

WILL of GOD

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How Do I Know God's Will?

"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." Romans 12:2

Knowing and doing God's will is very important. Be like Jesus. He said that He came to earth, *"Not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me,"* John 6:38. Much of God's will applies to all Believers in the same way. However, God has an individualized will for Believers that He gradually reveals as you grow in your walk with Him in daily faithfulness. You can know God's will. He will give you understanding. *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight,"* Proverbs 3:5-6. You know God's general will for all Believers from the Bible. You know His individualized will as a non-contradictory combination of His Word and a faithful obedient life. From that base of obedience, you can determine and obey His will for you. Ask the Father. Acquire guidance from His Word, His wisdom, His people, and His peace. When you know God's will, obey Him.

GOD'S GENERAL WILL. Most of God's general will is found in the Bible's commandments, principles, and examples. The Bible is the primary source for knowing God's will for your life. *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path,"* Psalm 119:105.

1. Commandments. There are many commandments in the Bible for all Believers such as, *"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus,"* 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. And *"For this is the will of God ... that you abstain from sexual immorality,"* 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Jesus said, *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments,"* John 14:15. Understand the context of the commandments. God told Noah to build an ark, Genesis 6:14. God did not tell you to do that. God told David to go to Hebron, 2 Samuel 2:1. God did not tell you to do that. Do not take a commandment out of its context.

2. Principles. There are Biblical principles for you to follow. The principle of good stewardship is in Luke 16:1-13. The cost of discipleship is at the end of Luke 14. The principle of seeking lost people is in the three parables of Luke 15. Follow these and the other principles in the Bible.

3. Examples. The Bible's commandments and principles give you God's general will for your life. The Bible contains examples for us to follow. The best example is the life of Jesus. After washing the disciples' feet, Jesus said, *"For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you,"* John 13:15. We should follow His example of humility, Philippians 2:3-5. We should walk in His steps, *"For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,"* 1 Peter 2:21. *"By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked,"* 1 John 2:5-6.

A WARNING. God does not lie, Psalm 119:160. God will not lead you, or tell you, to disobey His Word. Jesus gives leaders to equip us, Ephesians 4:11-14. However, there are many false teachers, 2 Timothy 4:3-4. Never believe that God is telling you to disobey His Word. God would not do that. If a church leader tells you to disobey the Word of God, that is a false teaching.

GOD'S INDIVIDUALIZED WILL. God has an individualized will for Believers, Psalm 32:8, Proverbs 3:5-6. Obey God's general will. Then to learn His individualized will, fervently ask God to tell you. Seek His answer from His Word, His wisdom, His people, and His peace.

Ask. Pray David's prayer, *"Teach me to do Your will,"* Psalm 143:10. The Apostle Paul prayed that the Believers in Colossae would *"be filled with the knowledge of His will,"* Colossians 1:9. Your earnest prayer for yourself and for others should be to know and to do the will of God.

Acquire guidance. God reveals His individualized will through His Word, His wisdom, His people, and His peace. Ask God to reveal His will to you. He will answer your prayers through:

1. His Word. Knowing God's individualized will is a product of routine Bible study. God's will for you becomes clear as you gain wisdom and understanding from His Word. He will never lead you to do something contrary to His Word.

2. His Wisdom. God's wisdom comes from spiritual obedience, 1 Corinthians 2:14-15. *"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,"* Romans 12:2. Ask God for His wisdom, *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God ... and it will be given to him,"* James 1:5.

3. His People. God's people are a resource for understanding God's will. Those who accurately teach His Word through speaking or writing can help, Colossians 1:28. It is good to get counsel from mature Believers. More than one counselor is a good idea, *"Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed,"* Proverbs 15:22. Mature Believers are not infallible but they can give you meaningful insight to help you determine God's will.

4. His Peace. God's peace is the final confirmation of His individualized will, *"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,"* Colossians 3:15. *"And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus,"* Philippians 4:7. This peace is a God-given deep sense of rightness about a decision that follows prayer, study of the Bible, spiritual wisdom, and insights from spiritually mature counselors. Seek and wait for His peace.

Act. When you ask if something is His will, the answer may be "no" as it was for Paul, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. It may be "wait". His answer of "wait" can result in great blessing, Isaiah 40:31. When God's answer is "yes", do His will even if it is difficult, unpopular, or costly. We should delight to do His will from our hearts, Psalm 40:8, Ephesians 6:5-6. Be careful of the counterfeit answers taught in the name of Christianity. Obey when you are sure you know God's will.

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