

## Connecting to His Will

**Psalm 40: 8 - I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.**

Perhaps some of us have asked this question: “How can I discern the will of God for my life?” How do you respond?

Certainly, the Lord has promised to provide personal guidance. He declared through the psalmist **David**, “**I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye**” (**Ps. 32:8**).<sup>\*</sup> And again, through the prophet **Jeremiah**, “**‘Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know’**” (**Jer. 33:3**).

**The promise of divine guidance is sure, but how does it happen?** Through the ages, God has spoken directly to the hearts and minds of individuals. **The prophet Isaiah promised, “Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk it,’ whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left” (Isa. 30:21).**

But again one might ask, “**How do I know if this is the voice of the Lord or just my own imaginings?**” After all, **there is a way that seems right, but the end of it is the way of death (Prov. 14:12).**

1. We must always test the convictions of our conscience **by the revealed Word of God**. If you are sincerely seeking to discern the will of God, the Holy Spirit will bring an appropriate Word of God to your remembrance. His Word confirms the convictions of your conscience <sup>26</sup> **But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (John 14:26).**
2. **Sometimes when we ask for a sign, the Holy Spirit simply points us back to the Word that has already been revealed.** A fellow Pastor from Nairobi, Kenya, was invited to participate in evangelistic meetings. Timid and apprehensive, he asked God for a sign regarding His will in this matter. The conviction that came to him was immediate and startling: **“Why are you requesting a sign? I have asked you to go into all the world, and I will be with you!”** The answer was so clear. All the Pastor could say was “Thank You, Lord.”
3. **The Lord also reveals His will to us through the counsel of godly associates.** When seeking to discern the will of God for your life, always remember this: **“In the multitude of counselors there is safety” (Prov. 11:14).** The wise man, Solomon, also offered this admonition: **“Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days” (Prov. 19:20).** Find people who love God and love you, and listen to their counsel.
4. **What if you take a course of action only to discover that you were mistaken?** What if it becomes abundantly clear that this is not the will of God for your life? **Answer: you can change course.** The apostle Paul and his associates attempted to travel to Bithynia (**Acts 16:7**), but there were roadblocks at every turn. The Spirit did not permit them to

proceed. Rather a supernatural revelation was given to Paul to head west to Macedonia. And how did he respond? He changed course, **“concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them” (Acts 16:10).**

## Obstacles to God’s Will

To successfully navigate **the path** of God’s will, we need to understand the obstacles that could trip us up.

1. **Self-Will.** The biggest stumbling block is a determination to have our own way rather than following God’s path. Our pride and selfishness keep us from even asking God what He would have us do. Therefore, we make up our minds and then come to the Lord asking Him to bless our chosen path. This is a foolish approach because God doesn’t operate this way, and we are not sufficient within ourselves to determine or accomplish His will.
2. **Influence of Others.** Following people’s advice can be another obstacle in our walk with the Lord. Some are quick to tell us exactly what we should do and how we should live, but their opinions may not agree with God’s plan. The best option is to first turn to Him rather than relying on fallible human beings.
3. **Ignorance of God’s Principles.** We can’t walk in God’s will if we don’t know what He desires. Biblical principles help us understand how He wants us to live. Here are a few of them:
  - **Wait on the Lord.** We need to know not only what He would have us do but when. God’s timing is essential in the Christian life.
  - **Trust God and leave all the consequences to Him.** Despite obstacles, we should keep moving in the direction of obedience to God. He is capable of handling whatever happens as a result. Our job is to walk by faith and trust Him.
  - **Allow God to supply all our needs.** The Lord will provide everything we require to obey His will.
  - **Take one step at a time.** The Lord will not show us the entire picture of our lives so we know exactly what will happen. Instead, His light shines as far as the next step. This means we must trust Him for whatever lies ahead that we cannot see.
4. **Willful Known Sin.** We must not believe the lie that a little sin won’t hurt anyone. Just consider what sin does:
  - **It deafens our ears to the voice of God.** Disobedience clogs our spiritual ears.
  - **Sin blinds our eyes to the vision of God.** We won’t be able to perceive His will or understand what He is doing in our lives.

- **It hardens our hearts to the awareness of God.** Disobedience makes our hearts hard, and sin draws us away from the Lord. We become distracted, disobedient, and indifferent to Him.
  - **Sin dulls our conscience to the Word of God.** When we read the Bible, we will get nothing from it. We won't sense God's conviction of sin or hear Him speak through His Word.
5. **Doubt.** This is another obstacle to walking in the will of God, and it's manifest in several ways.
- **We doubt that God has a personal will for our lives.** We may believe He's working out His plan for the world in general but not for us individually.
  - **We doubt that the Lord will make His will known.** Perhaps we don't understand that He loves us, or we're not sure we are actually hearing from Him.
  - **We doubt that we can do what the Lord requires.** This is often the point at which we step out of God's will. We look at our own inadequacy and question whether He will enable us to obey Him.
  - **We doubt God because we don't have all the facts.** Instead of looking at all the unknowns, we need to focus on what we know to be true. God loves us each individually and will walk with us through whatever He has planned for us. Although we may experience difficulty, suffering, or loss, the Lord promises to work it all out for good. His desire is to use these situations to mature us, increase our trust in Him, eliminate things that should not be in our lives, and shape us into the likeness of Christ. Our goal should be to follow His leadership and trust Him to guide us every step of the way.
6. **Feelings of Unworthiness.** Sometimes this is the reason we refuse to follow in God's will, but we should never underestimate what He can do through us. We must be careful to make decisions based on what the Lord has said, not on what we are feeling or thinking. If the reason for our sense of unworthiness is our failures, we have a promise of forgiveness and cleansing if we will confess our sins to God (1 John 1:9). Although we may have to endure the consequences, the Lord never walks away from those who belong to Him but always seeks to restore us to Himself. Even His discipline is an act of love by which He brings us back into His will.
7. **Busyness.** If we don't have time for God's Word, church, or prayer, we cannot expect to know or obey His will. Busyness is often used as an excuse for our sin—we just don't have time for God. Living in this world doesn't help because it's opposed to the way God wants us to live.

Although the Christian life is not an easy road, it has an awesome, eternal end. In heaven we will enjoy the Lord's blessings forever. For now, we have the Holy Spirit, the presence of God, and the promises of His Word to encourage and enable us to live according to His will. If we neglect these divine resources, we could easily become fearful and reject God's plan.

### **Fears in the Christian Life**

- **Fear of God's Requirements.** Following His will may seem too costly.
- **Fear of Failure.** We may let past sins keep us from moving forward.
- **Fear of Criticism.** Other people's disapproval may cause us to falter.

Is it possible to discern the will of God for our lives? Yes. Pray for a hearing heart, test your conclusions by the Word of God, and listen to counsel from those who love God and love you. Then you can testify to others with firsthand language about God's desire to direct their steps.