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## ***“Seeking God's Will?”***

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### **The struggle to seek or find the Will of God**

Seeking and searching, in our contemporary language, suggests looking for something that is not there or can't be seen. But, is this what we do when we search for the Will of God? When most Christians say they want God's Will, they may actually want Christ to do their will! So, this subject must be sought with reverence and obedience or we will miss it completely, rebalancing our will for His so we can have the trash we want instead of the wonders He has for us.

The struggle to seek or find the Will of God has conflicted and confronted countless Christians and non-Christians alike over the millennia. But, most miss the point of the quest and end up with the wrong items, declaring them as God's Will, or they give up and say God's Will cannot be found. So, what is the Will of God? A basic, general idea of what it means to know the Will of God is found in Matthew 6:33 ...*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well...*

*Seek first the Kingdom of God* refers to our quintessential quest in life as a Christian. It is about knowing Christ and pursuing a relationship that grows then is filled with Fruit, purpose, and maturity. It is about placing Christ first and foremost as Savior and Lord. By *Lord*, we mean He is ruling our hearts, minds, and actions, including our motivations and desires. So, we seek what is best, as Jesus has planned out the best for us. When we only look to ourselves or what we want, we miss His golden opportunities and goodness.

### **So, what is “seeking” about?**

You will be surprised to find out that here it does not mean *finding what is missing*. Rather; it is about seeing what is already found! More to the point, it is seeing what God has revealed to us. It is a call about placing God first in our lives, which is what “seeking” means (biblically) in this passage. An important point in biblical theology is this: we do not seek God. We can't! It is God who seeks us! This is what the Gospel is all about (Deut. 6:4; Rom. 3:23; 8:2; 9:30-10:8; Eph. 1:3-14; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 2 Tim. 1:9-10)!

To seek God's Will is our highest priority outside of our salvation. The Will of God is not only a task or an ends to find, nor is it just a set of goals; rather, it is a choice, a hunt, and a journey. The action of seeking Him and His plan is His Will! This is the hunt and the journey that produces the principles that grow and mold us in faith and maturity (1 Pet. 5). It never ends; it is always continuing until we are called home (See our channel on *God's Will*).

### **So, what do we do?**

The solution is simple. Put Christ and His Will first and everything else secondary. When we have our hearts centered upon what is really important, our real purposes and plans begin to function correctly, as our perspectives are in line with God's. The secret to a life of contentment is having the right perspective of our place in the kingdom. What is His Will?

### **How do we Find God's Will?**

Finding God's Will is not about programs or methods; it is about a person who is God, who wants us! A loving relationship! Asking the question, *what does God want me to do*, is the starting point, and the focus of finding the Will of God. Remember, Matthew 6:33-34 says "Seek first the kingdom of God." The Will of God has more to do with controlling our hearts and desires than what we do in our planning and ideas (1 Pet 5)! It comes down to our willingness and attitude that we must be a servant of Christ. It is to let Christ, through His Word and Spirit, mold and shape us to His Glory and purpose, and remain in this relationship! We will know the Will of God more intimately as He reveals it, helping us to learn and grow. As we grow close in our experience with Him, His Will unfolds in His perfect timing!

### **There are three Primary types of God's Will:**

1. **REVEALED WILL:** God's laws concerning lifestyle and righteous living for all Christians. (It is not God's will for you to ever leave your spouse or start a cult!)

The *revealed Will* of God is about what He has made known to us through His written Word, the Bible. The call is to know His Word and renew our minds to it so we know what He wants and has for us. This is about knowing what we "ought," and thus what we "should" do. In this way, we can understand the big picture and the details of how we are to live. We can make choices and be astute in our relationships and opportunities. If we do not know what God wants, how can we embrace His Will or lead a life of distinction?

God's Will is for us to have a right relationship with Him. Thus, we are to recognize His sovereignty over both the universe and our lives. Then, we can live accordingly as a Christian seeking God's righteousness, character, and virtue—His Fruit—so they flow into us. These are the main objects in our quest to find God's Will. These are the real jewels that we take with us into eternity! Righteousness, Fruit of the Spirit, character, and virtue must be our essence that spills onto others. If not, we are definitely not in His Will. And, remember the context in the Matthew 6:33 passage. When we worry, we cannot grow in righteousness, Fruit, character, or virtue, because worry takes over our lives, leaving no room for growth or maturity and thus we will not find God's Will. Worry will cut us off from our faith and growth because it blocks our focus and concentration upon our Lord (Heb. 11:10).

