

What Is God's Will, and How Do I Make It My Will?

Hebrews 13:20-21: *20 Now the God of peace... 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.*



Doing God's will should be a given for any and every Christian. After all, the mere fact that we are called Christians implies that we follow in Jesus' footsteps and that we are, therefore, obliged to do God's will as Jesus did God's will. While this all sounds pretty straightforward, the big question has to do with "knowing." How do we know what the will of God is? Answering this question may be harder than we would like to think. It would be easy to assume that because we love and worship God, He will, in turn, show us His love by giving us the good things that we want. After all, that IS what it says in **Psalm 37:4**—*Delight yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart.* It sounds exciting and almost easy, but as you might have guessed, it is not. How do we know what God's will is for us?

We all make thousands of decisions every single day, whether they be tiny or potentially life-changing. As Christians, we know that if we do things God's way, it's the best way, but we don't get a daily email from heaven telling us which way to turn.

In this episode, we'll examine underlying scriptural principles we can all consider when making decisions. This will give us a map—a process—for moving forward.

Let's begin by establishing the process that we, as Christians, need to follow to know and do God's will. We do this by going to the Scriptures:

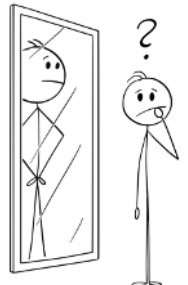
Hebrews 13:20-21: *20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, 21 equip (meaning "to complete thoroughly") you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Why does God need to "complete us thoroughly"? *To do His will!*

Doing God's will is not natural; it requires us to be appropriately equipped. We cannot go to the hardware store and get the equipment! God does the equipping Himself.

This equipping comes primarily from God's word:

James 1:21-24: *21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. 22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.*



We aren't given the supernatural ability to know what God is thinking. As best we can, we want to put aside our feelings and wishes and make the Bible's principles our own. Of course, just knowing them in our heads but not implementing them in our hearts will not give us the direction we are looking for.

This is not a quick or easy process, but it is important because the victory comes from the difficulty. To be equipped is to have God's word working in our lives from the inside out. It has to be so ingrained and so implanted in us that it drives our thinking, our decisions and our direction.

This is a nice introduction, but what does it really mean? How can we figure out what the will of God is for us?

To understand, we need to recognize the similarities and differences between the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, doing God's will was directly related to the keeping of the Mosaic Law.

When the people strayed from the Law, God gave them consequences. When they sought Him, God abundantly blessed them:

Psalms 37:3-6: *3 Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He will do it. 6 He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday.*

This is powerful. If we *trust in the Lord*, He will give us *the desires of our heart*. But what does this really mean?

The context is obviously focused on the nation of Israel. What did it take to be given *the desires of your heart*? In ancient Israel, doing God's will meant doing these things:

- *Trust and do good.*
- *Dwell where you have been led with growing faith.*
- *Delight in the Lord and commit your way unto Him.*



Proverbs 6:20-23: *20 My son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother; 21 Bind them continually on your heart; tie them around your neck. 22 When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk to you. 23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light.*

The basis of *the desires of your heart* was God, Israel, the land and the Law. To get those desires fulfilled, they had to stay immersed in the instructions of **Psalms 37:3-6**.

Let's expand this principle. Israel had God's favor, and it was shown to them in specific ways as reflected in their earthly lives.

The following texts are focused on God's favor returning to them after the 70-year Babylonian captivity. This had been a period of national punishment—they were sent into captivity for 70 years because of their disobedience. That time was coming to an end.

Here is what Jeremiah says about what is going to happen. This has a prophetic view looking forward as well as an application at that time:

Jeremiah 29:10-14: *10 For thus says the LORD, When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place. 11 For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.*

In other words, *Your time of punishment is over. Have I got plans for you!*

12 Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you, declares the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, declares the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.

God is saying, *I sent you into exile. You, as a nation, were punished. Now your time of punishment is over, and I will bring you back, and you will call upon Me. You will pray to Me, and I'll hear it because it's time.* This is a wonderful, powerful expression of God's love and care for them. *Yes, you'll call; I'll answer. And the plans I have for you will be to plant you back in your land so you can prosper as you follow me.*

Jeremiah 29:11 is famous in Christian circles, *For I know the plans that I have for you...to give you a future and a hope.*



To what extent is the Christian authorized to take this and some of the other texts we've read and apply them to us now? Christians aren't promised the same prosperity and being brought back into the land God gave them; they are promised suffering and sacrifice.



