

How To Know God's Will For My Life

Pastor Brad Brownell - Nov 26, 2023

Today's message is on how to know God's will for your life!

- Have you found at times, it's quite confusing trying to understand this big book called the Bible, let alone, what does God want for your life specifically?

The Bible gives us a command...

Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. 6 Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Pr 3:5-6

Jesus said to pray, 'your kingdom come, your will be done'

Knowing God's Will isn't about knowing ALL the knowings of the ALL-knowing God.

Paul's says, "Who has known the mind of the Lord?" Rom 11:34

But it's knowing the Lord and His mind and heart for you – His love and plan for you - the foundation of living that plan out, and how to respond to it...Because spiritual maturity isn't a matter of knowing God's will for your life.

God's Will was not meant to be overcomplicated, but obeyed.

Jesus Himself made it simple...

"If you love me, obey my commands" Jn. 14:15

"But even more blessed are all who hear the word of God and put it into practice." Lk 11:28

Why does Jesus say that you are more blessed if you do God's will?

It's because life is more than what you see and feel in the moment - *and we DON'T see the big picture. It's eternal and lasts beyond the grave.*

In our limited understanding to the big picture we can often ask for things that are unwise or wrong in our desires.

Jesus told His disciples after a request they made to Him...

“You don’t know what you are asking,”

James says..

“And even when you ask, you don’t get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.”

The reality is that we can often think we know best OVER God – this is what sin is.

But the Bible says...

There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death. Pr 14:12

Before understanding God’s will – what’s more important, is understanding our reactions or responses to His will.

See if you can relate to any of these?

(3 REACTIONS – Biblical examples)

1. SAMUEL REACTION – 1 Sam 16 – WE CAN REASON GOD’S WILL

4 Samuel did what the Lord told him to do and went to Bethlehem...

*6 When they arrived, Samuel saw Jesse’s son Eliab and said to himself, **“This man standing here in the Lord’s presence is surely the one he has chosen.”** 7 But the Lord said to him, “Pay no attention to how tall and handsome he is. I have rejected him, because I do not judge as people judge. They look at the outward appearance, but I look at the heart.”*

How often have you looked at your situation, even one God led you in, and reasoned it based on what made sense to YOU, but it wasn’t God’s will?

God said to Samuel,

“I do not judge as people judge. They look at the outward appearance, but I look at the heart.”

In other words...God sees what you don’t, even if what’s in front of you seems right or looks best...God knows THE HEART, knows what’s behind THE SCENES, sees THE BIG picture!

Bible says...2 Cor. 5:7

‘For we walk by faith, not by sight.’

What might you be *rationalizing* or *reasoning* out to be God’s will but isn’t?

2. JONAH REACTION – WE CAN RESIST GOD’S WILL

*“One day long ago, **God’s Word came to Jonah**, Amittai’s son: “Up on your feet and on your way to the big city of Nineveh! Preach to them. They’re in a bad way and I can’t ignore it any longer.”*

*But Jonah **got up and went the other direction** to Tarshish, **running away from God**. He went down to the port of Joppa and found a ship headed for Tarshish. He paid the fare and went on board, joining those going to Tarshish—**as far away from God as he could get**.*

But God sent a huge storm at sea, the waves towering.” Jon. 1:1-4

And when God speaks to you! Gives you a direction, do you ever find yourself like Jonah? But for reasons of your own, you don’t see it, want it, or are *wrestling* with it.

Where in your heart or life do you find you are resisting God?

*Know that God **loves you** too much to **leave you** like that...*

*Maybe He’s been **trying to get your attention** like Jonah...*

3. PHARISEES REACTION – WE CAN REWRITE GOD’S WILL

Listen to what Jesus says here...

Jesus replied, “You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote, ‘These people honor me with their lips,

but their hearts are far from me. 7 Their worship is a farce,

for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.’ 8 For you ignore God’s law and substitute your own tradition.”

9 Then he said, “You skillfully sidestep God’s law in order to hold on to your own tradition...13 And so you cancel the word of God in order to hand down your own tradition. And this is only one example among many others.”

Now though we may not literally create new rules or views of God’s word, we can re-write it by mixing it with views from other beliefs or what culture deems acceptable.

Don’t RATIONALIZE, RESIST, or RE-WRITE God’s will for you!

3 RESPONSES you can take as you seek God's will that can help you trust in him more.

1. **Don't be fatalistic.** The idea of fatalism—that everything that happens is God's will—*leads to self-pity.*

2. **Don't be frustrated.** *If you try to figure out everything in your life, you're going to be very frustrated.*

If God isn't moving things around you, it's likely He's trying to move things in you first so you can handle the next move!

3. **Don't be fearful.**

The root problem of fear is doubting God's love. The Bible says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18 NASB).

We always get into trouble when we doubt God's love - because when we don't trust him, we don't obey him.

Psalm 37:23-24 says, *"The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. 24 Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the Lord holds them by the hand."*

God's Will is an expression of his love.

So how can you have a foundation for knowing God's will in your life where you can be sure you're headed in the right direction?

REMEMBER THIS...if you want to know the **still small voice of God** prompting you, you need to be **walking in the spoken word of God** which He gave already.