We must immerse ourselves in His Word. In so doing, we will know the majority of His Will, all that is important to live a great, wonderful, Christian life (Jeremiah 42:2-6; 43:2-7; Matthew 12:33-36; John 8:32; 17:17; Romans 12:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 4:12). God has clearly revealed to us His decrees, commands, and calls, such as to be saved, sanctified, filled with the Spirit, and to obey His precepts, just to mention a few (Eph. 5:17-18; 1 Thess. 4:3; 5:16-18; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; James 1: 21-27; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 2:3-4). It is about our motivation to grow in faith and to be loyal to our Lord so we look to Him and not our troubles and trials. Heaven is our *hope of hope*, and so much more; it is a reality, a wonder, and a place we will be for ever and ever. Our biggest problem has been solved—that of our sin causing us to die with no hope or salvation. Christ paid that debt and our response is our gratitude. As a Christian, we have been saved; if you are not saved, you can be and then you can become a new creation in Him, set for eternity (1 Cor. 6:9-11; 2 Cor. 5:17)! The great comfort in this is that we have access to God and His life-giving blessings and renewal! He allows us to seek Him and be in His Will. Thus, we can trust that God is indeed in control. He loves us; He will not lead us astray or direct any malevolence toward us.

Because God loves and cares for us, we can respond to His precepts and apply them to our lives. Abiding in His Will brings happiness; but, living outside of it brings doom and gloom. He does not bring it; on the contrary, we bring it by our disobedience—our self-will instead of Christ's Will. The results of realizing we are approved by God will bring perseverance that builds our maturity, character, and faith (James 1: 12-18).

2. **DETERMINED WILL:** That which cannot be thwarted or stopped by anything (predestination; it will happen!)

This refers to God's sovereignty and control. He alone chooses who will be clued into His truth and who is not worthy to know or not ready. God is the One who chooses and dispenses wisdom and life. He is the only One who is capable and sufficient in knowledge, wisdom, justice, and mercy to do so. God reveals Himself in the heart and His Word. We cannot come to know Him or understand God from any other secular means; no learning, science, or power can grasp who God is or what He is up to. "All things" means that all things in the universe have been committed to Jesus. Being fully God, He is Sovereign (John 12:44-46). When you know Jesus, you know God; God's Spirit allows us to know Jesus. However, just because God is in control of all things does not mean we sit and do nothing; we have responsibilities. We are to trust in Christ regardless of our circumstances.

God will achieve His purpose; we will inherit His wonders and blessings! This flows into the great *axiom*, that Christ will “wipe away every tear.” This must resound in us not just for our personal hope and comfort but also to enable us to trust in Christ for all things and situations. Those in Christ are His and His for all time; there is no fear or dread when we are with our Lord King. He is the *Alpha* and *Omega*. He will bring all things new to those who know and love Him, and judgment to those who fight Him. Thus we can be encouraged, as we have hope, reason, and purpose to be faithful and pursue His will because of our confidence in Him; this, in turn, produces active faith that glorifies Christ and builds His kingdom (Eph 1:14; Heb. 12: 18-29)!

God's character is just and fair! Thus, we can and should submit to the sovereignty of God (Proverbs 1:24-33; 6:16; 8:13, Isaiah 57:15; 66:2; Micah 6:8; 1 Peter 5: 5-9). If not, we become the fool of Proverbs 3:34, living a life filled with irrationality and foolishness, hurting ourselves and other people because instead of using wisdom, we choose rather to seek folly and pride and thus bring adversity upon ourselves and to those around us. We remove our pride by “clinging” to the cross, confessing our sins, and seeking forgiveness from God and others whom we have offended. Our discipline in the faith will help strengthen our walk as we continue to grow in Him.