The Christian is promised to have the desires of his/her heart fulfilled by doing the will of God. Doing the will of God is different from following the Law. It has different requirements, which we will expand on. Still, it brings a powerful blessing and gift—not a physical blessing like returning to the land, but the blessing of God's peace, direction, wisdom, mercy and power working in our lives. It is different than the physical blessings Israel received when they returned to the land and rebuilt their cities.

As Christians, we do have an authority to look at those promises, but we must expect them to be fulfilled in spiritual ways.

Finding the Keys to Unlock
a God-Driven Life:



As Christians, we need to grasp the reality that God does not simply send us personalized messages from His mouth to our ears.

On the contrary, we need to personalize **HIS HOLY WORD** to be able to truly see His will.

Israel's experiences showed us that God's providence was powerfully positive when they obeyed His Laws.

As with most biblical topics, there is far more to understanding God's will for us than we may have initially thought. Let's continue to unfold the story.

With a basic understanding of Old Testament obedience to God's will, what's the same and what's different in the New Testament?

In the New Testament, things are very different. Because we do not have the written Law and the ritual sacrifices before us, we are drawn to God's will in many different ways. The path of a Christian is comprehending and accomplishing God's will. It is not defined by receiving physical blessings and security as it was with Israel. Ours is defined by adherence to godly principles of sacrifice and loyalty as we walk in Jesus' footsteps. That becomes the main focus of this whole question about determining God's will.

Jesus was the most disciplined example of a human being following God's will that we will ever see! As we walk through just a few of the events of his life, let's pay particular attention to the principles behind each of them, as a basis for our seeking and following God's will.

We will look at **seven basic principles that governed Jesus' life** to help us understand how to do God's will.

Jesus had a prophetic basis that described his attitude toward God's will:

Psalms 40:6-8: *6 Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired; my ears You have opened; burnt offering and sin offering You have not required. 7 Then I said, Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. 8 I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.*

Though David said these words, we know it is prophetic of Jesus (**Hebrews 10:5-10**).

Compare:

Psalms 37:4: *Delight yourself in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

With what Jesus said:

Psalms 40:8: *I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.*

Jesus' heart desired to do the will of God. This is our template. This is what we have to build our walk upon.

**1. Doing God's will was prophetically described as the offering up of himself.
This is what God wanted!**

As it relates to us (and we will discuss this more later), we know God is not looking for us to bring Him physical sacrifices; He's looking for us to BE the sacrifice—who we are is more important than what we bring. He's looking for voluntary obedience. We sacrifice our wills and desires to do what He would have us do.

From the age of 12, his attachment to God's will was Jesus' primary motivation:
Luke 2:48-50: *48 When they saw him, they were astonished; and his mother said to him, Son, why have you treated us this way? Behold, your father and I have been anxiously looking for you. 49 And he said to them, Why is it that you were looking for me? Did you not know that I had to be in my Father's house? 50 But they did not understand the statement which he had made to them.*

These are the first recorded words we have of Jesus. He had a mission and focus that no other 12-year-old boy has ever had.

2. Doing God's will was always first in the mind of Jesus, even as a young boy!

He questioned his parents, *Did you not know that I had to be in my Father's house? This is where I have to be.*

During his ministry, Jesus plainly put God's will above EVERYTHING else. His focus got stronger and stronger:

John 4:31-34: *31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, Rabbi, eat. 32 But he said to them, I have food to eat that you do not know about. 33 So the disciples were saying to one another, No one brought him anything to eat, did he? 34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to accomplish His work.*

Further, in **Matthew 4:4**, Jesus quoted from **Deuteronomy 8:3** saying, *Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.*

3. Doing God's will was the highest and best nourishment for Jesus' earthly life!

His physical circumstances weren't as important as satisfying his "spiritual hunger." He had to take care of his human body, but his primary nourishment was doing God's will.