If you want to the **specific**, will of God, you need to be walking in the **general** will of God – The Bible!

Jn 7:17 amp

If any man desires to do His will (God's pleasure), he will know (have the needed illumination to recognize, and can tell for himself) whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking from Myself and of My own accord and on My authority. (Jn. 7:17 amp)

And it starts with 'desiring to do His will'. This means...

- *Wanting His will* – do you desire God's will over all else?

- *Then Doing His will*
 - o In other words – walk in the known will of God for your life and you will have the *‘needed illumination to recognize’* whether what you are hearing if from God or yourself.

G.O.D.S. W.I.L.L.

G – GRATITUDE – 1 Thess. 5:18 - *in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

When we don’t give thanks – it leads us to...

- *Not see God correctly*
- *Create vain speculations.*
- *Blinding our hearts to truth*

If we have a wall – we won’t hear His Will

Giving thanks unlocks our hearts to hear God’s will and promises.

O – OBEDIENCE to God’s word – (Sanctification and purity) – 1 Thess. 4:3, 7; Ps. 119:1-4; Ps. 1:1-3

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality”

God’s word is a manual for life and living your best life in God’s love and plan for you.

But sometimes you don’t need to be praying for God’s voice, and simply look for a verse on what He already said.

More specifically in this passage of 1 Thess 4:3, Paul ties in God’s Will, with being sexually pure or living by God’s standard for sexuality and marriage.

Why is this so important to God?

- **Because your body is a temple of God’s Spirit**
- marriage relationship between a man and woman together is a reflection of God’s complete image
- and expression of how Jesus loves the church – *His bride.*

D – DON’T BE CONFORMED to this world – Rom.12:2

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

If you want to *discern* the will of God for you, it’s not just a matter of having a *knowledge* of God’s word...

It’s not letting the world’s ways permeate your *values* and *beliefs*.

Why is renewing and acting on God’s word so important?

You can know something, but true transformation from the inside out comes when we tie it to experience.

When we tie it to experience, we create the neuropathways required for sustainable change.

S – SILENCE the ignorance of foolish men by ‘*doing what is right and submitting to authorities*’ – 1 Pet. 2:13-15

13 Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, 14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.”

Jesus and Paul and the disciples were all under ungodly leadership and *submitted* to the *systems* and *authorities* so long as they didn’t deny their faith.

So, what can you do?

First, Peter says your **right living**, your godly living, will disprove the false accusations that can come against you.

Secondly, Paul instructs us to **pray** for our government with thanks asking God to help them...

I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. 2 Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. 3 This is good and pleases God our Savior – 1 Tim. 2:1-3

W – WALK IN GODLY WISDOM AND CAREFULLY – Eph. 5:15-18; Jms. 3:13-18

*“15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, **but understand what the will of the Lord is.***

'Wisdom is the principal thing' – Pr.4:7

'The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom' – Pr. 9:10

And the emergency verse of Proverbs – 9:11

'Wisdom will multiply your days and add years to your life.'

'If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.'
– Jms. 1:5

LOOK CAREFULLY - MAKE THE BEST OF YOUR TIME.

I – INDURE SUFFERING with the right heart – 1 Pet. 4:19

19 Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

14-16

14 Be happy if you are cursed and insulted for being a Christian, for when that happens the Spirit of God will come upon you with great glory.[a] 15 Don't let me hear of your suffering for murdering or stealing or making trouble or being a busybody and prying into other people's affairs. 16 But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being in Christ's family and being called by his wonderful name!

Knowing God's will for you means to be faithful in your darkest hour, rejoice in hope, and walk in faith with perseverance.

Sometimes, God's not trying to get you out of something - but grow you *through* it and others see the witness of that.

L – Live in the Spirit – Eph. 5:18

*17 Therefore do not be foolish, **but understand what the will of the Lord is.** 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit..."*

Before praying for clarity and confirmation, evaluate if you are walking according...

- to God's word, in Godly wisdom and counsel, and daily walking in the Spirit's influence of a *Christlike character called the fruit of the Spirit.*

Cause when something or someone controls you and not God's Spirit, the outcomes (like alcohol in this context) – *will lead to ruin and ambitions that may move things on earth, but don't make a difference for eternity!*

L – Love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength; Love your neighbor as yourself – Mk. 12:30

This is the ultimate will of God for your life!

God's greatest goal for your life isn't to achieve *all you can*, acquire *what you can*, be accepted by *who you can*...

But being loved by God and loving Him back – the greatest privilege of life

And loving people as Christ loves us – the greatest purpose

So, when you are seeking God's specific will for and you get a sense you think is from God, first check to see if you are living in accordance with the known will of God...

A sense of leading from God will be marked by His kingdom presence... *Of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit – Rom. 14:17*

Bible says, *God isn't the 'God is not a God of confusion but of peace' – 1 Cor 14:33*

If what you are sensing lines up with...

- God's word, His character
- Supported by the accountability and counsel of other believers and leaders God has given you (Pr. 11:14)

You can have faith you are headed in the right direction and Jesus as your good shepherd will be faithful to protect, correct, and direct you in your choices and path (Jn 10:27)