

## The Will of God

The first question should not be “What is Your will for me?”

The first question should be “What is Your will?”

What is on God’s heart? What is His will? Let’s look at Jesus’ last encounters with His disciples while on this earth.

Matthew 28:16-20. Eleven men were told to go to all the nations.

How? \_\_\_\_\_  
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What did Jesus tell us to teach the new convert?  
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What was the first command of Jesus that we are to teach the new convert?  
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Read Acts 1:8. What were the eleven disciples to do?  
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From Matthew 28:16-20 and Acts 1:8 - what do you conclude God wants us as His disciples to make a major emphasis of our lives?  
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So, it is very clear that the job we are to focus on is to develop multiplying disciples to help reach all the nations of the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ, regardless of our occupation or station in life.

Jesus prayed 3 times in the garden of Gethsemane, “*Not My will but Yours be done*”. Jesus’ great concern was to do what His Father wanted.

In John 4:34 Jesus said to them, “*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me*”

There seems to be five main ideas in the Scriptures related to the will of God and they are:

### 1. To Know God

John 17:3 “*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*”

Phil 3:10 “*That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.*”

That is often one of the reasons we see so much in the Scriptures about waiting on God (Psa. 27:4; Isa. 40:31; 26:8,9; 30:18; Psa. 46:10) that we might really get to know Him and learn to “seek His face not just His hand”.

**2. To love God**

1 John 4:19 *“We love him, because he first loved us.”*

Matt 22:36-39 *“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”*

**3. To obey God**

John 15:10 *“If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.”*

John 14:21 *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him.”*

**4. To please God**

John 8:29. Jesus said, *“For I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”*

Eph. 5:10 *“trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.”*

**5. To glorify God**

John 12:27-28 *“Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. ‘Father, glorify Thy name.’ There came therefore a voice out of heaven: ‘I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.’”*

John 17:4 *“I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do.”*

1 Cor. 10:31 *“Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”.*

That should be our attitude, always seeking to know, love, obey, please, and glorify God. His will must become our will. To do with our lives what God wants should be our greatest desire.

As we live our lives seeking to know, love, obey, please, and glorify God, He has not left us without plenty of instructions as to what His will is in many areas.

I Thess. 4:3 \_\_\_\_\_

I Thess. 5:18 \_\_\_\_\_

I John 5:14,15 \_\_\_\_\_

Eph.6:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Gal. 1; 4 \_\_\_\_\_

I Tim 2:4 \_\_\_\_\_

11 Peter 3:9 \_\_\_\_\_

These and other verses state specifically what “the will of the Lord” is. There are many other passages that state what God wants through the emphasis being on knowing, loving, obeying, pleasing, and glorifying God.

There is also a tremendous emphasis in the Scriptures on trusting God. Many of the decisions we need guidance in are not specifically addressed in the Scriptures, like which girl to marry, which job to take, which car or house to buy, whether God is calling you into a ministry and if so, where does He want you to serve? This is where trusting God to lead us is so important.

How do we discern God’s will in areas not specifically addressed in the Bible? There are several things that may help.

1. Much seeking the Lord in His Word and prayer, possibly with fasting.
2. A promise
3. Counsel of godly people
4. Prayerfully doing a “advantage and disadvantages” sheet
5. Circumstances
6. Peace – “Mind the checks in your spirit”
7. Considering these four questions
  - What is my objective?
  - What training do I need to fulfill my objective?
  - Where, when, and with whom will I get this training?
  - What price am I willing to pay to get the training?
8. Usually a combination of indicators – (ship captain illustration) “When those 4 lights on the shore line up to look like one light, I know I am headed directly into the channel.”
9. Spiritual gifting
10. Abilities, talents, and desires
  - AIMS – a 2 day testing service in the Dallas area that stands for aptitude inventory measurement service. The web site is [AIMS testing.org](http://AIMS testing.org).
  - There are several other testing instruments that may be helpful.
11. Use your head - Dawson is attributed as saying, “When God gave you a brain He gave you a lot of leading.”