The words Jesus spoke in his ministry were words and lessons his Father provided for him:

John 12:49-50: *49 For I did not speak on my own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent me has given me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. 50 I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told me.*

4. Doing God's will meant that all he taught was a direct reflection of his Father's words and lessons!

Jesus mirrored his Father's love, character, goals and vision. He emulated these qualities to the best of his ability. We want to emulate our Lord Jesus by representing him and being his mouthpiece just as he was God's mouthpiece.

His example is amazing. Jesus listened for God's direction to know how and when to approach people, how and when to call out the Pharisees, how and when to perform miracles—he had a constant connection with the Father.

He was not doing these things robotically—he had free will. He did these things because doing His Father's will was the delight of his life. God's Law was within his heart. We see this in his words.

Prayer was ever and always Jesus' constant companion. He used it to plainly express himself both in exaltation as well as in difficulty:

John 17:4-5: *4 I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given me to do. 5 Now, Father, glorify me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*

5. Doing God's will meant continually seeking reverent, close and honest communion with his Father!

Having accomplished the work which You have given me to do. His communication with the Father is honest and clear. He prays for his disciples because he is leaving them. We can feel the power of the connection with his Father. Jesus put his human will aside, even when it was most difficult, so he could do his Father's will.

Next, we read about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, saying some of his final prayers before the events leading to his crucifixion:

Luke 22:41-42: (KJV) *41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, 42 saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.*

Remove this cup from me—We understand this metaphorical cup to be the experience of having to be crucified as a blasphemer of God. He knew he had to sacrifice himself, but to be looked upon as one who stood against his holy Father was heartbreaking. However, Jesus was willing to accept with gratitude whatever God deemed to be best. What an excellent way to end all of our prayers—*nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.*

6. Doing God's will meant not only learning but applying obedience no matter what the cost!

We don't have many of Jesus' prayers recorded, but we assume he was in constant, prayerful communication with the Father. His obedience wasn't for the sake of earthly gain or prosperity, as Israel's was in the Old Testament. Jesus sacrificed for something much more glorious and everlasting. His life was not about his own will; rather, it was about the will of the Father.

From his first recorded words in Scripture to his last words on the cross, Jesus was always connected to his Father and his Father's will:

Luke 23:46: *And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT. Having said this, he breathed his last.*

This was God's perfect prophetic timing, and Jesus let go.

At 12-years old, his first recorded words were, *Why is it that you were looking for me? Did you not know that I had to be in my Father's house?* He needed to be where God's presence dwelt.

His last recorded words as a human being were, *Into Your hands I commit my spirit.* He was committing his spirit into God's hands, wanting to again be in His presence. From first to last, it was all about the Father and His will, and being with the Father and doing whatever the Father would have him to do. It is a powerful example for us to follow. It is beautiful because it illustrates his great love for his Father and his desire to be with Him.

7. Doing God's will meant fully living his life for the sole purpose of completing the mission God had sent him to accomplish.

Jesus accomplished God's will in more ways than just these seven we've described. We are highlighting these because we will use them as a template for ourselves as Christians.

So far, we have looked at Israel in the Old Testament and then at Jesus in the New Testament to get a big picture of fulfilling God's will. This is helping us to find the keys in a God-driven life.

Finding the Keys to Unlock
a God-Driven Life:



We look at Jesus' example of knowing and doing God's will with **AWE AND GRATITUDE.** Because he showed us the very highest principles of loyalty in action, he gave us a very clear picture of how privileged we can be by simply attempting to walk in his footsteps.

We cannot do it perfectly, but we can try.

"Breathtaking," "beyond comprehension," and "awe-inspiring" are all great ways to try and describe Jesus doing God's will, but truthfully, they don't even come close!

We are not Jesus. We don't have the same clear and direct connection to God he had. How do WE rise up to a spiritual level in determining God's will?

This is an important question. As we began this conversation, we noted that we all need to be equipped by God and that equipping comes from God's holy word. How do we prepare ourselves so that equipping can take root and operate from the inside out? What reminders should we be continually reviewing?

