

## LESSON 7: THE WILL OF GOD

“How do I find God’s will for my life?”

## KEY = DIRECTION

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 or bank account, or his influence and fame. It is simply doing what God wants him to do.

The purpose of this study 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 God would have him to accomplish.

**I. The Will of God and the Plan of God are not the same**

- A. The will of God is not physical, but spiritual. It is never connected with a set of rules, a geographical location or a specific ministry.
- B. The will of God is not to be confused with the plan of God for your life. God has a specific plan for your life individually and only God can give you all of the details regarding it because it is HIS plan for you, not any man’s. We will discuss this in greater detail later.

**II. There are two aspects to the will of God, His permissive will and His directive will.**

- A. The permissive will of God.

It must be clearly understood that God allows things to happen (or gives His permission) that He does not approve of in order to accomplish some larger purpose. Examples are abundant, both in and out of scripture.

- Paul’s trip to Jerusalem—Acts 21:4-14. God warned him three times not to go, but then allowed him to go to teach him obedience and ultimately to get him to Rome.
- Hitler—God certainly did not approve of him murdering 6 million of His chosen people, but allowed it as the beginning of the restoration of the Jews and to return them to their homeland.
- 1 Peter 3:15-18—God allows suffering in the lives of His children to perfect them, although He would clearly prefer that they not have to suffer.

*Note: Man has a free will. God will not force anyone to do anything. God offers salvation and lays down the principles for a godly life; but if a man exercises the free will God has given him and rejects it, God permits that man's free will to be exercised and the man suffers the consequences.*

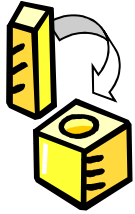
B. The directive will of God.



There are certain things God specifically “wills.”

1. 2 Peter 3:9 says that God “*is not willing that any should perish...*” All unsaved people are out of the will of God regardless of what else they may do.
2. We are to give thanks. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, “*In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*”
3. 1 Peter 2:13-15—We are to submit to every ordinance of man (obeying the law). However, this must be balanced by the next point:
4. Romans 12:1-2—We are not to be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. (Submission to the ordinances of man is to maintain a proper testimony to win them; while at the same time, your life is to be transformed to live by a higher standard to please God).
5. God desires our sanctification. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 starts by saying, “*For this is the will of God, even your sanctification...*” Also meaning, growing in holiness. God is more concerned with your holiness than your happiness.
6. Ephesians 6:5-8—Our service is to be from the heart, with pure motives, as if we were serving Jesus Christ.
7. Ephesians 5:15-17—We are to redeem the time. Quit wasting time, it belongs to God anyway! Make use of the small amount God has given you.

Summarizing God’s will for your life: The will of God is the same for every person on earth – to be conformed to the image of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.



- Romans 8:28-29 – *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*
- See also: John 17:20-23; Ephesians 4:13-15

### **III. The Plan of God**

The plan of God (and will of God) is always found inside the Word of God. You find them both by renewing your mind (Romans 12:1-2) and 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).

#### **A. How does God reveal His plan for my life?**

1. You must be in conformity to the 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, then trust Him to guide you in the detailed plan.
2. 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 the kind of person He wants you to be, and He will show you what to do.

#### **B. Why doesn’t God reveal His plan for me now?**

- It would overwhelm you before you got started.
- You may not be equipped to handle it yet. God will reveal what you can handle, when you can handle it. John 16:12 says, *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.*”
- You may not be the type of person God wants you to be yet.

**IV. Memory Verses**

**Romans 12:1-2** 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.

**1 Peter 3:17** For [it is] better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

**2 Peter 3:9** The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.