



Discovering God's Will

This summer - the questions Christians often ask deep inside...

- ❖ Why does God sometimes seem unfair? (Habakkuk)
- ❖ NOW - How can I know God's will for my life?

Sometimes it feels like a big *game show*, like a wheel that you spin, and you hope to get lucky and land on the right spot?

Well, maybe you've done this:

- If I'm supposed to marry him, let him call by three.
- I like to do something like this: "If I'm supposed to help out in the nursery, then I'll make this basket..."

Today we're going to start a brand-new series called "Discovering God's Will." How do we know what God's will is for our lives?

All of us, as we go through life, we ask God questions:

- You in Middle School: "Should I play baseball or basketball or no sport at all?"
- As you get older, "Should I go to college or should I go straight to work?"
- If you go to college, "Should I major in this, or should I major in that?"
- When you get out of college, "Should I take a job with this company, or with that?"
- Some guy asks a girl out, and the girl asks, "Should I go out with him..kind of cute?" "He wants to marry me, should I marry him?"

- So she marries him. "Should we have kids now? Should we wait? Should we have two kids? Should we have any? Should we get a dog or a cat?"
- "Should we buy a house? Should we rent?"
- "Should we get this car, or that car? Should we go to this church at that church?"

And in life the questions go on and on and on.

And if you're like me, there are times you *played some games...*

- "God, if it's your will, then let this happen." "God if you want me to do this, make the stop light turned green and if you don't, make it turn red." Be honest - Who's ever done that?
- Maybe you've done the "pros and cons thing." You know, "If there's more pros than maybe God you're in on this, or if there is more cons, then maybe it's the devil trying to trip me up."

When it comes to the whole marriage thing, man, the questions get really dicey. For example, "Is there one right person for every person that's alive?" If there is, that means that you've got a one in 3 billion shot at finding that one person.

Now think about this. Let's suppose that, single guys, it's God's will for you to meet "that person" today. And you're *one right woman* is in this worship center right now. And you see that person and think "She's attractive, she's carrying a Bible ... must be God's will." You're supposed to speak to her, but you chicken out. It is your life screwed up forever? Because you missed the opportunity?

And if there is one right person for everyone and somebody marries the wrong person, is the whole system messed up from then on out? These are important questions.

What I want to do today is **develop a foundation** upon which we will build on the weeks to come. Get your notes and we'll watch this video I made earlier this week...

So how do we know God's will for our lives? We'll use this soccer goal as boundaries as we discuss three different categories for the will of God.

1. This first goal post represents the boundary that we will call (if you're taking notes, write this down) **the PROVIDENTIAL will of God**. Write that down. The providential will of God. What's

that? That is the will of God that's going to take place no matter what. For example, when God decided it was time to send his son Jesus into this world, it was going to happen whether you wanted it to or not. When God decides it's time for Jesus to come back for his bride, the church, that's the *providential will of God* that will happen whether you like it or not.

It doesn't matter whether you believe it, if you have faith for it, if you pray for it or if you pray against it. It's the providential will of God. It will happen no matter what.

2. Now the **second goal post** represents the boundary that we will call **the MORAL will of God**. The moral will of God. Write that down. What's that? That's God's will for your life morally according to scripture. God wants you on the right side of the moral will of God. For example,

- Would it be right, morally for you to have premarital sex? Or extramarital sex? No, you would be outside the moral will of God.
- Would it be right to be harsh but your spouse? No, you would be outside the moral will of God.
- Would it be right for you to lie or cheat on your taxes? No, you would be outside the moral will of God.

God has two boundaries:

- The **providential will of God** - that which will happen no matter what. And
- The **moral will of God** - that which God wants you to live out daily.

3. And somewhere in between the providential will of God and the moral will of God is the **PERSONAL Will of God**. That's God's will for you, specifically.

What you need to understand is that God's personal will for your life will be somewhere between His providential will and His moral will.

Now, the most important thing for you to remember is this. **The more that you UNDERSTAND the Providential will of God - what God is doing in this world,**

and the more you LIVE by the Moral will of God - how God is calling you to live according to

Scripture - the better you'll be able to discern the PERSONAL Will of God for your life.

Make sure that you understand that. The more that you understand what God is doing in this world, and the more you understand what God is calling you to do morally, the better you'll be able to understand what God wants for you specifically.

