

What Is His Will?

Going God's Way, Part 2

☑ **Target:** *Find what God's will is for you*

Key Verses

Matthew 6:10—Your kingdom come. Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.

Psalms 143:10—Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.

John 13:17—If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Suggested Bible Reading

☐ Finish reading any previous suggestions that you have not yet completed.

Other Recommended Reading

☐ Finish reading *Making Great Decisions* [available soon.]

Prayer and Praise: "Teach Me to Do Thy Will"

Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name. Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; make Your way straight before my face. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day. For You are my rock and my fortress; therefore, for Your name's sake, lead me and guide me.

O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it altogether.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.

(Psalms 86:11; 5:8; 25:5; 31:3; 139:1–4, 23–24; 143:10)

Meditation: Are You Letting God Use You?

A water bearer in India had two large pots, hung on each end of a pole, which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, and while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the master's house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots of water to his master's house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect to the end for which it was made.

But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you."

"Why?" asked the bearer. "What are you ashamed of?"

"I have been able, for these past two years, to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your master's house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The water bearer felt sorry for the old cracked pot, and in his compassion he said, "As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path."

Indeed, as they went up the hill, the old cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful wild flowers on the side of the path, and this cheered it some. But at the end of the trail, it still felt bad because it had leaked out half its load, and so again it apologized to the bearer for its failure.

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of your path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back from the stream, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my master's table. Without you being just the way you are, he would not have this beauty to grace his house."

Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots. But if we will allow it, the Lord will use our flaws to grace His table. In God's great economy, nothing goes to waste.

God's Will for You

Look up the Scriptures in your Bible to get the most benefit from this article!

We should desire to please the Lord

□ 1 Thessalonians 4:1; John 14:15, 23a.

Making the right decisions

□ 1 Corinthians 3:14; Matthew 6:33; 2 Corinthians 4:18.

A sense of priorities is essential for making the right decisions.

Only one life, it will soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last.

Busy on the way

There was an older woman who arranged to travel by train through the mountains in the south of Austria. She had always wanted to take that trip, knowing the grandeur of the Alpine scenery she would pass as the train made its way. She boarded the train and decided to make sure she was comfortable. For the next few hours the woman fussed with her handbag and her little bag, trying to arrange things—adjusting a little pillow she had brought along for her back, and fussing about, never looking out at the scenery. Ordering tea, opening her sandwiches, checking the timetable, and the time went by. She had always talked about wanting to see what it looked like, but she didn't deal with the main purpose of her trip at all! She forgot what it was all about and just fooled around with those little, inconsequential things. It was a misplaced attention, a false priority. The emphasis was in the wrong place. The mountains passed her by...

What's important?

It was reported that eleven millionaires went down on the *Titanic*. Major A. H. Peuchen left \$300,000 in money, jewelry, and securities in a box in his cabin. "The money seemed a mockery at that time," he later said. "I picked up three oranges instead."

Keep the lights burning!—He knows his priorities!

The keeper of a lighthouse at Calais was boasting of the brightness of his lantern, which could be seen ten leagues out to sea. A visitor said to him, "What if one of the lights should chance to go out?"

"Never! Impossible!" he cried, horrified at the thought. "Sir," said he, pointing to the ocean, "yonder, where nothing can be seen, there are ships going out to all parts of the world. If tonight one of my burners went out, within six months would come a letter, perhaps from India, perhaps from America, perhaps from some place I never heard of, saying, on such a night, at such an hour, the light of Calais burned dim, the watchman neglected his post and vessels were in danger! Ah, sir, sometimes in the dark nights, in stormy weather, I look out to sea and feel as if the eyes of the whole world were looking at my light. Go out? Burn dim? Never!"

God has plans for you!

□ 1 Peter 4:10; Romans 12:6–8.

No matter how weak you feel, God can use you!

It was advertised long ago in a large city that a great violinist would play on a violin worth a thousand dollars.—At that time, a considerable amount of money. The theatre was packed. Many came as much to see the fine violin as to hear the music. The violinist came out and played, and the people were enraptured. But suddenly he threw the violin down and stamped on it, crushed it into matchwood and walked off the stage. The people were shocked, and thought the man must have lost his mind to destroy such a lovely and costly instrument. Then the manager came on and addressed the audience, saying, "Friends, the violinist has not been playing on the thousand-dollar violin yet. The instrument you have heard he bought at a second-hand store for 65 cents. He will play on the thousand-dollar violin now."

And so he did, and there were few people in the audience who could tell any difference. He simply wanted to show them that it is the violinist rather than the violin that makes the music. You may be a 65-cent fiddle, but the Master will make music upon you if you are yielded to Him (Acts 4:13–14; Romans 12:1–2).

