

LESSON EIGHT: HOW TO KNOW THE WILL OF GOD

Discovering God's Perfect Plan for Your Life

“God has a will for your life, and He wants you to know it.”

We need to ask God two questions:

- _____ are You Lord?
- _____ would You have me to do?

Jeremiah 10:23 - “O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself.”

Three principles that help us to know the will of God:

1. Guidance is _____.

“Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do” (Acts 9:6).

Ephesians 2:10 - “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

Psalm 37:23 - “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.”

Psalm 32:8 - “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.”

Isaiah 58:11 - “The Lord will guide you continually.”

Proverbs 3:6 - “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

KEY THOUGHT

God wants for you what you would want for yourself if you had enough sense to want it.

3 kinds of God's will:

a. God's _____ will. God can never be thwarted in His overall purpose.

b. God's _____ will.

2 Peter 3:9 - "The Lord is...not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

1 Thessalonians 4:3 - "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality."

c. God's _____ will. God has a plan for everyone's life.

Examples of God's:

- Sovereign will - "The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" (Revelation 11:15).
- General will - If you marry, you should marry a Christian. "Be ye not unequally yoked" (2 Corinthians 6:14 KJV).
- Specific will-He will confirm the person you should marry.

6 myths concerning the will of God:

1. The _____ myth that God will give you a road map.

KEY THOUGHT

The will of God is not a road map, it is a relationship.

2. The _____ myth. If I do the will of God, it will be terrible.
3. The _____ myth. God's will is just for a certain class of people; God calls preachers and missionaries, but not ordinary people.
4. The _____ myth. It requires something dramatic to know the will of God. While God may speak to you in a miracle, generally, He does not.

1 Kings 19:11-12 - “And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains, and broke the rock in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a **still small voice.**”

Most of the time, the will of God is in the still small voice.

5. The _____ _____ myth. I missed what God had planned, so it is too late for me.

Joel 2:25 - “I will restore to you the years that the locust has eaten.”

If you missed His will the first time, let God “re-program” you.

6. The _____ myth. God's will is like an Easter egg hunt. God has a will for me, but He is deliberately hiding it so I can't figure it out.

2. Guidance is _____.

There must be:

a. _____

Acts 9:6 - "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

b. _____

Psalm 25:9 KJV - "The meek will He guide."

If He is Lord, there will be no _____, no _____,
no _____.

c. _____

If God speaks in a quiet _____, we need a quiet
_____ to hear it.

d. _____

If you are not yielded, why should God _____ you His will?

3. Guidance is _____.

Six practical ways to know the will of God:

a. The _____ of God.

b. The _____ of God.

KEY THOUGHT

We can't know the will of God apart from the Word of God.

If God has said it in the Word of God, that is His will for you, *period*.

c. The _____ of God.

Proverbs 24:6 - "...in a multitude of counselors there is safety."

d. The _____ of God-the inner witness.

Romans 8:14 - "...as many as are led by the Spirit of God."

e. The _____ of God.

Ephesians 5:15 - "...walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise."

Wisdom is seeing life from God's point of view.

Get your motive clear, get your heart right, and do what you think.

James 1:5 - "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God."

f. The _____ of God.

In Summary:

The will of God for you is _____.

The will of God is for your _____.

The will of God will never _____ you where the power of God and the grace of God cannot _____ and _____ you.

You are free to _____. You are not free _____
_____. You are not free to choose the
_____ of your choice.

LESSON EIGHT: DAY ONE

What Do You Want Me to Do?

If Jesus Christ were to meet you physically, face to face, what would you want to ask Him? I have asked that of many people, and the most common answer I receive is, "I'd want to know what the Lord would have me do." Of course, that encounter has happened already to one man, and he asked Jesus that very question.

Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' So he, trembling and astonished said, 'Lord, what do you want me to do?' And the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go into the city and you will be told what you must do. (Acts 9:1-6)

In that passage Paul asks the two greatest questions we all need to know. First he asks, "Who are you, Jesus?" Then he asks, "What do you want me to do?" We live in a generation of misguided men; clever creatures who know much but have lost their way. The good news we learn from Saul's experience is that guidance is promised. Jesus promised Saul that, if he arose and went into the city, he would be told what to do. We have the Spirit within us, impressing our hearts with the leadership of God.

In your own words, what is the will of God?

How have you sought to know God's will in the past?

How has He led you?

Read the story of Samuel's call in 1 Samuel 3:1-10. What was Samuel's reply when God spoke to Him?

Before God reveals His will to us, what must our response to Him first be?

God Uses F.A.T. Christians

No, it has nothing to do with your weight! The F.A.T. Christians that God uses have the following three qualities:

- Faithful
- Available
- Teachable

As you are seeking God's will for your life, and asking God to use you in a place of service for His kingdom, first make sure you are a F.A.T. Christian!

LESSON EIGHT: DAY TWO

God Has a Plan for You

There are at least three ways in which we may understand the will of God. First, there is His sovereign will. God's *sovereign will* is always done; there's nothing you can do to stop it. God is God and accomplishes what He desires. His sovereign will is mysterious, known entirely by God alone.