As mentioned, we don't have that same clear connection Jesus had. Jesus had the holy spirit "in full measure" (*without measure*—**John 3:34**). This means he had complete access to God's power and influence, which is what allowed him to think, do and say what he did, in spite of having free will. The followers of Jesus are only given a *measure* or a portion of the holy spirit (**Ephesians 4:7, 1 John 4:13**). We pray for God to grant us more of His holy spirit, which we receive through continued prayer, study and fellowship.



James 4:8: (KJV) Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you...

There is much difference between us and Jesus, and yet he is the model we follow. Where his footsteps led is where we should go. Let's figure out how to do this better.

The Bible specifically tells us many things about the will of God for Christians. We are given two basic approaches to accomplishing God's will—what NOT to do and what TO do.



First is the category of doing God's will by NOT DOING specific things.

There are a lot of things we are warned NOT to do, but here are three to carefully review to see if any of these are secretly lurking in our hearts:

- 1. Keep your body and mind thoroughly protected from immorality and inappropriate desires:**

1 Thessalonians 4:2-5: *2 For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. 3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God.*

We must keep our bodies and minds protected from immorality. Why is this important? *This is the will of God, your sanctification.* God wants us to be sanctified—meaning set apart—from the sinfulness of the world. We need to protect our bodies and minds by keeping away from those things.

This is the will of God, your sanctification, that you abstain from sexual immorality. Do we want to know the will of God? This is one of the pieces, but there are more.

Here is another warning:

2. Keep your heart protected from any competitiveness and worldliness within the brotherhood—our Christian fellowship:

1 Thessalonians 4:6-8: *6 And that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. 7 For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. 8 So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His holy spirit to you.*



Now, **1 Thessalonians 4:7** doesn't say, "This is the will of God," but it refers us back to the sanctification from the previous scripture.



1 Thessalonians 4:3:
For this is the will of God, your sanctification...

Rejecting God is a powerful rejection! The sense here is that we are not to take our own revenge, but to let God take care of things. He has not called us for *the purpose of impurity, but for sanctification*—something higher. The will of God for **our bodies and our minds** was in the first set of scriptures, and now this is His will for our **heart**. Let's keep our hearts pure and clear, especially when it comes to the brotherhood.

3. Avoid entanglement in the everyday affairs of life:

2 Timothy 2:3-4: *3 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.*

Paul is writing to Timothy in what will be his last letter. He tells him, *Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus*, because we cannot be entangled in other things, in the details of life. We have to be about our Father's business and avoid the rest of the world.

Those are some things we are NOT to do in order to better understand God's will for us.

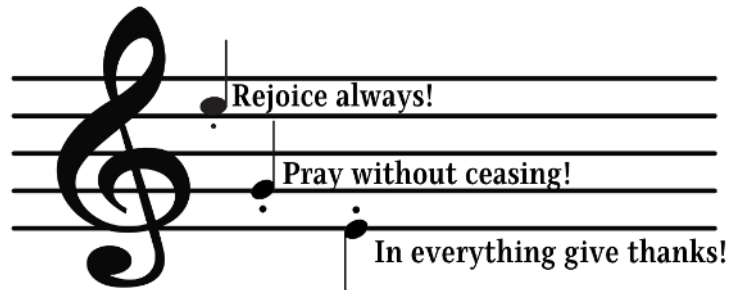


The second category is doing God's will by COMPLYING WITH AND DOING specific things.

1. Having a rejoicing and thankful perspective in all things is evidence of doing God's will:

1 Thessalonians 5:15-18: *15 See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people. 16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

In music, “staccato” is an adjective to describe the short, clearcut playing of notes. These are “staccato” scriptures, easy to memorize:



Doing these three things will keep us on the path to finding God's will for us in our circumstances.

Again, we aren't going to get a daily heavenly email outlining what direction we are supposed to take. We aren't given direct answers, but we ARE given all the necessary tools if we pay attention to our Official Instruction Book, the Bible.

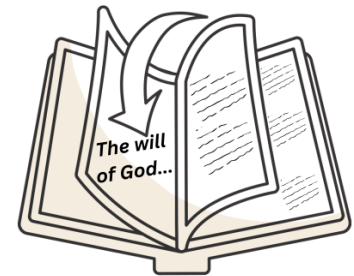
After these short, clear admonitions, we read:

For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

How do we do God's will? By looking at the Scriptures that tell us what God's will is! It is a matter of focus and clarity.

- God's will is staying away from certain things.
- God's will is moving towards other things.

The Scriptures are clear-cut and definitive. If we're wondering if we are doing God's will, we should start looking at where we stand in relation to the “do's” and the “do not's.”



2. Embracing the trials and testings of life and their importance is evidence of doing God's will:

1 Peter 4:12-14,19: *12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of his glory you may rejoice with exultation. 14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 19 Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.*

Peter grew in Christian maturity from where he began his walk.

Those who suffer according to the will of God doesn't include suffering the consequences of our own bad decisions or because we unwisely placed ourselves in positions of jeopardy, expecting the Lord to miraculously intervene on our behalf. These texts refer to the sufferings in Christ because we took a godly stand, and darkness hates the light.

Matthew 10:16 (KJV) tells us to *be wise as serpents and harmless as doves*.

- When we suffer because of our own poor choices, the consequences can help bring us to God's will.
- When we *suffer for righteousness sake* in the name of Christ, it is engaging in God's will.

This should be our mindset every single day. Should we pray for God to make us suffer every day? Our prayer should be if that is where the Lord brings us, then God's will be done. *Nevertheless, it is not my will, but thy will be done.*

3. **Doing good in a wise, godly and sacrificial way is evidence of doing God's will:**

Ephesians 5:8: *For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light.*

Ephesians 5:15-17: *15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 So then *do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.**

Making the most of your time—the King James Version says, *Redeeming the time*. In other words, make sure we are using our time well. Why? So we can understand what the will of the Lord is for us.



The New Testament tells us again and again what the will of God is—these are the things we need to focus on. We need to use our time in a way that honors God Almighty.

4. **Do “whatever it takes” to fulfill the will of God:**

Let's look at the Apostle Paul's own experience:

1 Corinthians 9:19-23: *19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more.*

Think about this. The Apostle Paul just said, *I have made myself a slave to all*. Remember who he was? He was a “Pharisee of Pharisees.” Pharisees weren't slaves to anybody. Pharisees were the ones who dressed up, who looked elegant, who had people get out of their way when they walked down the street. This is what Paul was, and yet for the sake of God through Christ, he changed.

20 *To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; 21 to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. 22 To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak...*

Paul explains that he was able to talk to different groups of people by meeting them where they were. He was Jewish, so he could speak from the Jewish perspective. He was a Roman citizen, so he could easily speak to non-Jews. He was educated in his past life as Saul the Pharisee but humbled once he became Paul, a servant of Christ. This gave him the life experience to speak with those on any socio-economic level. This is why he was so effective at bringing people to the gospel—he was a great communicator.

As a Pharisee, he communicated mainly within the small group of learned Pharisees and other educated leaders he associated with. But now, he communicates with the world and brings people from all lands and backgrounds to Christ. What an amazing transformation!

...I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some. 23 I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.

I DO ALL THINGS
FOR THE SAKE
of the Gospel




Paul's focus on his mission in Christ is inspiring. He changed and grew. That is the key to doing God's will. Change and grow:

- ✓ Look for godliness.
- ✓ Look for sanctification.
- ✓ Look for wisdom.
- ✓ Look for grace.
- ✓ Look for knowledge.
- ✓ Look for understanding.
- ✓ Look for support.
- ✓ Look for help.
- ✓ Look for giving.

Paul changed in order to do God's will, showing us how to do this as well.

Finding the Keys to Unlock
a God-Driven Life:



Determining how to do God's will in the large or small decisions of life is built upon a spiritually sound foundation of moral clarity, spiritual mindedness, faith in trials, spiritual maturity and living a clear life of discipleship.

The more we focus on these foundational principles, the easier it will be to determine God's will in specific circumstances.

Part of determining God's will means considering what we currently stand for, which helps us identify our reasons for making decisions.

Knowing what we know now, how do we focus our lives towards finding and doing God's will the way Jesus did?

We can take the things we have already learned and translate them into our limited ability to do what Jesus did. Let's now look again at the seven basic or fundamental principles of following God's will that Jesus showed us and apply them to our imperfect lives. Our mission is simple. Find out what God's will is, and then follow what we have found!

We are going to go back to the seven principles from Jesus' life of doing God's will in order to apply them to ourselves.

- 1. Doing God's will was prophetically described as the offering up of himself. This is what God wanted!**



For us, doing God's will by following in Jesus' footsteps was also prophetically revealed:

Ephesians 1:3-5: *3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us (meaning for the whole church; not individually) to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.*

We saw there are prophetic texts showing what Jesus would be like and what was expected of him. These texts in Ephesians show the calling of the true church to be Jesus' bride to help glorify God by carrying out His will. It was *the kind intention of His will* to provide a calling for us. This is, therefore, a prophecy for us, saying there would be a church to follow in Jesus' footsteps.

2. Doing God's will was always first in Jesus' mind, even as a boy!



For us to do God's will, we need that same fundamental response. God is first in all we say and do:

Romans 12:1: *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*

Again, we ARE the sacrifice. Paul reminds us he is trying to follow in Jesus' footsteps, and we need to do the same. We need to *present our bodies a living and holy sacrifice* because that is what Jesus did—even as a child. We need to look for and see the fulfillment of God's will in our lives right from the start of our consecration to God.

3. Doing God's will was the highest and best nourishment for Jesus' earthly life!



For us, it is a discipleship necessity to put God's will first in every one of our earthly decisions:

James 4:13-15: *13 Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit. 14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. 15 Instead, you ought to say, If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.*

Physical comfort, even food, was not as important as the spiritual nourishment Jesus received from doing the will of God.

To seek God's will, we don't want to rely on our own feelings and desires. Our approach should be, *If the Lord wills*, if the Lord opens the door, if the Lord's providence is there, we will move forward to walk in Jesus' footsteps and in so doing, honor God. It is not about us. It is about what our heavenly Father through Jesus wants us to grow into. This is looking for and accomplishing God's will.

4. Doing God's will meant that all he taught was a direct reflection of his Father's words and lessons!



For us, relying on God's word to show us His will is a primary and vital requirement for decision making:

2 Timothy 3:14-17: *14 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, (watch for this next part about the fulfillment of God's will:) 15 and that from childhood (Timothy) you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

We can't say we don't know how to find out how God's will works, because we read *ALL scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for all we need to walk in Christ equipped for every good work.*

Where does the “equipping” come from? The word of God.

5. Doing God's will meant continually seeking reverent, close and honest communion with his Father!



For us, this means prayerful consideration for the wisdom to understand and manage all parts of our lives:

James 1:5-8: *5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

Some of us get paralyzed when trying to make decisions, so we choose to do nothing and let life play out. But making decisions is an important part of our Christian walk. If we are staying close to the Lord in His word and doing what we are supposed to and not doing what we aren't supposed to, we can make choices with our own free will, confident that God can work with either outcome for our highest spiritual welfare. We can't let fear keep us from making choices. God will be with us in those choices.

Having the proper foundation enables us to make a good choice most of the time. Sometimes, we are not mature enough as Christians to make a good choice. What has to happen? A bit more study, a bit more prayer and perhaps fellowship with those who have spiritual wisdom. We might need to reach out to ask how we can understand which side of this situation we are facing is the will of God.

Getting input and following Jesus' footsteps is an important part of this process. If we are walking through deep snow and somebody has already walked that path, it is a lot easier to follow in their footsteps rather than create our own path. Look to the will of God through the word of God to understand where to go next.

6. Doing God's will meant not only learning but applying obedience no matter what the cost!



For us, a rejoicing and obedient mindset in all things is a critical part of following God's will:

Philippians 4:4-7: *4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

When are we supposed to rejoice? Only when things are going really well for us? Nope. *Rejoice in the Lord always.*

Rejoicing isn't an emotion or feeling; it's a state of mind, an approach to life. We CHOOSE to rejoice instead of complain. We CHOOSE gratitude instead of resentment. We rejoice in the big picture of God's promises and providence in our lives. Rejoicing is not necessarily related to happiness. We do not feel happy with life experiences of tragedy and trauma, but we can still rejoice in the spiritual peace of knowing this bad, horrible experience is in God's hands. Once it is in His hands, He will take care of it.