Let's review. This pole represents the Providential Will of God - what God is doing in the world no matter what. This (right) pole represents the Moral Will. The more we get to know the providential will and the more we DO the Moral will, the better will discern God's PERSONAL WILL.

THE MORAL WILL OF GOD

Today in building a foundation, what I'd like for us to do is **make sure that we're doing what we know in Scripture to do.** And that is living on the correct side of the moral will of God. We want to make sure that we're not living in sin outside of God's moral will.

A couple of verses.

1 Thessalonians 4:3. "*It is God's will that you should be sanctified.*" What does the word sanctified mean? It comes from the Greek word *hagiosmos*. It means "A state of purity." It means "without impurity or pollution."

What is God's will? *It's God's will that you beat the should be sanctified.* That we should be living on the correct side of his moral will. It's his moral will that we should live without the impurities of the temptations of this world.

1 Peter 4:2-3 *As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.* We should live on the correct side of the moral will of God.

³For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.

Lets just for a minute be honest. **Sometimes being outside of the moral will of God and sinning can be fun, can't it?** Can't it? Don't be all churchy and religious on me. After all, who would sin if it wasn't on some level enjoyable?

It's also incredibly dangerous.

A man had a next-door neighbor who always parked his car in front of his house. And he asked them time and time again to stop doing it, but he wouldn't do it. One day the neighbor parked his car in front of his house again, but left the windows open. So the man chose to water his lawn that day and he also watered the inside of his neighbors car. Fun? Yes. Wrong? Yes. And since his neighbor was a big hulking guy it was also incredibly dangerous.

It's a lot like a sneeze. Sneezing feels good, doesn't it, but then there's snot everywhere. Sin is that too.

Some people today are living outside the boundaries of the moral will of God and wondering, "Why is my life not working any better than it is?" It's fun for a little while, but it's the most dangerous place that you can live.

It is God's will that you should be sanctified, that you should be inside his boundaries. Today we're going to deal with Two types of sin.

I. SINS OF COMMISSION

First with what theologians call the **Sins of Commission**. Write that down. These are the things that you do that you should not do.

Romans 6:1-2 *¹What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?* In other words, since we're going to be forgiven anyways, why don't we just have some fun, we'll sin, have a good time, and then God will forgive us. What's the big deal? And then he answers it...

²By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

How can, when Jesus died for our impurities, when Jesus lives in us and the same spirit that raised Christ from the grave is inside the believer, convicting us toward holiness, how can we continue to live outside of the protective, loving, boundaries of the moral will of God?

How can we risk it and be so foolish to live outside of God's perfect will?

So, how is it that we end up outside of God's will?

Well, I was reading about a shepherd and what it means to take care of his sheep. And if you know anything about sheep you know that they are incredibly STUPID.

How do sheep get outside of the protective care of the shepherd? He said the sheep will do something like this. A sheep will see some green grass over there... "Oh, there's some grass" (hop, hop, hop) nibble, nibble, nibble. "Why there's some more green grass over there..." nibble,

nibble, nibble. "Oh, there's some more green grass..." Nibble, nibble, nibble...

And then suddenly a sheep looks up and says to itself "I'm lost." What happened? **The sheep got lost one step at a time, little by little.**

And that's often what happens to us. The little sheep wandered away from the protective care of his shepherd, and some of you will wake up today and say "How did I end up here?" Step-by-step, we walk outside of the protective boundaries of a loving God.

Today you have got to ask yourself **TWO QUESTIONS**. The first one you need to prayerfully consider is: **"What are you doing that is outside of the moral will of God?"** In other words examine your life to see what areas are right now outside of the moral will of God. What are you doing that's outside of God's will. Because if you are knowingly and willfully living outside the boundaries of God's moral will, there's not much chance that you will be able to discover his personal will for your life.

- It could be that you're filled with lustful thoughts.
- Or that you're gripped in a very materialistic worldview, where you think to yourself and believe "If I just have more money, or more things then I'd be happy. A bigger house, a better car, and then I'd be happy."
- It could be that you're married and you're disrespecting your spouse. It could be that you not submitting to one another in love.
- It could be that you're rebelling against your parents. Or that you rebelling against God.
- Or that you're full of envy or pride or greed or that you gossip all the time.
- Or you're just bitter because you're harboring unforgiveness.
- It could be that you just so stinking negative, that you can just pick everything apart! (You're criticizing your church experience right now.)

