

Discerning God's Will For Your Life

Christians often wonder what God wants them to do concerning their desires and plans. It seems as though God's will is hidden in a buried treasure chest and we have only small portions of the map to find its location. Is this true? Is God keeping His plans from you as some hidden secret, or is He interested in having you follow Him so that He can lead you step by step?

A passage of Scripture which deals with this area is Proverbs 3:5-6, This passage clears up any misconceptions about knowing God's will. Meditate on it carefully.

The Revealed Will of God

1. What should be one of your desires as a follower of Christ? Ephesians 5:17

2. What does God promise you concerning His will for your life? Psalms 32:8

3. What does God reveal about His will for you in the following verses?

1 Thessalonians 4:3

1 Thessalonians 5:18

1 Peter 2:15

4. Who is your source of strength to do God's will?

Philippians 2:13

John 15:5

"The will of God is not like a magic package let down from heaven by a string.... The will of God is far more like a scroll that unrolls every day the will of God is something to be discerned and lived out every day of our lives. It is not something to be grasped as a package once for all. Our call, therefore, is basically not to follow a plan or a blue print, or to go to a place or take up a work, but rather to follow the Lord Jesus Christ."

From: Affirming the will of God by Paul Little. 1971 Inter-Varsity Press, Downer Grove, Illinois

In the Scripture Christians have all the guidance they need in order to live for Jesus Christ. However, there are certain specific decisions which must be made even though the Bible does not give specific instructions. In these cases, a Christian should apply the principles of decision-making which are contained in God's Word.

Principles of Decision-Making

Objective from God's Word

God has given particular commandments which can help you make decisions concerning your activities. If a particular course of action is inconsistent with God's Word, then you know that it is not His will for you.

5. Using the following verses, state in your own words some of God's objectives for you. God wants you to....

Matthew 6:33

Matthew 22:37-39

Matthew 28:18-20

1 Peter 1:15

2 Peter 3:18

6. Using the following verses, develop questions that will help you discern God's will.

1 Corinthians 6:12

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

1 Corinthians 8:9

1 Corinthians 10:31

Obedience to God

If you refuse to obey God in what He has already shown you, will God give you further direction? Obedience to the known will of God is important in receiving further guidance.

7. How do you gain an understanding of God's will?

Psalms 37:31

Psalms 119:105,130

8. What other action can you take to learn God's will?

Psalms 143:8

James 1:5

9. Whose guidance have you been promised as you seek direction from God?

John 16:13

10. Read Psalms 27:14 and Isaiah 30:18. How does "waiting on the Lord" relate to knowing God's will? How do you do it?

Satan rushes men- God guides them.

Openness to God's Leading

Many difficulties in determining the Lord's will are overcome when you are ready to do His will, whatever it may be.

11. You may not always know all of the possible alternatives in determining what to do. What is a means by which you can gather additional information? Proverbs 15:22

Counsel should be obtained from mature Christians who themselves are committed to the will of God and know you well. It helps to talk with others who have previously made decisions in matters you are presently experiencing.

12. What are some other factors which can help you discern God's leading? Match the following verses with the appropriate factors.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| ___ Careful and wise thinking | a. Colossians 3:15 |
| ___ Inner spiritual peace | b. Philippians 1:12-14 |
| ___ Particular circumstances | c. Ephesians 5:15-17 |

What possible dangers exist in relying only on these things?

13. Following the chart may be helpful in determining God's will for a particular decision you now face.

Decision I am facing:

Objectives in Living	Yes	No	Neutral
Am I putting God's desire ahead of my own?			
Will it help me love God and others more?			
Will it help me to fulfill the Great Commission?			
Will it help me lead a more holy life?			
Will it help me further my Christian training?			

Obedience to God

What factors from God's Word affect this decision?

Openness to God's Leading

Alternatives

Advantages

Disadvantages

Counsel from mature Christians who know me well:

Inner peace factor

Circumstances

(Adapted from Book 3 DFD, NAVPRESS)