Second, there is God's *general will*. It encompasses the moral standards that God has set for us to follow. There are things God tells us that we must do, and things He considers wrong. God's general will is revealed to us in His Word. When God sets a fixed standard, it is always His will that we obey it. Because God commanded us “do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers,” we know that it would never be God's will for us to marry someone who is not a Christian.

The third way we understand God's will is His *particular will*. God has a special will for you, just as He had a particular will for Saul. Acts 9:15 describes God's will for Saul: “The Lord said to him, 'Go for he is a chosen vessel of mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings and the children of Israel.’” God had a special plan for Saul, and He has a special plan for us.

The reason God is interested in me is that He loves me. I might be one small, insignificant man in the sea of humanity, but God knows my comings and goings. The very hairs of my head are numbered. He loves me and calls me His own. And because He does, He has designed a particular plan for my life.

What is the difference between God's general will and His particular will?

In what specific ways has He called you to obey His general will?

Can you think of an instance where you really desired something, but it did not coincide with God's general will?

Read Ephesians 2:10. What can we tell from this verse about God's plan for our lives?

KEY THOUGHT

The will of God is not something I have to do; it is something I get to do.

LESSON EIGHT: DAY THREE

Not a Road Map, But a Relationship

God never provides a special road map for your life. Instead, He provides a relationship. When the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness, God didn't give them a road map of where to go; He provided a pillar of fire and told them to follow it. He set up a relationship with the people. Christians want God to send them a simple map to follow that will outline everything they are supposed to do in life, but that's not how He works. That would take the romance and the excitement out of the Christian life.

Although it is not wrong to ask God about specific things in your life, such as what town you should live in, He is more concerned with *who* you are than *where* you are. He is more interested in your sanctification than whether you live in New York or New Mexico. His ultimate plan for you is that you become like Jesus. Romans 8:29 tells us that God has predestined us to “become conformed to the image of His Son.”

According to Ephesians 6:6-8, how should we do the will of God?

According to 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, what are three things we know that are always God's will for us?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

According to Hebrews 13:20-21, what is God's will for you?

How does verse 20 describe our relationship with God?

He is:

We are:

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19. What do we learn about God's will for us from this passage?

The Map Myth

Many Christians live their life hoping that they don't take the wrong turn and miss God's will. In reality, even when we choose a turn that God had not intended for us, God causes all things to "work together for good." God, in His sovereignty, can overrule our mistakes.

Follow God's leading and let Him direct your path, but when you take a wrong turn, allow God to make a "mid-course correction."

LESSON EIGHT: DAY FOUR

One Day at a Time

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told us, “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble” (Matthew 6:34). He wasn't telling us to be bad stewards and not save for the future; He wasn't telling us not to have dreams and goals. He was simply instructing us to live one day at a time. We don't need to worry about what God's will is for us next week, next month, or next year. We need to concentrate on doing His will today.

The problem many Christians have with the will of God is that they spend too much time trying to figure out the part that isn't clear and not near enough time obeying the part of God's will that He has plainly revealed. Start following God in the areas you do understand, and He will give you wisdom concerning the areas you don't understand.

Although we live in time, God lives outside of time, in eternity. He sees the big picture. As we trust Him, He unveils His plan for us on a day by day basis. We don't have to see the big picture all the time. We simply have to respond to God's leading and walk in the light that He gives us.

What promise does God give us in Psalm 32:8?

What do we learn about God's will in Psalm 37:23?

Read Psalm 40:6-8. Finish this sentence in your own words. Obeying God is more than keeping a set of rules and regulations. I truly do God's will when:

According to Proverbs 3:5, what two things must we do so God will direct our paths?

1. _____

2. _____

How does God promise to guide us in Isaiah 58:11?

Read Jeremiah 10:23. We know that God will guide our steps because:

LESSON EIGHT: DAY FIVE

God's Guiding Hand

God does not expect us to be psychics or clairvoyants, gazing into some crystal ball trying to guess whether to turn to the right or to the left. God gives us many practical ways that we can know His will. One of the primary ways God confirms His will for us is His Word. Psalm 119:105 says, “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” When you are facing a situation and you wonder what you should do, go to your Bible. Read God's Word and see what He has to say about your circumstances. Any solution that comes to you will be in accord with Scripture.

God also guides through the counsel of others. God gives wisdom to parents, grandparents, pastors, teachers and godly friends to provide direction in our lives. Many times they have been through the exact situation we are facing and God uses their advice to show us His will. Proverbs 24:6 says, “In a multitude of counselors there is safety.”

God also confirms His will by provision and circumstance. If, every time you try to walk through a door, God shuts it, He may be telling you to go in another direction. Where God guides, He provides. He will never expect you to do something, and not provide the resources to accomplish the task. If God wants you to get married, He will provide the spouse. If He wants you to be a missionary pilot, He will provide the airplane (and the training).

Spend time in God's Word, seek the wise counsel of other Christians, and follow His guiding hand. God has a plan for your life, and He wants you to know it.

How does God guide us through the His Word?

How has God used other Christians to guide you?

How can a Christian learn to listen to the Spirit's leading?

Name several instances where you can look back and see how God has used provision and circumstances to confirm His will in your life:
