

What is God's Will for My Life?

Nothing is more important in this life than knowing God's Will for us individually.

Success in life is knowing the Will of God and being right in the centre of it.

God wants us to know His Will.

Ephesians 5:15-17 [Amplified] *“Live purposefully, worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise, sensible, intelligent people. Making the very most of the time, buying up each opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be vague, thoughtless and foolish, but understanding and firmly grasping what the Will of the Lord is.”*

If God wants us to understand what His Will for us is, why is it so difficult?

Why is it so hard to “figure out” what God wants us to do with our lives?

Why do we seem to be in a fog so much of the time as far as knowing what God's Will is?

I feel this is because of some basic misconceptions about God's Will.

Many people are looking for the wrong thing when they are looking for God's Will.

1) God's Will is not a feeling, emotion or impression.

God's Will must *not* be associated with a sensation, not a “quiver in your liver” or “a series of goose bumps”.

Some people have used this looking for a sensation method to find out God's Will for them.

They sit down, close their eyes and let their mind go blank (*not too hard for some people today!*)

They sit there waiting for an emotion or a sensation that will show them what God's Will is for them.

I can assure you that such a method will not work, for God's Will is not a feeling.

Have you noticed that some people claim to have a direct telephone line to God?

They are constantly telling **other people** what is God's Will for them, that they should do this or that.

Notice, it is never about themselves, it is always what is God's Will for other people.

I have a hard time accepting such a “theology”!

The problem with this approach to finding out what God's Will is that feelings are very unreliable, highly suspect and come to us from many different sources.

Your feelings could be based on fatigue, illness, a T.V. show or a book you have just read.

They could even be based on a bad pizza you have just eaten!

Hardly something to base your future on with the exception of taking an indigestion tablet!

Even the Apostle Paul in The Bible didn't have an easy time when it came to knowing God's Will, he struggled with it.

Many times in his letters he showed that he had no idea where God was going to lead him next in his ministry.

Not many years ago there was one young man who was constantly telling the people in his community what was God's Will for them.

Every day he was getting God's Word directly from God, not from God's Word, the Christian Bible.

In the end he convinced many people it was God's Will that they joined him in drinking poisoned cola.

His name was Jim Jones!

Jeremiah 17:9 [Amplified Bible] *"The heart is deceitful above all things, it is exceedingly perverse and corrupt and severely sick!"*

When you are sick you don't feel good, and in such a condition you can experience many differing feelings.

God's Will is not a feeling; feelings can come and go just as fast.

2) God's Will is not a formula.

The mechanical approach to find God's will. Follow this recipe and you will get automatic results!

Most books you can read on God's Will follow this type of approach, do this and this followed by this to find God's Will.

We are attracted to such a method because we live in a highly mechanical society, the push button microwave society, with everyone wanting things instantly.

The quick fix. *"10 easy steps to God's Will"* type of approach.

Have you noticed how many *"easy steps"* there are to everything?

Cooking made easy. Flying made easy. Embalming made easy. *"Give it to me quick, I'm on the run eating my Big Mac and I'm in a hurry"* attitude.

I have problems with this kind of approach because every book has a different list of things to do, often contradicting each other, so they can't all be right!

Also, it just doesn't work when you try them!

When I was considering if it was God's Will I should marry my girlfriend, I tried this formula but as hard as I tried I could not find the name Sylvia Child in The Christian Bible, my Handbook For Life!

The biggest problem with seeing God's Will as the result of a formula is that you have to follow it perfectly, no mistakes allowed.

It doesn't take into consideration our humanity and proclivity to making mistakes.

Just like making a cake, if you miss out one ingredient, such as baking powder, you end up with a pancake instead of a birthday cake.

God's Will is NOT a closed system; it is dynamic.

God takes into account even our mistakes.

We may have made mistakes in the past, gone into wrong careers, married the wrong person, but this does not mean we have missed out on God's Will for ever, and we have now got to settle for second best.

This is a lie, you do **not** find the phrase "*second best*" in The Bible; one mistake won't put us off course for ever!

Think of the logic of this.

If I'm supposed to marry a certain person to fulfil God's Will for my life and I married the wrong one, this will mean that my wife married the wrong person, so did the person whom she should have married and so did his wife.

It sets off a trend which means we are all married to the wrong person.

All because back in the time of Adam and Eve one of their children married the wrong person.

This is **not** rational!

The scripture tells us that all believers and servants of God made mistakes.

For example, Moses could have said "*I killed a man so God can't use me*", but God did.

King David, who committed adultery and murder as a result of impulsively using his God given sexual desires in a lustful way instead of a loving way within marriage.

Yet in spite of such a major mistake (among others) in his life God used King David in a powerful way. God even called David "*a man after my own heart*" [Acts 13:22] and many of the Psalms in God's Word were written by King David.

There is no unforgivable sin, any sin can be repented of and forgiven by our loving Creator.

The truth is that God's Will takes into account our humanity.

Are you not glad about that?

Are you not glad that God's Plan for your life is bigger than our major mistakes and foolish decisions? I am!

What then is God's Will?

God's Will is a fellowship, a friendship.

1 Corinthians 1:9 [Living Bible] "*God will surely do this for you, for He always does just what He says, and He is the one who invited you into this wonderful friendship with His Son, even Christ our Lord.*"

God's Will is not rules but a relationship.

God's Will is not a limiting life-map but is a lifestyle, the way we live.

If we study scripture trying to find out what is God's Will, it will be a fruitless task, it just isn't there.

Why is this?

If God's Will is so important why don't we find it in His Christian Bible?

You find very little on technique in The Bible but thousands of verses about relationships. Why?

Because God's Will is a fellowship, not rigid rules but a relationship.

Focus on God not on guidance, that is the key to knowing God's Will.

Often The Bible compares the Christian life to a marriage.

When Sylvia and I got engaged, our differing work and the distance between our homes kept us apart much of the time, so we wrote love letters to each other.

Man, were they good!

I can go back today and read them and become embarrassed by these love letters, especially the ones Sylvia wrote to me.

I never wrote anything "*that silly*".

When we were engaged I had to write down my feelings so Sylvia would know how I felt. But now I have been married to Sylvia long enough for her to know how I feel, I don't have to write it down any more.

99% of the time Sylvia can "*read me*".

Why?

We have a relationship.

The deeper the relationship the fewer the rules.

The deeper our relationship with God the fewer the rules.

We don't focus on, don't do this or that, but we do this and that.

There is a lot more freedom regarding God's Will for us than most Christians realise.

I feel that in certain circumstances there are many choices we can make and all of them could be God's will for us.

I believe that God has many options for us that could fit into the framework of His Will because God's Will is dynamic.

As God's Will is a relationship then our attitude is the key to unlocking that Will.

What wrong attitudes will block God's Will in our lives?

1) Don't be fatalistic about God's Will

"What will be will be" attitude.

It happened so it must be God's Will.

We passively slide through life with an attitude of resignation saying *"whatever happens, it's God's Will"*, then we just grin and bear it.

We assume that everything that happens in life is God's Will.

Two major errors in such thinking.

a) If everything that happens in the world is God's Will, then God gets blamed for everything that is bad in this world.

Someone gets cancer: must be God's Will.

Someone gets killed in a plane crash: must be God's Will.

God gets blamed for all of the evil in the world.

When I say the phrase *"it must have been the Will of God"*, what first comes to your mind?

Something good or something bad?

You read in small print of an insurance policy that it covers everything that may happen to you except *"Acts of God"*!

What are these *"Acts of God"*?

A baby gets born, someone gets healed, someone gets married and lives happily ever after?

No!

What are *"Acts of God"*? Floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, tidal waves, struck by lightning – all are catastrophies.

