

God's Will – Clearer

Definition: There are three types of God's will.

- (1) **Decretive** sovereign will, or hidden will, is the will which God brings to pass whatsoever He decrees. This is hidden to us until it happens (see Providence). Because God is sovereign, and His will cannot be frustrated, we can be sure that nothing happens over which He is not in control. He at least "permits" whatever happens to happen. He always has the power and right to intervene and prevent the actions and events of this world.
- (2) **Perspective** will is God's revealed law or commandments, which we have the power but not the right to break.
- (3) **Dispositional** will describes God's attitude or disposition. It reveals what is pleasing to Him. God's sovereign "permission" of human sin is not His moral approval. God takes no delight in the death of the wicked yet he surely wills or decrees the death of the wicked.

Seeking God's will – not even a New Testament concept, much less prescribed

Many Christians become preoccupied or even obsessed with finding the "will" of God for their lives. If the will we are seeking is His secret, hidden, or decretive will, then our quest is a fool's errand. The secret council of God is His secret. He has not pleased to make it known to us. Far from being a mark of spirituality, the quest for God's secret will is an unwarranted invasion of God's privacy. God's secret council is none of our business. This is why the Bible takes such a negative view of fortune-telling, necromancy and other forms of prohibited practices.

According to noted Old Testament scholar Bruce Waltke,

"There are no examples of explicitly seeking or finding God's will after Acts 1:24-26, in which the disciples drew lots to select Matthias as a replacement for Judas. There are dreams, visions, and revelations after this, but never in the context of explicitly seeking God's will. From this point onward it is not divination (seeking to probe the divine mind) but revelation given by God to His people. After Pentecost there is no instance of the church seeking God's will through any of the forms of divination. The problem of using divination today is that the techniques Christians use, like promise boxes and seeking signs are not examples offered to those living under the New Covenant. So when a believer is told to "not take a job until you have God's mind," I think he may be led astray. His faulty logic and faulty exegesis cause him to believe in divination, but there is no such biblical example to follow for Christians." [1]

Nowhere in the New Testament does God tell His followers to "seek his will." Christians are commanded to seek His kingdom and do His will.

We are to live our lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. It is His revealed will that is our business, indeed, the chief business of our lives. It is the Godly person who meditates on God's law day and night. See also: John 19:11 Rom 9:14-28 Eph 1:11 Col 1:9-14 Heb 6:13-18 2 Pet 3:9

What is God's will for us?

What does Scripture tell us about seeking God's will for our lives? According to John MacArthur (Plan of My Life: God's Will), the Bible reveals that it's God's will for all of us to be:

(1) Saved -- 1 Timothy 2:3-4: This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 2 Peter 3:9; The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

(2) Spirit-filled -- Ephesians 5:17-18: Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

(3) Sanctified -- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7: It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

(4) Submissive -- 1 Corinthians 10:31: So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 1 Peter 2:13-15: Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.

(5) Suffering -- 1 Peter 4:15-16: If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. Philippians 1:29; 29: For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him. 2 Timothy 3:12: In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Summary

“The will of God is not meant to be a secret we must uncover,” says John MacArthur, president and featured speaker of Grace to You, “God wants us to understand His will far more than we want to understand it. He always makes His will clear to those who seek it with an obedient heart. Most of the real problem areas in the question of God's will are settled for us in Scripture.[2]”

“If all those things [the five above] are true in your life,” says MacArthur, “**you may do whatever you want.** Psalm 37:4 says, ‘Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart.’ That means that if you are conforming to God's will in all the five ways listed above, He will place in your heart desires that reflect His will. So do what you want to do!”[2]

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (NASB95 Romans 12:1,2)

1. Knowing the Will of God By Bruce Waltke, with Jerry MacGregor Published by Harvest House Publishers, Eugene OR.

2. The Plan of My Life: God's Will By John MacArthur