When we follow Him and submit to His sovereignty, we are following His Will. Then...*He will lift you up*. God alone deserves the right to be exalted and honored. God is the only One to exalt us! This is an essential attitude we must take before effective Christian character, maturity, spiritual growth, or seeking His Will can be possible. God's plan for our lives is far better than any desire—evil or good—we could ever have. His promise is relief from persecutions, both in this life and in our life to come. The application is to trust Christ, to keep praying, and keep trusting in our Lord, knowing that His love for us is real and true. God is merciful and is moved by our struggles; He does care (Ex. 2:23-25; 3:7-9; Jug. 2:18; 10:16; Psalm 107:9; Prov. 3:34; Isa. 2:11-12, 17; Ezek. 17:24; 21:26; Luke 1:52-53). Thus, it is logical and beneficial to be humble in Him (2 Chron. 7:14-15; Prov. 3:34; 25:6-7; Isa. 2:11-12; 5:15; Matt. Mt 18:4; 23:12 Luke 11:43; 14:11; 18:14; 20:46; 1 Pet. 5:62)!

Remember this important point about God's will: it is not an excuse to do nothing! *He wills!* God is sovereign and yet we have free will. The Bible teaches both. We may not fully understand it, but there it is. We are the elect and chosen, to which we must realize we have no right. Our responsibility and call must be directive and purpose driven—His purpose! To sit and hide behind theology is a coward's and reprobate's way out! Spurgeon said, "*We have a chosen people, and yet His gospel is to be preached to every creature...*"

3. **SPECIFIC WILL:** God's special plan for each believer (whom we marry, career, education, etc.).

When we know God's revealed Will and respect His determined Will, we can undrape what most Christians seek in their quest to know God's Will. Simply put, we are prepared to understand His Word, know His thoughts, commands, and call, then apply His Word into our lives so we can be in prayer, seek godly council, and then consciously and productively make the right decisions.

### **How do we Make Good and Healthy Decisions?**

- **First, God leads by the precepts and principles of His Word!** The Bible shows us the way. Biblical *Precepts* are statements that are imperatives such as commands (Mark 12:28-31), and passages that are clearly His Will (Gal. 5). *Principles* are general concepts in context such as *character* that require us to make a determination. Think through how to apply them through prayer, wisdom, discernment, growth, and maturity (*Sermon on the Mount*, Psalm 119, emphasis on vs. 66 & 105; Rom. 8:27).
- **Secondly, God leads us by the power and prompting of the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit will guide us, (John 16:13), and will never countermand the Bible! Through our walk with Christ by His Word, prayer, devotions, disciplines, and the teaching of others, we will receive prompting to move us in a certain direction (Psalm 32:8; Philippians 2:12-14).
- **Thirdly, God leads us by the wise counsel of others.** God will use others to direct our path as we seek wise council (Prov. 25; 27:17-19; Rom. 15:14; Col. 3:16; Titus 2:3-5). This too will never countermand Scripture, or the Spirit's leading. It will test us to make sure we hear the Spirit correctly, and are on the right track (Proverbs 15:22; 27:9; 1 Timothy 5).
- **Fourthly, we are to pray and think through issues,** considering all options in making a decision. Make sure the people to whom you are listening are walking in His way (Chronicles 25:16; Psalm 1:1)! With these first three precepts in mind, we are to pray and seek God's specific guidance (Psalm 25:4; 31:3-4; 40:6-8; 43:3; 48:14; 73:23; 139:9-10, Prov. 3:5-6; 4:10).

**Then, God will draw us into His Will** (2 Cor. 7:9-10; Eph. 1:1, Col. 1:1-2, 2 Tim. 1:1). When we achieve the following of all four of these, we need to take a step of faith (Hebrews 11:6). Just as if we are at a nexus, or fork in the road, we have to choose a path and then go. To follow God, we have to know Him intimately, believe in Him, trust in Him, and then react and do what He says within the character of Christ. Remember, faith is belief, trust, and action synergistically combined. Faith requires us to react. Unsure? God also leads us by giving us peace about our decision. If you do not feel right about it, it is probably the wrong decision or direction (Colossians 3:15).

### **The Solution to God's Will really is Simple**

To know and trust in our Lord, lean on His ways, meet Him in your devotions, learn from Him in your studies, and receive His Will as a person who is rooted in Christ. This may sound like a long and arduous process; it is, and yet it is not. The more we follow His Word and the flow from the Spirit in Him, the more automatic it will be, the better decisions we will make, and thus, the more joy and contentment we will have!

