

## Doing the will of God

**1 John 5:14-15** "...This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of Him."

Being in the will of God guarantees that we have His attention. Today we will be examining the importance of "doing" the will of God. But first let us address three key issues regarding the **will of God**.

(a) What is the most important prerequisite to knowing God's will? The most important prerequisite to knowing God's will is to decide in advance to do it – once we know it. This is necessary in order that we do not confuse our will with God's will. Proverbs 14: 12 says, "**There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to destruction.**"

In order to know God's will we must also learn to think His thoughts (after Him) through the memorisation and meditation of Scripture. God says in Isaiah 55:8-9, "**For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways... As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.**" We get a glimpse of God's thoughts in His word.

(b) What are the most common mental obstacles we must overcome when seeking to discern God's will? You may have one or more of the following questions in mind:

- What if God's will is too difficult for me to do?
- What if God's will is something that I'm afraid to do?
- What if God's will is something that I don't want to do?
- Does surrendering to God's will mean I can no longer decide for myself?
- Is God's will so detailed that it applies to every decision I will ever make?
- Is God's will going to conflict with what I want most in life?
- How can I know God's will and how will I know when I've found it?

(c) How can we prepare for doing God's will? Consider the following three personal characteristics:

- **Be ready to stretch** – God's plan for us is bigger than our plan. Someone once said, "*God doesn't give us challenges to match our strength; He gives us strength to match our challenges.*" God wants the best for us and He is willing to help us achieve it.
- **Be ready to dream** – When God reveals His will for us, He doesn't just give us a blueprint, He gives us a sketch and we fill in many of the details. Our dream or vision needs to be consistent with God's plan and purpose for our lives. We need to learn to visualise ourselves doing God's will. Most significant actions are 'conceived' before they are achieved.
- **Be ready to roll with the punches** – We need to be flexible. Many rigid people frequently miss God's will because they miss valuable opportunities.

The way in which we react to success and failure will have a significant impact in the kind of people we become. We react to failure by not letting it get us down and we react to success by not letting it go to our head. Regardless of our situation, we should react in a manner that would please God.

I have found **Ten Steps** to doing the will of God:

1. **Stay in harmony with God's Word.** Psalms 40:81, "*I delight to do your will, your law is within my heart.*" Would God lead you into breaking His law? No – Never! Psalm 119:105, "*His Word is to be a Lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path.*" When you are in harmony with God's word you will see clearly where God wants you to go, and know definitely what God wants you to do.

2. **Always be willing to do the will of God.** If you are not willing to do God's will, His will can never be revealed to you. Jesus is your example. He came to do His Father's will. If you are "willing" God will show you clearly His will for your life. You shouldn't be planning your own life. You should be trying to do God's will, and consequently, surrender your will to His will. God's will is much more beneficial than your own. We are told in Proverbs 16:25 that our ways lead to sorrow, death and destruction, so why would you insist on having it your way?

3. **Be fervent and faithful in prayer.** Praying for guidance from above. James 1:5-6 tells us to ask in faith, not wavering. James 5:16 says, "*The effectual and fervent prayer of the righteous avails much.*" 1 John 5:14, "*You can have confidence that if you ask according to God's will, He hears you.*"

4. **Do what lies nearest to you first.** God has many things to tell you, but you can't handle many of them now. So do what you can do, and what you know to be correct – right now! Then He will show you what to do next. Proverbs 3:6, *"In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path."* Luke 16:10 tells us to be faithful in the small things first and then God will give you much more. If you don't obey God in the small things, how will you obey Him during the bigger test?

5. **Pick the option that will bring the most glory to God.** In everything you choose to do you should give ALL the glory to Him. I Peter 4:11 says, *"That God, in ALL things might be glorified!"* Revelation 14:7 – Part of the last warning messages to the world contains these instructions, *"give glory to Him"*. This indicates that most of the world will not be giving glory to God at the end of time. The decisions you make in your daily life indicate whose side you are on.

6. **Seek people of like mind and like heart.** Be careful who you hang around with. Paul wrote that there would be many who had a *"form of Godliness"* (2Timothy 3:5,7,8), and many false teachers. A good Christian colleague should point you to a *"Thus says the Lord"*. And don't have just one person speaking into your life. Proverbs 11:14 tells us that there is safety in a multitude of counsellors. Psalms 1:1-2 says, *"Don't follow the counsel of the ungodly."*

7. **Listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.** Isaiah 30:20-21 – Though you go through adversity and affliction, God will talk to you. You will hear His voice whether you turn to the right or the left. Yes, God may whisper, *"This is the way – walk in it."* Often that still small voice that's making you feel uncomfortable is the Holy Spirit speaking to you. So don't ever neglect the promptings of the Holy Spirit. His is always leading you into the perfect will of God! And remember, God doesn't speak to you in a earthquake or fire, but in a still small voice (I Kings 19: 11-12).

8. **Humbly wait on the Lord.** Humility attracts God to you more than any other human characteristic. Psalms 25:9 says, *"He guides the meek."* Along with humility comes patience. Revelation 14:12 tells us that those who overcome the beast and his mark have an identifying characteristic – "patience". They keep God's commandments (and not man's) and they humbly wait for Jesus. Psalms 37:4-7 says, *"Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him."* And remember, God can never forget you, your problems, or your struggles! So put your trust in Him. He thinks about you constantly!

9. **Be decisive** - Make and implement every decision. In Joshua 1:5-6 we see the reward of decisiveness. But in order to do this you must have courage. Have courage the Lord is with you! When you have wholeheartedly followed the Lord, He will keep you in complete safety – to do His will. Now go after it! Be like Joshua and say, *"Give me this mountain!"*

10. **Follow God's providence** – follow His predestined plans and purposes for your life. Watch out for the opened or closed doors, and don't worry about what is on the other side of the door. Move forward boldly with your eyes on Jesus. Watching and listening for His leading. Always making sure that you are not violating His Word as you progress. Isaiah 45:1-3 tells us that God will open doors and break in pieces the gates in order to accomplish His will for your life. You can count on it! Even the mighty city and nation of Babylon was no match for our Lord. Throughout the Bible you can see incident after incident of God's will being fully accomplished. So as you move forward, watch Him remove the obstacles, and remember that He often requires you to move first. Why? This tests and shows you the state of your Faith. It causes you to exercise your faith. And this is very important. It's better to have little tests now prior to the big crisis - isn't it?

Revelation 3:8, ***"I know your works: behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it: for you have a little strength, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name."***

Remember this – God guides you in the doing of His will. Has God not said He would give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? And isn't the Holy Spirit a real, true and actual guide? Some people seem afraid to take God at His word (as though it would be presumptuous of them). They pray for the Lord to teach them and yet they are afraid to give credit to the word of God by believing that He teaches us all things.

As long as we come to our heavenly Father humbly, and with a teachable spirit, why should we ever doubt God's fulfilment of His own promise? Therefore, when you have sought to **know** His will, your part is to believe that you will be 'led' and 'guided' – and then blessed in the doing of His will. Amen!