often comes from the Lord through other people.
a. confirmation b. deception c. confrontation d. discipline
- 1.06** You can find help in locating Scriptures that are related to your particular problem in a _____.
a. commentary b. concordance c. Bible dictionary d. Bible atlas
- 1.07** The meaning of a verse is determined by the _____.
a. content b. length c. context d. consideration
- 1.08** God has revealed the greatest part of His will through _____.
a. His Word b. nature c. preachers d. Christian related books
- 1.09** The guidance of the Word of God and _____ always agrees.
a. mature Christians b. ministers c. the Holy Spirit d. counselors
- 1.010** That God works in us both to will and to do His good pleasure is stated in _____.
a. Philippians b. Ephesians c. Romans d. 1 Corinthians

Complete these statements (each answer, 3 points).

- 1.011** If we _____ ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desires of our heart.
- 1.012** Every good and perfect _____ is from above and comes down from the Father of lights.
- 1.013** We should be able to comprehend with all saints what is the length, breadth, depth, and height of God's _____ in Christ to us.

- 1.014** To guide, teach, and build up Christians in their faith God has set _____ in the church.
- 1.015** The writer of Hebrews says that the Word of God discerns the thoughts and _____ of the heart.
- 1.016** The Psalmist described the Word of God as a _____ to our feet.
- 1.017** A Christian is saved from the penalty and power of sin, but he is not removed from the _____ of sin.
- 1.018** The Lord desires that we might be filled with all the _____ of God.
- 1.019** Safe counsel is usually assured if you seek guidance from several _____ Christians.
- 1.020** Job believed that _____ was more important than food.

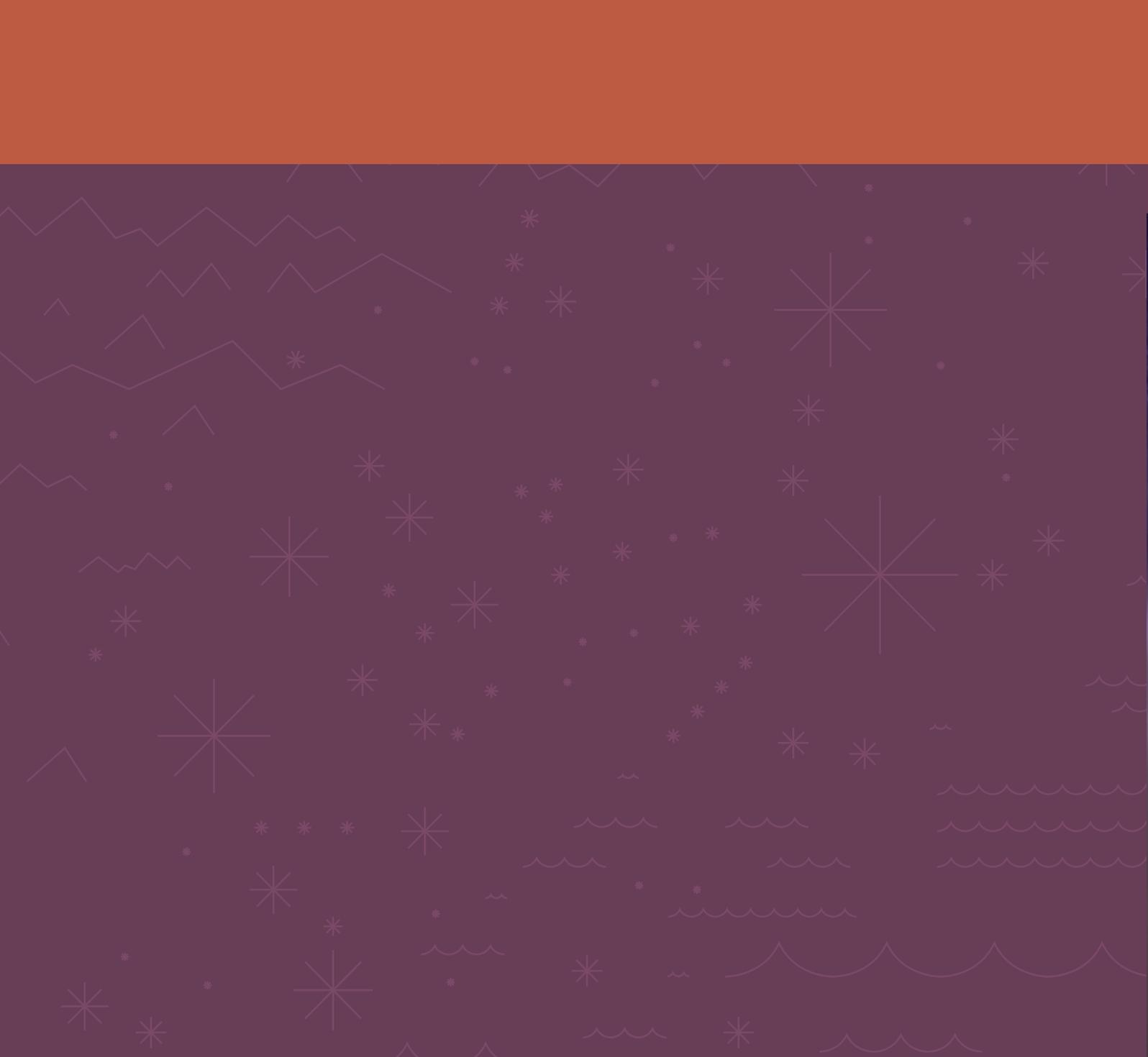
Match these items (each answer, 2 points).

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1.021 _____ Gabriel | a. second channel marker |
| 1.022 _____ Bithynia | b. a prophet who refused God's will |
| 1.023 _____ Bereans | c. Paul desired to preach here |
| 1.024 _____ providence | d. archangel sent by God to Daniel |
| 1.025 _____ witnesses | e. fourth channel marker |
| 1.026 _____ Daniel | f. compared Paul's word with Scripture |
| 1.027 _____ Michael | g. the chief prince angel |
| 1.028 _____ Jonah | h. prayed to understand the meaning of a vision |
| 1.029 _____ virtues | i. circumstances which God arranges for His purposes |
| 1.030 _____ God's Word | j. a matter can be established by two or three |
| | k. praiseworthy qualities that we should think upon |

1.042 State four kinds of Satanic opposition we may meet as taught in Ephesians.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

107 134	SCORE _____	TEACHER _____	initials	date
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