

# HOW DO YOU FIND GOD'S WILL FOR YOUR LIFE?

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I think if you asked most Christians if they want to follow God's will for their lives they would say yes unhesitatingly. Yet are they actually doing it? How would they know if they were? How do you hear from God about specific direction for your life? Why should you care?

God has a plan for your life. "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11. He wants good things for us, He has gifts he wants to give you, both spiritual and material, but you must want them and accept them when offered-He isn't going to force them on you!

"So, letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace." Romans 8:6. How do we do this-letting the Spirit control our minds so we can get life and peace?

## FINDING GOD'S WILL FOR YOU

The first step in finding God's will for your life is **you have to want it**. You must believe God's plan for your life is better than yours. God's universal will for all mankind is salvation. His Word also contains His will for all mankind on a variety of topics. His specific will for your life is found through intimate relationship with Him. The good news is that God isn't hiding His will for your life. He wants you to know & live out His will for your life. You must be committed to finding His will for you. The good news is He has put his Holy Spirit in us at salvation to teach us what His will for us is.

1 Corinthians 2:10-13 says: "but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us in human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words."

Step two is to commit to becoming a **living sacrifice** (Romans 12:1). God doesn't want our service as much as he wants US, our hearts. He loves and cares for us more than He loves what we can do for Him. If you make yourself a living sacrifice and commit your life to Him, He will start developing your talents and directing you. Philippians 1:6, 2Cor 3: 5-6.

Part of being a living sacrifice is to **delight yourself in the Lord**. Psalm 37:4 says: "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart."

The Hebrew word for delight in this verse carries the idea 'to be soft or pliable.' It's speaking about having a sensitive heart towards the Lord. It doesn't mean He'll give you whatever you want, it means He'll put his desires for you into your heart-His desires will become your desires.

I believe God will always call you to do something that is beyond your natural ability, forcing you to rely on Him. If you only do what you know you can do in your own strength, you may be tempted to give yourself the credit for it instead of God. I would go as far as to say that if all you're doing in your life is what comes naturally to you and you don't have to stretch for it then you probably haven't found God's will for your life yet.

So, finding God's will for your life is about discerning whether our feelings and inclinations are coming from God or from our flesh. To do that we need to spend time in God's word to know what is true about ourselves. If we allow ourselves to be dominated by our five senses, what we can see, hear, feel, smell and touch, we will never be able to discern the

things of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says “When we tell you these things, we do not use words that come from human wisdom. Instead, we speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit’s words to explain spiritual truths.” If what we are feeling led to do doesn’t line up with the Word of God how can it be from God? And if you aren’t diligently studying God’s word how will you know what it says? Jesus said, ‘The words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life.’ John 6:63. The only way we can know what is going on in the spirit is through the Word.

## **FOLLOWING GOD’S WILL FOR YOU**

I believe that following God’s will involves the work of the Holy Spirit. If you haven’t been baptized in the Holy Spirit, it will be difficult to tune yourself into what God is trying to get through to you. This is because we live in a physical world and we tend to be dominated by our physical senses. 1 John 2:20 says we have a special anointing, or power, from God and our spirit knows all things. Our job is to draw out what God has already put in us. If we don’t know how to do this, we can fall into the trap of trying to discern God’s will by judging our circumstances. The best way I know of to attune yourself to God is by praying in tongues. I have a whole paper on this topic, and won’t go into all the issues involved here, but suffice to say the Apostle Paul, who wrote two thirds of the New Testament said he spoke in tongues more than the whole church of Corinth (1 Corinthians 14:18) and in verses 13-14 that it is our born-again spirit that is praying, and we should ask for interpretation of what we are saying. This is how we “**let the peace of God rule in our hearts**”. “And let the peace that comes from Christ rule *in* your hearts. For as members of one body, you are called to live *in* peace. And always be thankful.”

Peace is a fruit of the Spirit, so we always have peace in our born-again spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23). Letting the peace of God rule in our hearts, like an umpire, is one of the best ways to discern His leadership. We need to evaluate the desires in our hearts to see if we feel peace about it, to know that it’s from God. We need to spend extra time in prayer seeking the Lord until we are settled in our souls that we have peace about a particular decision. Don’t make the mistake of going against your ‘gut’ feelings just because conventional wisdom says so. Very often the direction the Lord takes us is a challenge-but we can still have peace about it!

To really have peace about God’s leadership in our lives we need to ‘be still & know that I am God.’ Psalm 46:10. Being still isn’t something the American lifestyle does well. We tend to cram our schedules so full we don’t make any time to just sit still and listen for God. We must do that if we’re ever going to receive specific direction from the Lord.

It’s also important to understand that sometimes the way the Lord leads you is through a holy dis-satisfaction with the course you are on now.

## **FULLFILLING GOD’S WILL**

Once you’ve committed to finding and following God’s will, you must stick it out, sometimes through adverse circumstances. The Apostle Paul was specifically warned that the course of action God was calling him to would land him in jail. But that didn’t dissuade him because he pursued the higher calling. We need to be patient; with people, circumstances, and God. Our society also isn’t good at patience. Patience is just faith over a long period of time. It’s a God quality, not a human quality. It’s a fruit of the Spirit. Patience is built as you study God’s word. God’s truth always trumps the world’s truth. You may get a bad report that’s a ‘fact’ in the natural world, but it’s not the end with God. If God’s word contradicts your experience, your feelings, your circumstances, what other people say, who and what you choose to believe will set your destiny. Jesus said, ‘According to your faith be it unto you.’ More often than not we just need to believe what God says more than what anyone or anything else says and the only way to do that is to have more of God’s word top of mind than what the world says top of mind. It’s all about what you focus on.

It pains me no end to see brothers and sisters in the Lord suffering needlessly because they believe the circumstances of their natural world, or the religious traditions they were raised in more than the word of God. We are told to magnify the Lord. This means to focus more on him than anything else. Fulfilling God’s will is about keeping our relationship with Him close and personal. That’s how you endure for a long period of time. Isaiah 30:21 says: ‘And your ears will hear a word behind you, saying, this is the way; walk in it, when you turn to the right hand and when you turn to the left.’ We should be led by the still small voice of God (1 Kings 19:12).

Once you experience the peace and joy that comes from finding, following, and fulfilling God's will, you'll never want to live any other way ever again! I pray this lights a fire in you to seek God's will for your life!