

Session 6: Knowing God's Will in Life

WCR Summer Elective: God's Will & Making Decisions

Growing in Christlikeness¹

We tend to focus on God's will of direction, his plan for our lives, often wanting some assurance that things are going to work out well in the future. But Jesus offered a different way of thinking about God's will.

Read Matthew 6:25-34. When it comes to God's plan for our lives, what does Jesus command us to do?

Worry and anxiety are not merely bad habits or idiosyncrasies. They are sinful fruits that blossom from the root of unbelief. Jesus doesn't treat obsession with the future as a personal quirk, but as evidence of little faith (v. 30)

Note also v. 33. Jesus doesn't call on us to seek a divine work before we make a choice; He calls us to run hard after Him, His commands, and His glory. The decision to be in God's will is not the choice between A or B, but rather a daily decision to seek God's kingdom or ours, submit to his lordship or not, live according to His rules or our own.

The apostle Paul thought in a similar manner. For each text below, what do we learn about God's will for our lives?

1. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-22 – . . . to be grateful, submissive and holy.
2. Colossians 1:9-12 - . . . to walk worthy, bear fruit and know Him better.

To summarize: God's will is that we grow in Christlikeness.

But how does this help us make choices (i.e., find God's will of direction)? If you are seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, you will be in God's will, so just go out and do something (sound familiar?).

¹ Kevin DeYoung, *Just Do Something*, chapter 5.

6 Principles for Knowing God's Will²

Assumption: Since God has a will for us, He must want us to know it. If so, then we could expect him to communicate it to us in the most obvious way. How would that be? Through the Bible. What one needs to know about the will of God is clearly revealed in the pages of the Word of God.

Six principles for knowing God's will for your life:

1. To know God's will, you must be **SAVED** (1 Timothy 2:3-4; John 10:4; Mark 3:35).
2. To know God's will, you must be **SPIRIT-FILLED** (Ephesians 5:15-21; Colossians 3:16-17). Hint: note the parallels.
3. To know God's will, you must be **SANCTIFIED** (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; 1 Pt 1:15-16).
4. To know God's will, you must be **SUBMISSIVE** (1 Peter 2:13-18).
5. To know God's will, you must be **SUFFERING** (1 Peter 3:17; 4:19).

If you are doing all five of these things, do you know what the sixth principle of God's will is? **Do whatever you want!** If those five elements of God's will are operating in your life, who is running your wants? God is.

Example:

1. Abraham's servant (Gen. 24:27)
2. Paul's missionary journey with Silas and Timothy.

Finishing in Galatia he went west towards Asia Minor.

Acts 16:6 they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit.

God never told them to go to Macedonia until they had proven their faith and persistence and couldn't take another step.

3. **The principle: Keep Moving!**
4. Corollary: God likes to use people who are already moving. So once you get moving (e.g., made a decision to do something), understand that God might redirect you; that's ok.
5. God's will is not primarily a place. It concerns you as a person. If you are the right you, you can follow your desires and you will fulfill his will.

² John MacArthur, *Found: God's Will*.