The first step in finding His will: Yield to Him!

☐ 2 Corinthians 9:7; 1 Chronicles 28:9a; Proverbs 3:7; Matthew 6:10

In His care

A young lady stood talking to an evangelist on the subject of consecration. "I dare not give myself wholly to the Lord," she said, "for fear He will send me out to China." The man of God said: "If some cold, snowy morning a little bird should come, half frozen, pecking at your window, and should let you take it in and feed it, thereby putting itself entirely in your power, what would you do? Would you grip it in your hand and crush it? Or would you give it shelter, warmth, food, and care?" A new light came into the girl's eyes. "Ah, I see, I see!" And her face shone as she went away. Two years later she again met the clergyman and recalled to him the incident. With a countenance all aglow with joy, she said, "And, do you know, I am going to China!"

Follow the Guide

☐ Psalm 143:10, 100:3.

Finding God's will for us and for our possessions

☐ James 1:17; Psalm 136:25; Ecclesiastes 5:19

The believers' duty to give

☐ Galatians 6:10; Romans 15:27; 1 Corinthians 9:6–11; Mark 12:41–44; 2 Corinthians 8:1–4; 1 Kings 17:9–16; Romans 15:26

Choosing God's will is not necessarily easy

☐ John 15:18–20; Galatians 1:10b

Rewards for doing God's will

☐ John 15:14; Hebrews 10:36; 1 John 2:17; Ruth 2:12; 2 Chronicles 15:7; Daniel 12:3; Matthew 5:12; 16:27; 25:21; 1 Corinthians 3:8b; Galatians 6:7b; Ephesians 6:8; 2 Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 6:10; Revelation 2:10b; 2:23b; 3:11–12

Seven Ways to Know the Will of God

1. The Word

☐ 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16

2. The voice of the Word

☐ Psalm 119:130; 103:20

3. Revelations (Prophecies, dreams, visions)

☐ Ezekiel 3:10; 1 Corinthians 14:31; Job 33:15,26; Acts 2:17; Ecclesiastes 5:3; Numbers 12:6; Hosea 12:10

4. Advisors and counselors

☐ Proverbs 11:14; 15:22; Matthew 7:15–20

5. Circumstances and conditions

☐ 2 Corinthians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 16:9; Revelation 3:7–8; Matthew 7:7

6. Personal desires

☐ Psalm 37:4; Proverbs 16:1

7. “Fleeces” (Specific signs)

☐ Judges 6:36–40

God’s will may be conditional: Matthew 10:13

☐ Alternative choices: 1 Kings 3:5

See also:

☐ *Discovering Truth—Bible Basics*: “How to Find the Will of God” (pages 85–95) and “Giving” (pages 80–84).

Let’s do God’s will!

John 13:17—If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Meditation Moments: Finding Life’s Priorities

Excerpts from the writings of Virginia Brandt Berg

Just skimming

Some time ago, I was sitting in a little coffee shop overlooking the ocean, and I was watching the boats far out to sea.

Suddenly I became conscious of the conversation at the next table. The two men were discussing business. One asked the question, “Why did you dismiss Henry from your office force?” The man replied, “Well, he had no sense of priorities! He didn’t value life, health or money! This began to affect my business: Whenever I wanted him, he was taking a coffee break. It seemed to me he valued a cup of coffee more than his job! And I warned him a number of times.”

I thought about that a good deal as I was meditating on it: “a cup of coffee rather than a good position.”

The little sail boats kept skimming over the water just as a light wind had risen. And I thought how many people just go skimming over the surface things of life and never have any sense of priorities, like the man that he was speaking of.—Just living off the non-essentials, and the inconsequential things of life crowding out the things that are worthwhile, and robbing them of the things that are in the long run really worthwhile.

I wonder sometimes if that’s what’s the matter with our confused old world. On a stupendous scale, we have put the emphasis on material things instead of spiritual things! Too many wrong choices have been made. Trivial temporal things so often are put first and God and His Word crowded into a secondary place. And if that’s the case, all of life is just thrown out of balance and the result is only disharmony and disruption and confusion.

What’s the outstanding purpose of life? What are we here for? We’ve been entrusted with some responsibilities from God Himself. Are we choosing to follow His ways?

The value of divine guidance

I was reading this week the autobiography of Jerome Hind, the great opera singer, and he was telling of how he learned about divine guidance, and he made these statements:

“The experience of obedience to God revolutionized not only my career, but my entire life, and yet spiritual growth was so often blocked by my own interference, my ego. Time after time I would

charge ahead on my own steam, only to fall on my face. On each occasion I would tell myself, once and for all, to get out of God's way and let God run my life.

