



 How to Find the Will of God 

S E R M O N G U I D E

March 7, 2021

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Acts 16:6-10

INTRODUCTION

NOTES

At some point in all our lives, we are confronted with critical decisions, and choices that have to be made, and we want to know which way we should go, which choice we should make, which direction is God's will for our lives. George Truett said, "to know the will of God is the greatest of all knowledge," and yet as important as it is to be in God's will, we oftentimes struggle to find the will of God for our lives. But it doesn't have to be so complicated. God doesn't want us to be in the dark when it comes to His will. He wants us to have clarity. He wants us to know which direction to go. He wants us to be confident in which path we should take, which is why He gives us His Word, so we don't have to be confused. We don't have to second-guess, and we don't have to suffer with decision paralysis. So here are a few tips on how to find the will of God for your life.

KEY POINTS

1. Finding God's Will Requires Surrender

What stands out to me as our key text unfolds is that while Paul and his colleagues desired to go in one direction, they were met with a divine veto, and were instructed to go in another. Twice, they attempted to go towards the northeast, towards Bithynia, but the spirit of God shut the doors of opportunity that would have led them in the path they preferred.

This suggests that in order for them to get to where God ultimately wants them to go, they must be willing to surrender to the will of God. Finding God's will require surrender. It seems that God had to orchestrate their stops in order to direct their steps. Notice, if you will, that the door to the path they wanted to pursue wasn't a door that was shut by Satan, it was shut by God. What a sobering reality, to have a dream you desire, and opportunity you want denied, and to realize that it was denied by God.

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2. Finding God's Will Requires Sensitivity To The Spirit

While Paul and his companions were trying to go towards Bithynia, the Spirit said "no." But at the same time, the Spirit was saying, "yes" to Macedonia. Paul's team ultimately succeed in ministry because they are sensitive enough to hear the voice of God. Every Christian must cultivate the capacity in life to hear God's voice, and I want to contend that what enabled our friends to hear God's voice in Acts chapter 16 is that they had already had an encounter with God before this moment.

Do you remember in Acts chapter 9, when Paul encounters the Lord on the Damascus Road, and sees a vision and hears the voice of God telling him to witness to the Gentiles? Also, in chapter 13, the Holy Spirit directed Paul's course and spoke to the church, directing the church to "set aside for me Saul and Barnabas." So because Paul had heard the voice of God before – in chapter 9 and in chapter 13 – he recognizes God's voice when God speaks in chapter 16.

3. Finding God's Will Requires Trust

Finding the will of God isn't always about the destination; oftentimes it's all about the journey. It's like the old hymn that says, "When we walk with the Lord, in the light of his word, what a glory, he sheds on our way. While we do his good will, he abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey."

Trusting God is how we gain discernment. And in the course of discerning the will of God for our lives, we should want to be in a place where we can best serve God, where we can do the most good, and where God can get the most glory. That should be the standard that all of us apply when trying to assess the will of God. Our prayer should be, "Lord, lead me to the path where I can best serve You, and where I can do the most good, and where You God can get the most glory from my life and witness."

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Is there a door God is trying to shut in your life, but you keep trying to pry it open? What would it look like for you to fully surrender to God's way rather than trying to make things happen on your terms?
 2. When was a time you were sensitive to the voice of God? What wisdom or lessons can you draw from that experience to help you as you search for God's will in your current circumstances?
 3. Do you find it easy to trust God and His plan and will for your life? Or do you have to try to figure things out on your own before you're willing to trust Him?
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