Isn't it amazing that if things go right in my life it is luck, but if things go wrong it must have been *'The Will of God'*."

Why should luck get the credit for all the good things and God the credit for all the bad things?

b) The Bible makes it extremely clear that God's Will is not always done on earth.

Matthew 6:10 [NIV] *"your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*

If God's Will was always done on earth, why are we commanded to pray *"may Your Will be done here on earth, just as it is in Heaven."*

God's Will is done perfectly in Heaven, but imperfectly on earth.

A spouse runs out from their mate. *"It must have been God's Will."* Who says?

Someone gets hurt in an accident. *"It must have been God's Will."* Who said?

Such a fatalistic attitude is unfair on God and unhealthy for us.

When we have this fatalistic attitude towards God's Will we become a puppet, not a person.

This attitude of fatalism robs us of one of the greatest gifts that our Creator has given us: the freedom to choose.

This fatalistic attitude tends to promote self pity, passivity and worst of all it stops us from growing in character.

This attitude takes the blame away from us. *"I didn't have any choice; it was God's Will."*

It was God's Will that I went to sleep in the church service today, or I cheated my Income Tax.

That was just God's Will, I didn't have any choice.

We don't grow when we *"pass the buck"* and say everything we do is God's Will.

Why are Christians in the world?

To mature and to bring about the Will of God.

A fatalistic attitude robs us of initiative.

We say *"I've been unemployed for years, but if God wants me to have a job He will give me one."*

No!

The parent that makes all the decisions for its child and never lets that child make any decisions themselves: that poor child is doomed to immaturity.

God wants us to grow up.

Even when we make the wrong choices it is part of growing up, just like a young child stumbles and falls as they are learning to walk.

But that is the only way you will learn.

God wants you to come to the point in your life that we make decisions, just like Jesus Christ would, without God having to write it in the sky for us to see.

That is what is called spiritual maturity.

Wisdom is seeing, knowing and responding to life from God's point of view.

That is what Christianity is all about.

John 7:17 [Living Bible] *"If any of you really determines to do God's Will, then you will certainly know whether my teaching is from God or is merely my own."*

God's Will demands a determined but free choice on our part to do His Will.

God will never force us to fulfil His Will in our lives.

What does all this mean?

God revealed a lot of His Will for us when He gave us a mind.

Why would God give us a self-determining mind and then tell us to **not** use it but wait for God to write His Will for us in the sky?

God purposely will not make all the decisions in life for us, so we can mature by using our mind to make our own decisions and then experience the end result of our choices, whether they are good or bad.

2) Don't be fearful about God's Will

For many people even the subject of God's Will scares them, makes them nervous and defensive and start to run from the idea.

What if He sent me to Africa to be a Missionary?

What if He wants to make me a religious fanatic?

Jesus didn't come to scare us but to save us.

Are we afraid at times to pray "*Your Will be done, Lord*"?

Is that a scary phrase for you regarding our work, marriage or our children?

What are we afraid of?

a) We are afraid of change!

What if God changes my lifestyle?

Well, it may be His Will for that to happen.

b) We are afraid of criticism. What are other people going to think if I submit to God's Will?

c) We are afraid of commitment. What if we say "*Yes God, I want to do Your Will*" but then we find it too hard and we decide we don't like it?

The root of this attitude of fear is that we doubt that God has our best interests at heart.

That is the bottom line.

Maybe God doesn't really know what will make me happy.

Jeremiah 29:11 [Living Bible] "*For I know **the plans I have for you, says the Lord.** They are plans for **good** not for evil, to give you a future and **a hope.***"

What does this say about God's Will?

God's Will is an expression of God's Love for us.

Everything that God does to us, for us and through us, is an expression of His unconditional love for us.

There is no anger or hate in God's Will for us if we are a believer.