I John 2:17 *“He that doeth the will of God abideth forever.”*

## HOW THE LORD LEADS - A.W. TOZER

One of the problems most frequently encountered by serious-minded Christians is how to discover the will of God in a given situation. This is not a small matter. To countless thousands of Christians it is vitally important. Their peace of heart depends upon knowing that God is actually guiding them, and their failure to be sure that He is destroys their inward tranquillity and fills them with uncertainty and fear. They must get help if they are to regain their confidence. Here is a modest effort to provide help.

First, it is absolutely essential that we be completely dedicated to God's high honor and surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. God will not lead us except for His own glory and He cannot lead us if we resist His will. The shepherd cannot lead a stubborn sheep. The evil practice of using God must be abandoned. Instead of trying to employ God to achieve our ends, we much submit ourselves joyously to God and let Him work through us to achieve His own ends.

Now, granted that we are wholly committed to God with every full intent to obey Him, we may expect actually to be led by Him. The scriptures that teach this are so many that one scarcely knows where to begin quoting. It only remains for us to believe they mean what they say.

The many choices that we Christians must make from day to day involve only four kinds of things: Those concerning which God had said an emphatic "no"; those about which He had said an equally emphatic "yes"; those concerning which He wants us to consult our own sanctified preferences, and those few and rare matters about which we cannot acquire enough information to permit us to make intelligent decisions and which for that reason require special guidance from the Lord to prevent us from making serious mistakes.

Regardless of what our "positive thinkers" have said, the Scriptures have much to say about things Christians are not to do. Every call to repentance is a call to negative as well as to positive moral action. "Cease to do evil; learn to do well" is a fair epitome of the moral teaching of the Bible. Put this down as an unfailing rule: Never seek the leading of the Lord concerning an act that is forbidden in the Word of God. To do so is to convict ourselves of insincerity.

Again, prophet, psalmist, apostle, and our blessed Lord Himself join to point out the way of positive obedience. His yoke is easy, His burden is light, so let this be the second rule: Never seek the leading of the Lord concerning an act that has been commanded in the Scriptures.

Now, a happy truth too often overlooked on our anxious search for the will of God is that in the majority of decisions touching our earthly lives God expressed no choice, but leaves everything to our own preference. Some Christians walk under a cloud of uncertainty, worrying about which profession they should enter, which car they should drive, which school they should attend, where they should live and other such matters when their Lord has set them free to follow their own personal bent guided only by their love for Him and for their fellow men.

On the surface it appears more spiritual to seek God's leading than just to go ahead and do the obvious thing. But it is not. If God gave you a watch would you honor Him more by asking Him for the time of day for by consulting the watch? If God gave a sailor a compass would the sailor please God more by kneeling in the frenzy of prayer to persuade God to show him which way to go or by steering according to the compass?

Except for those things that are specifically commanded or forbidden, it is God's will that we be free to exercise our own intelligent choice. The shepherd will lead the sheep, but he does not wish to decide which tuft of grass the sheep shall nibble each moment of the day. In almost everything touching our common life on earth God is pleased when we are pleased. He wills that we be as free as birds to soar and sing our Maker's praise without anxiety. God's choice for us may not be one, but any one of a score of possible choices. The man or woman who is wholly and joyously surrendered to Christ cannot make a wrong choice. Any choice will be the right one.

But what about those rare times when a great deal is at stake, we can discover no clear Scriptural instruction and yet are forced to choose between two possible courses? In such a situation we have God's faithful promise to guide us aright. Here, for instance, are two passages from the Word of the Lord: "if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." (James 1:5,6). "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." (Isaiah 48:17).

Take your problem to the Lord. Remind Him of these promises. Then get up and do what looks best to you. Either choice will be right. God will not permit you to make a mistake.

# DISCERNING GOD'S WILL