The key point to our knowing God's specific Will, such *who will I marry or what school will I go to or what church should I attend or...* is this: God's Word and our growing relationship with Him will lead us to His Will through our obedience and prayers that lead to godly action. Then, we will have a life that has been transformed. If not, we are self-deluded as James states in James 1: 23-27 and Ezekiel in Ezek 3:30-32. Thus, the Bible must be read, it must be adhered to, it must impact us. Then, a visible and viable result will occur as our faith development increases and our purpose is set with a life that is worth living and that leads others to Him. Further action is taking our faith to the streets of life and actually helping others in a real, authentic way.

**God calls us to make wise choices; so, what will you do about it?**

**The Principle Point of making good choices is simple. Keep your eyes on Christ (John 11:32-35)!**

God's Will is about a Person who is God, who wants you! He wants a loving relationship with you; He wants you to do well and succeed in life. God cares; He is lovingly pushing you forward and is grieved when you fail or are hurt to the point that He weeps for you. And still, He has His amazing grace for you now!

Making good and wise decisions is based on keeping our eyes on Christ and not on our faulty desires. It is Christ that we are to seek, because our spiritual growth and our faith and character development are the most important things and above all else. Then, the details and specifics of life become clearer for us, such as what friends to have, what major to choose, what career is best, who we should marry, or what good investment we can make in our church and community. It is all about connecting with Christ so we are growing in Him. Then we can connect with others better, and be healthier and more content in our lives. We can lead lives of worth and distinction when we are in a healthy, loving, empowered Way—His Way. Then, the bumps in the road that come, such as disappointments, frustrations, set backs, disease, sickness, trials, and tribulations will make us stronger and better. We will see life not as a series of personal attacks and hurdles that are against us, but rather a way we can learn and grow and also be better to others (1 Thess. 5:21).

**We can take comfort that seeking God's Will is a journey that is well worth it!**

We need to realize that we have a purpose; we have a reason to keep going even in times of confusion, dire stress, and when all seems lost. Even in our darkest hours, God is there communing with us, enabling us to persevere. His blessings come to us in ways we cannot always fathom. So, we need to realize that God is indeed good. He is there for us! He has a plan; He has revealed the most important parts to us through His Word. Thus, we can take comfort that He does not bring harm to us but rather helps lead us out and away from sin and harm. He will take our temptations and choices and turn them into His great glory (Rom. 8). Because of this, we will wear an inconceivable crown all through eternity. Therefore, since God is good and we have a reason to go through what we go through, then we can resist temptations. In fact, we can stop blaming God and others and take responsibility for our life and choices. Then, we can come to a place where life will make sense and we can navigate the evils and ways of the world which no longer interest us! Why? Because Christ is formed in us, and He becomes greater than our desires (John 1:29; 3:30; Gal. 4:19).

### **The Bottom Line of Finding God's Will is this Imperative Point**

God is more concerned with our obedience than with our knowledge. This is so essential for us to understand and apply! What we think we know pales in comparison to who Christ is and what He does for us. When we feel we are wise, we are like a four-year-old thinking he knows better than his parents. How far can a four-year-old carry himself in life? How far can we carry ourselves in life without Christ? We may think we are doing well, but when we look back, with eternity as our guide, our ways are revealed as very pathetic indeed! We need to allow God's truth to reign in us and hold on to that reign with trust and obedience. When we do this with trust and without worry, we grow, and real wisdom flows to us and through us to those around us. Just be aware that God will not give you wisdom or gifts until you have mastered what He has already given you (Luke 16:10; 19:17; John 7:17; 14:12; Heb. 12:6)!

### **How We Fail at God's Will**

We Christians fail when we place our desires over God's direction and plan. We are so consumed with the "me," *what is in it for me, how does this affect me, this is what I want, I only have time for me* and so on... that we leave out God's call to come alongside others with His love and compassion (Rom. 9:1-13). This does not mean we are slaves, because God liberates us into joy and contentment. He brings out our best and gives us purpose and real, authentic meaning. An application of this is in how we control what we say and do, as we are called to do. Our words reflect what is in our heart as do our actions. Serving the needy is His Will as is our character and maturity in action. Liberty means God's Law does not enslave us; rather, it sets us free (John 8:36; Rom. 8:2; Gal. 5:13)!

