

How can I know (and be *in*) The Will of God for My Life?



One of the most excruciatingly practical questions a Christian can ask is, “How do I KNOW the will of God for my life, and how can I be sure I am living IN God’s will?” It’s practical because being in the will of God is most certainly where you want to be (or better be!); but it’s excruciating because we tend to wonder and fret about if we are there or not – especially when it comes to life choices we make. So in a sense, there’s few questions more important and practical than this one is! Let’s look at God’s will and how we can know and do it.

1st, the will of God is **ONE WILL** with **TWO PARTS**.

This crucial distinction comes from *Deuteronomy 29:29* (a good verse to memorize, by the way). Think of 1 coin with two sides. Think of one dollar bill with two sides.

➤ There’s the **SECRET** or **DECREED** / **DECRETIVE** will of God.

Consider this from our own *Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 3, Section 1*:

“God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: yet so, as thereby neither is God the Author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.”

** In other words, God is 100% **SOVEREIGN** over **EVERYTHING**. ** Not even one maverick molecule anywhere in the universe. Either that, or God’s not sovereign @ all. There’s a lot of things you can’t be, partially = winner / loser of an athletic contest; either pregnant or not, not a little bit pregnant...

Genesis 50:19-21 – *Even the evil actions and intentions of people cannot stop God’s will from being accomplished.*

Psalms 139:16 – *Our life is “scripted,” the novel, the book, the script is written before we even take the stage.*

Proverbs 16:33 – *No such thing as “luck”. Or “chance”. [Lot is how Judas’ replacement chosen]. We throw, God decides.*

Isaiah 46:9-10 – *God speaks and it is so. The playwright knows the story arc of all the players in the drama.*

Acts 2:23; 17:26 – *Sovereignty / responsibility back to back. We are “boundaried” by God’s sovereignty.*

Ephesians 1:11-14 – *It is all in conformity to HIS good will and for HIS glory and praise.*

What can we say about this part of God’s will?

- It is **COMPREHENSIVE**, NOTHING is outside it’s jurisdiction! Enter another county (Rankin, Hinds, Madison), and come under the jurisdiction of another God. ALWAYS on God’s playing field! As w/Jonah, God can deputize the winds & waves as a posse to hunt down and bring back His servants.
- It is **known** to God **ALONE**. We have no access. Paul Simon, “God only knows, God makes His plan; the information’s unavailable to the mortal man...”
- It includes **2ndary CAUSES**. I Throw paper b/c I am able b/c God makes me able. I am a 2ndary cause.
- It includes all the **CONTINGENCIES** of our lives. God ordains the MEANS as well as the ENDS. Eg prayer as God USING the PRAYERS of His people to bring about the RESULTS God has ordained.
- **God’s will ultimately OVERRULES our sin!** Best eg = the crucifixion of Christ = the most evil, unjust acts ever devised or done by one person to another, but apart from that crucifixion, we have no forgiveness of sin, no hope, no future! [God and God alone / reveals the truth of all we call unknown. And the best and worst of man, won't change the Master's plan, it's God's and God's alone.]

- It has a purpose, ultimately, to bring us to **PRAISE** and **GLORIFY** God! Not “Que Sera, Sera” Xny, but whatever GOD wills, will be. It’s ALWAYS good to know that a personal, holy, just, good, gracious, and merciful GOD is the ONE Who’s will is what will be! Our lives are not for 1 split second left in the fickle hands of FATE, but the mighty and wise hands of GOD! We are not balls of twine being tossed to and from between the paws of a cat named “Chance”. And we are not puppets on a string.

➤ There’s the **REVEALED** or **PRECEPTIVE** will of God.

What is the purpose of this part of God’s will? To give us direction and standards for living.

Who is it for? It’s for US *and* the generations that follow us! It is meant to be passed on. We WILL pass SOMETHING on!

Why is it given? That we may DO what God has revealed. Schaeffer quote. Knowledge w/o application = abortion. Abort = terminate something before completion.

2nd, the will of God can be **KNOWN** and **FOLLOWED**.

A Key Scripture here is *Romans 12:1-2*.

How important is it to know and follow the will of God? It is an URGENT matter of CRITICAL IMPORTANCE.

- **God’s will for your life involves a certain POSTURE.** We are offering OURSELVES (“bodies”) to God. That is what a sacrifice is: Something offered to GOD, to please HIM. So pay careful attention to WHO is telling you to sacrifice . . . whatever! That someone is the “god” making the demand of sacrifice.
- **God’s will for your life involves RESISITING something.** We are to NOT conform to something, that is not be in agreement or in accord with something. And we are NOT to let that something pressure us into it’s mold. What? The PATTERN of this Fallen WORLD! How do you recognize this pattern? It is MAN-centered, and not oriented to GOD. It opposes God’s clear revelation of the imperatives of Scripture. And It begins with US; it appeals ultimately to US. In 3 ways.

1 John 2:15-17 reveals the 3 appeals of a fallen world system.

The Lust of the FLESH = exalting feeling good over being good. Sexualization (even of heroes and heroines in shows & stories), drugs, just being led to do whatever simply because that’s what you FEEL LIKE doing. “I FEEL this is the right thing to do . . . “

The Lust of the EYES = that which is MATERIALISTIC where your life is defined primarily by what you HAVE, or your POSSESSIONS. [Lewis, “Two kinds of materialists: Those who say that MATTER is all there IS; and those who say MATTER is all that MATTERS.”] You are NOT what you OWN; your identity is bound up in Who OWNS you!

The PRIDE of LIFE = Making yourself the center of your personal universe. It can involve self-promotion, seeking prestige, making everything about ME. It involves ONE-UPMANSHIP based on human achievement. [Sister “Birtha Better-Than-You” from Ray Stevens “Mississippi Squirrel Revival” where the squirrel went bezerk in the 1st self-righteous church . . . “] It involves always wanting to be in CONTROL.

Worldliness does NOT come from God. And it is passing away. It never delivers on its promises, but produces ADDICTION. You can never FEEL good enough, never HAVE enough, or be in CONTROL enough to satisfy yourself. In fact, it takes more and more of whatever to bring you to that state of TEMPORARY satisfaction. Thus, addiction. [*Addictions: A Banquet At The Grave*, by Ed Welch]

➤ **God's will for your life involves **INSIDE-OUT TRANSFORMATION**.**

What is it? It's a METAMORPHOSIS! NOT from outward pressure, but from the inside-out!

How does it happen? By the RENEWING of your MIND. Until your mind, your THINKING is changed, you will NEVER change!

And how does that happen? Through the constant study and application of SCRIPTURE. Then and only then will you be able to TEST and APPROVE what God's good and pleasing and perfect will is. God's will is what GOD SAYS His will is. What does God PRESCRIBE in any situation? THAT'S God's good and perfect and pleasing will for your life! Always!

Here are some BIBLICAL PRESCRIPTIONS God's redeemed people should be taking, in the power the Holy Spirit provides, in dependence upon Christ, apart from whom we can do NOTHING.

Here are just a few TRANSFORMATIONAL passages of Scripture to meditate on and apply until they become FORMATIVE in your life.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:3-12; 5:16-22**
- **Proverbs 3:5-6**
- **Psalm 1**

Nothing magical or mystical about this. No snap, crackle, or pop. No secret code. No inside scoop. Just being humble and open to the Lord, resisting the pressure the world puts on you, and transformative reading of God's Word, in dependence upon the Lord Who you acknowledge as the Controller, Authority, and Presence in your life.