

Inspirational Nuggets

(Archived posts from www.discipleshipcenter.org)

GOD'S WILL:

Need some helpful pointers for making a decision about GOD'S WILL in a particular situation?

In his book entitled *Discovering God's Will for Your Life*, Lloyd John Ogilvie suggests some very helpful questions to consider for making a maximum decision under the Lord's guidance. You may not use all of these questions for every decision, but all are good questions to use when you can:

1. *Is it consistent with the Ten Commandments?* (It's probably not the Lord's guidance if the decision requires breaking a Commandment.)
2. *Will it deepen my relationship with Christ?*
3. *Is it an extension of Christ's life, message, and kingdom?*
4. *If I do it, will it glorify Him and enable me to grow as His disciple?*
5. *Is there Scriptural basis for it?* (Not every decision will have specific guidance from the Bible, like an answer to the question, "Shall I move to xxxxx?", but many decisions will have Scriptural basis.)
6. *Is it adventuresome enough to need the Lord's presence and power to accomplish it?*
7. *Has prolonged prayer and thought produced an inner feeling of "rightness" about it?*
8. *Is it something for which I can praise Him in advance of doing or receiving it?*
9. *Is it an expression of authentic love, and will it bring ultimate good in the lives of the people involved?*
10. *Will it be consistent with my basic purpose to love the Lord and be a communicator of His love to others?*
11. *Will it enable me to grow in the talents and gifts the Lord has given me?*
12. *Will my expenditures still allow tithing plus generous giving of my money for the Lord's work and the needs of others?*

Have you learned to take time to ask important questions like these when seeking God's guidance?

GOD'S WILL-

When I was growing up, there was little doubt that Mom was in charge of the house while Dad was away. Part of Mom's unquestionable sovereignty came in the form of imposed chores after school before we went out to play. Was it enough just to know what those chores were, that each of us kids had to do? I still tremble a bit, imagining a conversation in which Mom asked: "Did you do your chores today?" I think she would only be half pleased if I said to her, "Mom, I saw that you left a note, telling me to dust the stairway rails and vacuum the upstairs rooms. But I only had an hour or so to go out and play before it got dark, so I went to my friend's house and played football. *I guess I knew what you wanted me to do, but I didn't do it.*" That sort of admission of knowing her wishes, but not doing them would earn me the opportunity to stand and think for a while about my error (since my rear end would suddenly become too sore to sit on - if you know what I mean).

Many of us have heard of God's will - His plans for what He wants to see accomplished in my world. Hopefully, most of us have learned the skill of discovering God's will for the important situations of our lives. But is it enough just to know what He wants me to do? Listen to some wise words from one Son, who knows what His heavenly Parent is looking for:

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who DOES the will of My Father who is in heaven."

- Jesus, in Matthew 7:21

"Whoever DOES the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

- Jesus, in Matthew 12:50

Jesus makes it very clear that we need to know AND DO the will of God. That's where the blessings are (and a great way to avoid His disciplinary measures, too!).

Once I discover God's will for a particular situation, am I moving in the direction of DOING His will?

GOD'S WILL:

"What is God's will for my life?" This is one of the biggest questions that I wrestled with in my teen years. Back then, the focus was on what God wanted me to do in terms of a lifetime career. In my mid-teens, I had settled on becoming a junior high history teacher, but when I heard that God had a will for everyone's life, I eagerly searched for what He wanted me to do with my life. That search led me to discover that God's will for me was (and still is) to serve Him as a minister.

When it comes to determining God's will for a particular situation, there are five keys that I rely on as avenues by which He can reveal His will to me:

1. **Prayer** - I invite God to show me His will, and I listen for the inner voice of the Holy Spirit to bring direction.
2. **The Bible** - often He has used some verse as a platform for revealing a portion of His will.
3. **Positive or Negative Circumstances** - many in the Christian world refer to these as "open" or "closed" doors.
4. **Mature Christians** - their wisdom can really be helpful in your search for the will of God.
5. **Reason** - using the mind God has given you to think through situations.

Am I using the five keys, listed above, to help me discover the will of God?

GOD'S WILL:

Here is some helpful advice as we focus on doing God's Will in your life:

I like to absorb the wisdom that other people possess. As a young minister, I used to contact experienced ministers and say: "Could I get together with you sometime, and pick your brain about being a minister?" (I can't recall a time when they said "No.") And then, as we got together, I would benefit in two ways. First, I would usually get a free meal, because ministers like to talk over food, and seasoned ministers are so thrilled that someone wants to learn from them that they gladly choose to pay for lunch! Second, I could pick up on bits of wisdom that could not only help me serve as a more effective minister, but keep me from making painful mistakes as well.

I can imagine you and me standing together in a room with a wise senior author named Henry Blackaby. Because he has devoted so much of his life to the topic of knowing and doing God's will, he has lots of wisdom that we could tap into. You are first to ask him for some advice about God's part in helping us to know and do His will. And Henry Blackaby might respond with this:

Right now, God is working all around you, as well as in your life. One of the greatest tragedies among God's people is that, although they deeply long to experience God, they are encountering Him day after day but do not recognize Him. Learn to clearly identify God's activity in and around your life. The Holy Spirit and God's Word (the Bible) will instruct you and will help you know when and where God is working. Once you know where God is working, adjust your life to join Him in His activity. (Experiencing God workbook, p. 16)

Find out where God is working, and join Him there. What a simple definition for knowing and doing God's will! The Holy Spirit and the words of the Bible will help you.

Where is God at work in your world? Have you joined Him there?

(P.S. You can pick up a copy of *Experiencing God-Knowing and Doing the Will of God* at www.christianbook.com for about \$10, or see if the local Christian bookstore has a copy.)

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GOD'S WILL:

What do I do while I wait for GOD'S WILL to be revealed in my life?

Randy Southern, author of *The World's Easiest Guide for New Believers*, has a good answer:

One of the great myths associated with God's will is that your life is supposed to be in some kind of "holding pattern" until you figure out what it is that God wants you to do. Some people point to passages such as Psalm 27:14 - "Wait for the Lord" - to defend their minimal efforts.

The fact is, regardless of how little you know about God's individual will for your life, you still have your plate full with His revealed Word (and what His will is for every Christian, such as "Love one another" and "Serve one another" and "Let us not give up meeting together"). The Bible has something new to teach you every day. Why not focus your time and energy on discovering its truths? Why not make your waiting as productive as possible?

Prayer: "Heavenly Father, while I am waiting for specific guidance from You for one area of my life, help me to stay occupied by working with You in other areas that You have already revealed to me."

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