Finding God's Will is about how we are to trust God and obey Him. Because He is righteous, He makes the right decisions. We do not make the right decisions. His ways are far beyond our understanding; He is God and chooses as He pleases, period. We have to understand that when we worry about trivial things, lust after goods and riches—even things we need—it will choke from us the life we could have had in Christ (Matt. 6: 28-34; 13:22). It is our relationship with Him that is important, and that is what we are to seek. We are to seek His provisions for every aspect of our lives, and work with all we have to help fulfill it. If we do not pay attention to Jesus' teachings because we are too busy worrying, we may go through life on earth without His help. Do not let Jesus be a concept; let Him be your LORD!

We must abandon ourselves to Christ, and never hold back by reasoning and logic or hide in our theology. Our drive must be to follow His character and not our own or our cultures. My interests must be surrendered to His; His interests must be mine (John 3:30; Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:5; 2: 20-21; Phil. 3:10) so that doing something I do not want to do in the first place becomes sheer pleasure because I am serving Him (John 15:13; 1 Cor. 9:22; 2 Cor. 12:15). When we are doing this, our maturity and character will grow and then we will be in God's Will as we are showing the love and care we are called to give!

### **God's Will is About Making Wise Decisions**

As Christians, we must have the perspective that all things in life, all that we have, see, and use, do not belong to us. It all belongs to God—period! We did not create anything; we are merely the stewards entrusted to care for, develop, and use all of these wisely, all to His glory, and to progress with His call and His Kingdom upon our hearts and the world. When we think we have ownership or entitlement, we are deluding ourselves, creating worry and needless stress. We then get ourselves off His plan and Will, because we seek possession and not His Kingdom!

We can also take comfort in this: we are not called to be perfect all of the time. We still have His grace and forgiveness when we mess up, but at the same time, we are called to put forth an effort and have a caring heart. We must see the necessity of personal responsibility in whatever we do, and we must do it with excellence for His glory.

### **God's Will is Intimacy with Christ**

Finding God's Will is also about our intimacy with Christ. Do you long for intimacy with Christ as Lord and as the love of your life? In these passages, Jesus shows us that He restores and seeks us to be renewed and to be in Him. Christ gave us grace from His love to make Him our abode of faith and motivation in life. Then, He prepares an eternal home for us. The question is, *as Christians, do we give back our worship, praise, gratitude, and devotion to Him? Are we at home with Him as our main inspiration, impulse, and comfort in this life, not just in the life to come* (John 14:23)? We can be assured that He cares and loves us beyond description; but, do we love Him back? God has a purpose for this world and for our lives and it is all about communion



in and with Him. We must find a way to increase our awareness and love for Christ in our daily lives so our lives are lined up to His Will, and so that it means something more than just *what I want* and *what I can get*. Our lives must be Christ-focused, for this is what Heaven is all about!

If you really want to know and follow God's will, you must be willing to give yourself to Him; immerse, commit, surrender and even die to Him! Kill off your will so His Will can saturate you and spill out to all that you are and can be. Allow His will to replace yours and grow you into the Christian person you are called and supposed to be (Psalm 25:14; 84:11; John 8:32; 17:17)!

God's Word gives us our template for knowing Christ and His Will. He gives us spiritual birth and reason in life (Col. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:22-23). *Who am I? What am I here for? What is the meaning of life?* It is all wrapped up in who we are in Christ, and our allowing Him to empower us. God calls us to put our faith in action; we do this by listening to Him and then doing what He says. When we hear the Word of God, the proof text that it is working will be that it affects and impacts us and we are able to make a response to it. If we do nothing with it, we are like the man in the Parable of the Sower (Matt 13:1-23). The concept, *Do what it says*, is essential for our growth as well as our societal influence and betterment.

The goal in our Christian life and His Will for us is primarily to be apart from sin—not to allow ourselves to be influenced to compromise our faith and life in Christ. When we choose to mix or add in evil, then rationalize it away, we become the evil people the Bible talks about and the fools that the Proverbs talk about. When we claim Christ as Lord, we must be above reproach and open to inspection. Our faith matters, because what we do and say does indeed echo into and throughout eternity. Our spiritual growth affects our moral success and failure (2 Cor. 5:10). We will give an account and He will wipe away our tears!

**Finding God's Will is Awesome! God's heaven, holiness, glory, throne, power, and His purpose are for all eternity!**

See more articles on God's Will on the "God's Will" channel....

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