It might not be easy, and it might be painful, but there will be a way to go through it with His help. In that, we rejoice! *Rejoice in the Lord always; (in case you didn't hear it the first time), again I will say, rejoice!*

7. Doing God's will meant fully living his life for the sole purpose of completing the mission God had sent him to accomplish.



For us, doing God's will is always pointing us towards the ultimate transformation of our lives:

Romans 12:2: *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.*

Jesus lived his life for the sole purpose of completing God's mission. For us to do the same, we have to transform our lives *by the renewing* of our minds. The spiritual mind growing in us must change our natural mind. Why? *So that you may prove what the will of God is.* Therefore, to understand the will of God, we need to have our minds transformed. This transformation of our natural mind to a spiritual mind gives us an open door to be able to see and follow the will of God.

Through study of the Bible, we find and determine God's will for us. If we have trouble figuring things out in our lives, let's go back to the Bible, go back to the Word, find the principles and see where we stand.



Making our will conform to God's will is no easy task, as it requires us to dig into the fundamentals of who we are and how strongly our earthly will is influencing us.

Our objective should ever be to honor God in ALL ways, and ultimately, His will leads us to that end.

Are we focused on and open to following wherever His will might lead?

It comes down to the choice: my will or Thy will. Am I willing to not be willful? Am I willing to watch, wait and follow as the Scriptures open up with these principles so I can do God's will?



The result is that our life gets to honor God!

There is nothing bigger, nothing better in your life than honoring God. Seek to do His will!

**So, what is God's will and how do I make it my will?
For Rick, Jonathan, Julie and Christian Questions...
...Think about it!**

All scriptures cited are from the NASB1995 translation unless otherwise noted.



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Study QUESTIONS

Ep.1360: What Is God's Will, and How Do I Make It My Will?

<https://christianquestions.com/doctrine/1360-gods-will/>

See:



What did Israel have to do for God to give them the desires of their hearts? In what way are these promises applicable to Christians? How did Jesus echo the sentiments of Psalm 37? (Psalms 37:3-6, 40:8, Proverbs 6:20-23, Jeremiah 29:10-14)

Seven Basic Principles That Governed Jesus' Life (page 5-7): How do they Apply to Christians? (page 13-16)

1. What was prophesied for Jesus' mission on earth? (Psalms 40:6-8, Hebrews 10:5-10)
What was prophesied for the church? (Ephesians 1:3-5)
2. How did Jesus regard God's will in his life? (Luke 2:48-50)
How do we manifest this in our lives? (Romans 12:1)
3. Where did Jesus find nourishment during his earthly life? (John 4:31-34, Matthew 4:4, Deuteronomy 8:3)
How should we approach seeking God's will? (James 4:13-15)
4. From where did Jesus get inspiration for his teachings? (John 12:49-50)
What do we rely on to determine God's will in our lives? What "equips" us? (2 Timothy 3:14-17)
5. How did Jesus end his prayer in Gethsemane? What is the significance? (John 17:4-5, Luke 22:41-42)
What is necessary for us to make decisions? What if we do not know what is best? (James 1:5-8)
6. God's will meant being obedient no matter the cost. What did that mean for Jesus? (Luke 23:46)
How can we rejoice in terrible life experiences? (Philippians 4:4-7)
7. How did Jesus live his life to complete the mission God sent him to accomplish?
To achieve God's will, what is necessary for us? Explain how this has happened in your life. (Romans 12:2)

Doing God's will by NOT doing specific things: (page 8-9)

1. What are the three things we must avoid in order to stay within God's will? (1 Thessalonians 4:2-8, 2 Timothy 2:3-4)
2. Which of these do you find the most difficult to avoid? Why?

Doing God's will by COMPLYING with specific things: (page 10-13)

1. What are four things we need to have or do to comply with God's will? (1 Thessalonians 5:15-18, 1 Peter 4:12-19, Ephesians 5:8,15-17, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)
2. Which of these do you struggle with most? Why?
3. What are the nine points we can look to for help in changing and growing? Will you pick one to work on each week?