"Now I realize after all these years in my career, that guidance comes to different people in different ways! Some people obtain it just through quiet meditation and Bible reading; to others divine guidance arrives at odd moments in the form of quiet mental nudgings from God and His Spirit.

"There are times, to be sure, when I've badly wanted direction, but all I could hear were my own thoughts clamoring for control. Yet I know that real guidance doesn't always come when I just keep asking over and over, 'Now God, is this what I'm supposed to do?'

"No. Divine guidance comes through obedience and trust: Believing that God is hearing and believing that God cares, and knowing that if I trust Him and obey, that step by step He will guide me, and then there must be no doubt."

And so he goes on and tells of the timing of some of his remarkable experiences and how it strengthened his conviction that God wants to give us divine guidance in our lives.

You know it's so foolish that one who values his life at all should ever forget that he cannot ever succeed or really be what God meant him to be unless he constantly seeks God's guidance. How foolish is the one who values this life so little that he has never sought God's plan for his life, but just wanders aimlessly through the years, never knowing what God meant him to be or wanted him to do.

A lesson from billy

The story is told of a billy goat being shipped from one point to another and arriving at last to the baggage station. The station man, just seeing the goat there, asked the baggage man what his destination was, and the man replied, "He don't know where he's going. He's chewed his tag!"

Worse than that goat, some people don't even know that they've ever *had* a tag.—But God has tagged every life! He has planned a destination and a purpose for every single life. Among the mighty works of God, His creation, His greatest masterpiece is the immortal soul of man and his body that's made to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. You know it would be amazing if God did not have a program or plan for that life. This means then that Divine Guidance is vitally important in your life.

God has a definite plan for your life, for my life. It's such a tragedy to miss God's plan for your life, to miss the special program He has especially for you.

The Guide for our life's walk

We're speaking especially to those who have been born again, who have become new creatures in Jesus. In Ephesians 2:10 we read this:

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

According to this verse, we are to know God's will for us and live it out in our daily walk, making sure that we find that will in every decision we make, in every crisis of life whether great or small. You'll go stumbling through life, coming to dead-end streets, frustrating detours, stone walls that block your way, unless you determine the will of God in every avenue of your life.

Now when you hear the still small voice pleading from within or when you feel the "nudge of the Holy Spirit," as Jerome Hind calls it, the feeling to do this or that, this is, as the Scripture says, "God working in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." That's a precious promise. In Proverbs 20:24 it says this: "A man's steps are of the Lord; how then can a man understand his own way?"

It's a blow to human pride to say that man is not capable of choosing his own way, that he needs Divine Guidance, but it's so true. An experienced guide of many years in the jungles of Africa once said, "It's hard to lead one who is willful. It's very difficult to guide them. They don't trust their guide, they're always wanting to have their own way, and I've seen many such people in my

days of guiding that ran into dangerous situations and serious accidents because they wouldn't follow the guide."

Is it strange then that God's people, the sheep of His pasture, need a Shepherd to guide them? You know we shouldn't face a single day without the presence and guidance of the Lord!

Putting yourself in the Lord's loving hands

The first step in Divine Guidance is to yield your life to God. Remember that verse: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).

You want to know how to know God's will? There it is! You can know what is that good and acceptable and perfect will: Presenting yourself to Him brings about a divine harmony with God's will.

If you do not believe God has a plan for your life, you'll lay out your own plans, and then you'll miss God's way. So many believers that are not fully surrendered and who choose their own path come back to God's way later, but only after years of frustration and suffering.

Do you believe that God has a plan for your life? Are you going to determine to take that plan? Then pray for it and seek it!

Note in James 1:5 and 6 that we have to "ask with faith" to know God's will, and then have an expectant attitude that He's going to guide.

Remember that God's Word says, "If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know" (John 7:17). Now that is, if he wants to do the will of God, then he shall know!

Every life is a fresh thought from God to the world

In all the ages there never has been and never will be a man or woman just like you. You are unique and have no double. No two leaves, no two jewels, no two stars, no two lives are alike. Every life is a fresh thought from God to the world. There's no one in the entire world who can do your work as well as you. There is a need for you. God has a plan for you, and if you don't find and enter into God's purpose for your life, there will be something missing from the glory that would otherwise have been there.

Every jewel gleams with its own radiance, every flower distills its own fragrance, every believer has his own particular bit of Jesus' radiance. Has God given you a different personality? He has also created a particular circle of individuals who can be reached and touched by that personality only, and you can do it as no other one in all the world.

Seek His guidance, find His plan for your life. Turn to Him, and ask Him to lead you and guide you all the way.