

Finding God's Will (Part 2)

Last month we explored the will of God and stated that His will is not primarily a map to guide us (although that is a minor part of it), but it has to do with our relationship with Him. It's not primarily what we do, but who we are and whose we are. We touched on the broader aspect of **His sovereign will** where He ordains and is in control of everything that happens. He has the power to permit, postpone, or prevent the actions and events of our world. Then we spent some time looking at another aspect of God's will, **His revealed or declared will**. He reveals this aspect of His will in His Word and commands us to do or not do certain things.

There are only two places in the New Testament where the words **"this is the will of God for you"** are found. In Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians the phrase mentioned in *1 Thessalonians 4:3-5* where Paul states:

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God;

In this passage, it is God's will that we be morally pure in reference to our bodies. This aspect regarding our bodies is referred to again in *1st Peter 4:2* where we read, ***"do not live the rest of this earthly life for gratifying your sensual passions, but for the will of God."***

The other reference where we read **"this is the will of God for you"** is found in *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*: ***"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."***

God's will is not only that we keep our bodies morally pure, but also that our soul (mind, will & emotions) and our spirit display purity in all our actions and attitudes and not be swept away by unholy emotions or passions (*1 Peter 4:7*).

:16 Rejoice always: Joy is a gift from God (*Romans 15:13*), a fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:22*), and should be a constant companion in our trials (*James 1:2*).

:17 Pray without ceasing: Praying regularly and persistently will keep us in constant communication with Him. First and foremost, God is the One we need. Prayer acknowledges our dependence on Him and who He is. Always being in an attitude of prayer allows us to draw on the inner strength that He provides.

:18 Give thanks in all circumstances: We are to give God thanks **in** every circumstance of life. The word **"in"** means **"in the middle of"** or **"during"**. Why are we to do so? God deserves and desires our thanks. Being thankful brings Him glory (*Psalms 50:23*). In triumphs, it communicates to all that He is our source of victory. In trials, it shows others that we have a reliable source of strength and support that they know nothing about. In addition, ***"we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose"*** (*Romans 8:28*).

Paul was appointed to know God's will (*Acts 22:14*). Jesus said, ***"My food to do the will of Him who sent me..."*** (*John 4:34*) and ***"I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me"*** (*John 6:38*). Knowing God's will revealed in His Word and obeying it completely should be our passion and our number one priority. It demonstrates to the world that we are one with Jesus (*Matthew 12:50*; *Mark 3:35*).

Just as Paul appealed to the believers in his letter to the Romans, it is God's will for us to present our entire person, body, mind, and spirit to God for His exclusive use (*Romans 12:1-2*).

APPLICATION:

Are you completely sold out to the Lord? Have you presented your body, mind and spirit to Him as a living sacrifice? If you know His will, are you allowing Him to accomplish it in and through your life?

If so, I encourage you to either speak the words of this hymn written by Peter Ellis while he was still a teenager, or sing them to the hymn tune HYFRYDOL composed by Rowland Prichard in 1844, to Jehovah M'kaddesh, The Lord Who Sanctifies You:

***I am Yours, Eternal Father, All my body, mind and heart.
Take and use me to Your glory, Form Yourself in every part.
Lord, Your love brings joy and gladness Flowing forth within my soul.
May my very breath and being Rise to You, their source and goal.***

When we are totally submitted to the Lordship of Christ, it is easy for the Holy Spirit to guide us. Next month we will examine the various ways He gives direction to our lives.

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