What is it that you **DOING** that you not supposed to be doing? **Some of you may say "Well, I don't really know?"**

Have you ever gone into a dark movie theater? And when you go in you can't see a thing. You're stepping on people's toes. "Oh, forgive me, I'm sorry." But then what happens after a while? Your eyes begin to adjust. Before

long you can see, and then when the movie is over and if you go out directly the exit to the outside, what happens? The light then blinds you.

I would argue that for some people, you have so long been living outside of the moral will of God that you have become blinded to that reality. You have adjusted to the darkness. And you've forgotten with the light looks like.

Let the light of Jesus Christ illuminate the darkness in your life. Let your heart be broken with the things that break the very heart of God. When is the last time you've come to the point of broken, humble, repentance before God? And said "Oh God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Forgive my sins. Make me new and clean in every way. God, forgive me, transform me, change me."

Sins of Commission. What are you doing that you should not be doing?

II. SINS OF OMISSION

The next type of sin is just the opposite, **sins of OMISSION**. Write that down. The things that we should be doing that were NOT doing.

James 4:17 *¹⁷Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.*

The **second question** I want you to ask yourself is this... **What are you NOT doing that that God wants you to do?** What are you not doing that God wants you to do?

Maybe there's something that God's calling you to do, but you just haven't done in your life?

I like when people argue with God about things He is telling them to do...

- "God, you know I feel like I'm supposed to give this to someone who's in need, but I'm not sure that that's you." Yeah, that could be Satan who's trying to get you to be generous again?
 - If you're feeling God told you to do something that is consistent with Scripture, do it. Do it immediately. Delayed obedience is just disobedience.
- Maybe you're supposed to forgive someone. You know you're supposed to, but you don't even want to pray about it.
- Maybe you're supposed to give something to someone who's in need.

- Maybe you're supposed to honor God with good stewardship and honor God with the tithe. You're out there dying financially and you're wondering why, and you're not even giving a tenth to God, giving him something to bless.
- Maybe you're supposed to be involved in your church. And being a fully functioning follower of Christ. Not just an observer or a spectator, but a participant in the plan and glory of God in the local church.
- Maybe you're supposed to use your gifts and serve somewhere. Maybe you're supposed to do something for someone else.
- Maybe you're supposed to make a real commitment to a small group like Sunday school instead of just being inconsistent.

CONCLUSION

What are you **DOING** that you're not supposed to be doing **AND** what are you **NOT** doing that you're supposed to be doing?

Now, some of you may be at this point thinking, *"Man, I am so far out here. I mean there's so many things that I'm doing wrong. There's so many things that I'm not doing that I should be doing. Is it even possible for me to live within the blessings in the goodness of God? Have I screwed up my life so bad that its too late for God to do his best and reveal his will to me?"* That's a good question.

Remember asteroids, the videogame? There was a button called "hyperspace." And when you pushed it, you were gone and you reappeared somewhere else on the screen. It was the greatest thing ever.

And when you're outside the moral will of God, there is a button that you can push, not called Hyperspace, but **HYPER GRACE**. The grace and the goodness of a God who, according to Scripture, is working in all things to bring them together for good. The God who is working, even in the things that are outside of his moral will to use them to draw something good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose.

Let **Ephesians 1:11** speak encouragement to you... *¹¹In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.*

He's a God who, in a moment of time, is so big that he can take you out of the darkness, let his light shine in, and His *Hyper-grace* can forgive you, transform you, and change you. And you can experience the goodness of the blessings of the will of an all-knowing, all-powerful, ever present, completely loving God.

So, as we get to know his Providential Will - what he's doing in this world. As we live by his Moral Will -- then we will better be able to discern his Personal Will.

- What are you DOING that you're not supposed to be doing? Cut it out.
- What are you're NOT DOING that you're supposed to be doing? Start doing it.

May we die to ourselves so all of our lives will reflect his goodness. His glory. And may you live by nothing but the perfect will of God.

Lets all pray together.

God we ask, in your presence, that your spiritual hyper grace may be evident to us all.

God, will you please forgive us of our sins? Please Holy Spirit, convict us in the areas that we are wrong. We thank you for your righteousness. We thank you for Jesus. We thank you for his grace and his forgiveness. God we thank you that you're a loving God that speaks to us through your word, circumstances, by your spirit, by people, in all sorts of different ways. God speak to us and we will be obedient. God make a life in us that is like yours. Generous, loving. And may our lives count to bring glory to your name.