
C.O.R.E

Commit - Obey - Relationship - Encourage



Lesson Seven:
The Will of God

How Do I And God's Will for My Life?

A famous preacher once said that a successful man is a man who finds out what God wants him to accomplish with his life and then fulfills it. That is a very profound statement. The true measure of a man's success is not his social status, his bank account, his influence or his fame. It is simply doing what God wants him to do.

The purpose of this lesson is to give the individual a clear understanding of what the will of God is, as revealed in the Bible, so he can begin to accomplish those things that God would have him accomplish.

What Is the Will of God For My Life?

1. Many people, including Christians, often ask or wonder about such questions in life as what should I do when I grow up, who should I marry, where should I live, etc.

These are important questions, and as a Christian, it is important to have God's input in the decision making process concerning these matters.

2. But how can you know what God wants for your life? This is not an unreasonable or foolish question, for as Christians we realize that we are not our own, but are bought with a price (I Corinthians 6:19-20). God created us for a purpose and that purpose is found in Revelation 4:11, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."
3. There is, however, a difference between what God's will is and what His plan is for your life.
 - A. God's will is the same for every man, but His plan for each individual differs.
 - B. God is infinitely more interested in your being the type of person He wants you to be than in your doing for Him all the "mighty works." Be what He wants you to be, and He will show you what it is He wants you to do.

God's Clearly Revealed Will Is Found in His Word, the Bible

1. God's will is no mystery. It is not something we have to wonder about; it is clearly revealed in the Bible, and He wants us to understand what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17).
2. God's will is:
 - A. That all men be saved - God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). In fact God has commanded "all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30), because God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4)
 - B. Not only that all men be saved, but that all men should be Spirit filled. This means we should be yielded and controlled by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:7-19).
 - C. That we be thankful in all things (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Closely associated with being filled with the Holy Spirit is thankfulness (Ephesians 5:20).
 - D. That we be sanctified, that is, set apart for holy purposes (1 Thessalonians 4:1-7). We are not to be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:1-2). When we live holy, sanctified lives, we are separated from evil (2 Corinthians 6:16-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).
 - E. That we be submissive servants (Ephesians 6:5-8; 2 Corinthians 8:3; 1 Peter 2:13-15). First we are to serve God and then man from our hearts with pure motives. The Bible instructs us to be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses that we may be profitable, fruitful and able to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men (Titus 3:8, 14; 1 Peter 2:15). Remember, "ye serve the Lord Christ," (Colossians 3:24).
 - F. That we be ultimately conformed to the image of His dear Son. The Lord Jesus Christ is the one we are to be like (Romans 8:28-29; John 17:20-23; Ephesians 4:13-15).
 - G. That we sometimes suffer (1 Peter 2:15; 3:17; 4:19). The following section covers this in detail.

The Will of God and Suffering

1. How does suffering come?
 - A. Through our own sins and mistakes (Galatians 6:7).
 - B. Through the sins and mistakes of others (2 Corinthians 5:21; Genesis 37:23-28).
 - C. Through temptations (1 Corinthians 10:13).
 - D. Through God's providential dealings with man (Job 1:13-22; 5:6-11; John 16:33).
2. Why do Christians suffer?
 - A. Divine chastisement (Galatians 6:7; Numbers 32:23; Hebrews 12:6-11)
 - B. We are called thereunto (Philippians 1:29; Acts 9:16)
 - C. To identify with the sufferings of Christ (1 Peter 2:21; Philippians 3:10)
 - D. In persecution (1 Corinthians 4:12; Acts 5:28-29, 41; Philippians 3:10)
 - E. In the expenditure of our personal resources (Philippians 2:30)
 - F. In oppression by Satanic forces (Job 1)
 - G. That the works of God might be made manifest (John 11:4)
3. What does suffering accomplish in us?
 - A. Produces patience and faith (Romans 5:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:4-5; James 5:10)
 - B. Produces experience through which we might comfort others (Romans 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 1:4-5).
 - C. Produces hope thorough our experiences (Romans 5:3-5)
 - D. Produces holiness and a harvest (Hebrews 12:10-11; 1 Peter 4:1)
 - E. Makes us perfect (1 Peter 5:10; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Job 23:10; James 1:2-4)
 - F. Establishes and strengthens us (1 Peter 5:10)

- G. It is proof of godliness (2 Timothy 3:12)
- H. Unifies the Church (1 Corinthians 12:26)
- I. Glorifies God (1 Peter 4:14-16; Philippians 1:12-14; 1 Peter 1:7)

4. What ways can you respond to suffering?

- A. You can despise it and rebel against it.
- B. You can faint in the day of adversity.
- C. You can yield reluctantly.
- D. You can yield to the will of God with rejoicing.

5. What should our attitude be toward suffering? Accept these biblical truths:

- A. Suffering is an unavoidable part of human life (Job 5:6-11).
- B. Suffering is part of our Christian calling (Philippians 1:21).
- C. Realize that God's plan is bigger than we are (Ephesians 2:6-7; Daniel 4:32, 35).
- D. It is good to be afflicted (Psalms 119:71).
- E. If we suffer, we shall reign (2 Timothy 2:12).
- F. We should rejoice when we suffer (Colossians 1:24; Acts 5:41; Job 23:10)
- G. Realize that all temptation, trials and suffering must pass through the permissive will of God (Job 1).
- H. Worship amidst suffering proves our loyalty to God and repudiates Satan's lie (Job 1:13-22).
- I. "We know that all things work together for good" (Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20).
- J. Our suffering cannot be compared to the glory that will be revealed in us (2 Corinthians 4:17; Romans 8:18).

God's Will in Principle or His Plan for Your Life

1. God has clearly revealed through His written revelation, the Bible, what He desires for each of His creatures. But wait a minute, that doesn't help us determine whether we should buy that car, or take this job. What is God's will and plan concerning these things?
 - A. You will never find the will of God or His plan outside of the Word of God. You can find God's will and plan by renewing your mind (Romans 12-1-2). You renew your mind by letting "...this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). You must replace carnal thoughts with God's thoughts by immersing yourself in the Word of God (2 Corinthians 10:5).
 - B. You must be in conformity to the clearly revealed will of God before He will reveal His plan to you. Your priority should be to fulfill the general will of God in your daily life and then trust Him to guide you in the detailed plans.
 - C. The question then comes, How does God reveal His will concerning these things to the seeking individual?

Sometimes God reveals His will through opportunities, circumstances, the wishes of parents, the advice of friends, the evaluation of one's own abilities, personal inclinations, the needs of the day and conscience.

- B. Three things concerning God's will and plan are true:
 1. The Word of God directs.
 - a. God often guides through verses of Scripture that speak loudly to you.
 - (1) Be cautious, don't just open the Bible, close your eyes and point to a verse at random. God is a God of order.
 - (2) Saturate yourself with the Word of God so that the Lord can bring various portions of Scripture to your mind.
 - b. God's will never contradicts His Word, therefore, know your Bible (Psalms 119:105; Joshua 1:8-9; Psalms 1:1-3).
 2. Our inner conviction agrees.
 - a. God has given us His Holy Spirit to guide us, and He bears witness with our spirit that a certain course of action is right or wrong (Romans 8:16; Acts 13:2; John 16:13).

- b. Again be cautious; is the voice you hear the voice of your own desires, or is it indeed the voice of God?
 - (1) The old man is deceitful and desperately wicked.
 - (2) Delight yourself in God and He will give you the proper desires (Psalms 37:4).
- 3. The circumstances permit.
 - a. God opens and closes doors of opportunity.
 - b. Nothing happens to the child of God by chance, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28)
 - c. As road signs serve as guideposts in our travels, we accept circumstances as guideposts in the direction of God's leading.
 - d. Caution: God on occasion allows Satan to control circumstances, as in the case with Job (Job 1 and 2).
- 4. "When the Word of God, the impulse of the Holy Spirit in my heart and the outward circumstances are in harmony, then I am convinced that I am acting in accordance with the will of God" - F.B. Meyer.
- 5. My desires may be my own and not God's, and so I can't fully trust my desires; the circumstances may be dismal or contrived by my adversary the Devil, and so I don't want to blindly follow opened or closed doors; but "Thy Word is truth" (John 17:17). There I must ultimately place my trust.

"And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net" (Luke 5:5)

IN Summary, the Lord Jesus Christ Laid Down a Principle that Should Govern All Our Life, "But see ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33)

- A. First, seek God's kingdom and righteousness, fulfilling His will that is clearly revealed in the Scriptures.
- B. Then, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6; See also Psalms 37:1-5).

Questions & Answers

1. God has a direct and clearly revealed will for man. List seven things that God specifically wills for us.

A.

B.

C.

D.

E.

F.

G.

2. Where do you find God's will and plan for your life?

3. What is God's ultimate will for your life?

4. In general principle, what three things should be true for you to know that you are in God's will?

A.

B.

C.

5. Briefly explain the difference between the will of God and the plan of God.

6. Briefly explain the primary purpose of this lesson.

Key Memory Verses

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:1-2).

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

“Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass” (Psalms 37:4-5).

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Additional Thoughts

There is much confusion today about the will of God. Some popular beliefs are:

1. The will of God is different for every individual.
2. The will of God has to do with specific, physical matters.

From the Bible principles taught in this lesson, you should understand that these teachings are false, and why.

Questions

Write any questions you may have concerning the subjects of this lesson.