Romans 8:1 [Living Bible] "*So there is now **no condemnation** awaiting those who belong to Jesus Christ.*"

God wants our lives to be full of joy and He knows more than we do what will give us lasting joy.

3) Don't be frustrated about God's Will

This is where many Christians find themselves today. They find God's Will confusing and complicated, don't really know and are just stumbling around in life.

Maybe it is because you are looking for something that isn't there, an agenda; when God's Will is a relationship, that is dynamic.

Maybe some of you did something that you really thought was God's Will and it came to nothing.

We got "egg on our face" and were left disappointed and resentful.

Maybe you look at other people and see them with great success in life, great health, and everything seems to be going his way and he doesn't want to seek God's Will for his life or even know God.

While I'm trying to live for Christ and I'm going broke, what happened?

Maybe we feel we are a failure, and I can't find the will to start again, so you are worried and confused about God's Will.

Romans 8:28 [Amplified Bible] *"We are assured and know that God being a partner in their labour, all things work together and are fitting into a plan for good to those who love God and are called according to His design and purpose."*

"All things" – does that include all my own mistakes? Yes!

Does it include all the mistakes others make that affect me? Yes!

Does that include incidents that are beyond my control? Yes!

Does that include when our children reject all we have taught them for their own good? Yes!

Even when it hurts? Yes!

God's Will is a long-term process to make us like Jesus Christ that will include both problems and pleasures in life.

Problems are part of life?

If you don't have problems you are not living. Check your pulse.

The only people I know who don't have problems are living at the bottom of my garden in the local church graveyard!

Everyone has problems. You finish with one. Guess what? Along comes a new one! Same old problems? No! You get new ones!

God says:-

a) Don't be fatalistic.

b) Don't be fearful.

c) Don't be frustrated.

What is the right attitude? Faith!

Hebrews 11:6 [Living Bible] *“You can never please God without faith, without depending on Him. Anyone who wants to come to God must believe that there is a God, and that He rewards those who sincerely look for Him.”*

God's Will always requires faith.

That is why He doesn't spell out all His Will for us at one time.

If God spelt out His Will for us, would that require faith? No!

Faith comes when you are **not** really sure.

When we have to take that step into the dark. God will give you enough light for that one step but not the next until you take the first.

Maturity is moving forward in faith.

How do we get started in God's Will?

1 Timothy 2:3-4 [Living Bible] *“This is good and pleased God our Saviour, for He longs for all to be saved and to understand the truth.”*

The starting point to fulfilling God's Will is to start a relationship with Jesus Christ our Saviour, not a religion but a relationship.

If you haven't done this you haven't started seeking God's Will for your life!

2 Peter 3:9 [Living Bible] *“... He [God] is not willing that any should perish...”*

God wants everyone to come to know Him in a personal way.

Second thing we do is to start to fill our mind with God's Word – The Christian Bible.

God's Will is found in God's Word.

People say to me *“I have a hard time knowing what is God's Will for me.”*

I reply *“Are you having a regular quiet time reading God's Word and talking to God about what you read?” ... “No!”*

“Are you memorising scriptures?” ... “No!”

“Are you involved in a small group Bible Study?” ... “No!”

The more we fill our mind with God's Word the more we will know His Will.

The more we know God's Word the deeper our relationship with Him becomes.

We will begin to think like God thinks, and act the way He thinks.

Psalm 119:105 [Amplified Bible] *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”*

In ancient Israel there was no street lighting nor flash lights with beams of light that showed the pathway far ahead. When walking after dark you strapped little oil lamps to each of your feet and they gave enough light to see just one step ahead: no further until you took the next step. A step-by-step enlightenment.

Likewise, God's Will is **not** laid out for us years ahead, for such knowledge would "*blow our minds*" seeing ten to twenty years ahead.

So God tells us that His Word will light the path He wants us to tread just one step at a time. Any further than that will demand our faith in Him, and His unconditional love for us.

That type of relationship is what God desires with us all.

That is the Will of God for you and I.