

# God's Will For You



## Sermons Related To The Will Of God For Christians

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**To God Be The Glory!**

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# **God's Will For You**

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# God's Will For You

## Rejoice Always

### INTRODUCTION

1. What is God's will for you...?
  - a. Of course, if you are not saved, the answer is rather obvious
  - b. But if you are saved, what is God's will for you in your life?
2. Sometimes the Scriptures are quite clear, as in passages like...
  - a. **1Th 5:16-18**
  - b. **1Th 4:3**
  - c. **1Pe 2:15**

[Such passages do not exhaust what is God's will. But this series of lessons will focus our attention on what is clearly stated as the will of God for you. Starting with **1Th 5:16**, where we learn that...]

### I. GOD WANTS YOU TO REJOICE ALWAYS

#### **A. REJOICE IN LIFE...**

1. To rejoice in your youth - **Ec 11:9**
2. To rejoice in your work - **Ec 2:24; 3:12-13,22; 5:18-20**
3. To rejoice in life and wife - **Ec 9:7-9; 11:8**
4. To rejoice in the things God has given us - **1Ti 6:17**
5. Of course, we are to rejoice responsibly - **1Ti 6:18-19; Ec 12:1**

#### **B. REJOICE IN SALVATION...**

1. To rejoice knowing that you are saved - **Lk 10:20**
2. To rejoice as a kingdom quality - **Ro 14:17**
3. To rejoice as fruit of the Spirit - **Ga 5:22**

[It is clearly the will of God that you rejoice always! Now let's consider why...]

### II. YOU NEED TO REJOICE ALWAYS

#### **A. FOR PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL STRENGTH...**

1. Anxiety weighs one down - **Pr 12:25**
2. A glad heart raises the spirit - **Pr 15:13,15**
3. A joyful heart is like good medicine - **Pr 17:22**

#### **B. FOR SPIRITUAL STRENGTH...**

1. In the joy of the Lord there is great strength - cf. **Neh 8:10**
2. When we have joy in what we believe, we abound in hope - cf. **Ro 15:13**
2. When we are joyful, it helps those around us to be joyful - e.g., **2Co 2:3**

[Our Creator understands the importance of a joyful spirit for both body and soul. Since He wants you to rejoice always, here are a few thoughts on...]

### **III. HOW YOU CAN REJOICE ALWAYS**

#### **A. IN THE LORD...**

1. It is in the Lord that one finds the ability to “rejoice always” - cf. **Php 4:4**
2. His salvation is the source of much joy - cf. **Ps 21:1**
3. He grants joy to those who please Him - **Ec 2:26; 5:20**
4. His mercy is a source of great joy - **Ps 31:7**
5. In His presence there is fullness of joy, and He will abide with us if we obey His commands - **Ps 16:11; cf. Jn 14:21,23**

#### **B. SOME IMPORTANT SUGGESTIONS...**

1. Read and feed upon the Word of God daily - cf. **Ps 1:1-3; Jer 15:16**
2. Meditate upon the teachings of Christ and His apostles
  - a. Jesus spoke that His disciples joy might be full - **Jn 15:11**
  - b. The apostles wrote that our joy might be full - **1Jn 1:4**
3. Sing praises of joy to God
  - a. Certainly we should sing when cheerful - **Jm 5:13**
  - b. But we can also find joy by singing praises (cf. “**Sing and Be Happy**”) - **Ps 71:23; 104:33-34; 135:3**
4. Spend time with brethren who make us happy
  - a. As Titus’ joy encouraged Paul - **2Co 7:13**
  - b. As Philemon’s love and joy refreshed the hearts of others and gave Paul joy - **Phm 1:7**
5. Lead others to Christ, for they will be a great source of joy
  - a. As the Thessalonians were to Paul - **1Th 2:19-20; 3:9**
  - b. As Philemon was to Paul - **Phm 1:7**
  - c. As John’s converts made him joyful - **3Jn 1:4**

### **CONCLUSION**

1. So what is the will of God for you...?
  - a. Rejoice always!
  - b. Rejoice in the Lord always!
  - c. Rejoice in the blessings He has given you!
  - d. Rejoice in both the physical and spiritual blessings of life!
2. This does not mean we will never suffer hardship; but if it is in service to God...
  - a. There can be great joy! - cf. **Mt 5:10-12**
  - b. There can be inexpressible joy! - cf. **1Pe 1:6-9**

Even if the hardships we experience are due to the vicissitudes of life, we can rejoice that we serve a God who offers comfort and hope to endure every trial:

***“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” - Ro 5:3-5***

And so, let us be diligent to do the will of God: Rejoice always...!

# God's Will For You

## Pray Without Ceasing

### INTRODUCTION

1. In our previous lesson, we saw that it is God's will that you **rejoice always...**
  - a. To rejoice in life
  - b. To rejoice in salvation
2. In **1Th 5:17** we also read that it is God's will for you to **pray without ceasing...**
  - a. Really? This is what God wants us to do?
  - b. Why is prayer so important?
  - c. How can we possibly pray "without ceasing"?

[In answer to such questions, let's begin by emphatically repeating that...]

### I. GOD WANTS YOU TO PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

#### **A. ACCORDING TO JESUS CHRIST...**

1. In the parable of the persistent friend - **Lk 11:5-10**
2. In the parable of the persistent widow - **Lk 18:1-8**

#### **B. ACCORDING TO APOSTLE PAUL...**

1. "pray without ceasing" - **1Th 5:17**
2. "continuing steadfastly in prayer" - **Ro 12:12**
3. "praying always with all prayer" - **Ep 6:18**
4. "continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it" - **Col 4:2**
5. "in everything by prayer...let your requests be made known to God" - **Php 4:6**

[It is clear that God wants you to pray without ceasing. Why? I can think of at least **13 reasons** why...]

### II. YOU NEED TO PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

#### **A. TO PRAISE GOD...**

1. Jesus taught us to praise God in prayer ("Hallowed be Your name") - **Mt 6:9**
2. Paul provides an example and good reason to praise God in prayer - **Ep 3:20-21**

#### **B. FOR GOD'S WILL...**

1. Jesus taught us to pray for God's will on earth to be done - **Mt 6:10**
2. Especially as it relates to His kingdom (rule, reign) - **ibid.**

#### **C. FOR DAILY NEEDS...**

1. Jesus taught to pray for our daily needs - **Mt 6:11**
2. For God has promised to provide our necessities - cf. **Mt 6:25-34**

#### **D. FOR FORGIVENESS...**

1. Jesus taught to pray for forgiveness as we forgive others - **Mt 6:12**

2. The Christian finds forgiveness through the blood of Christ - **1Jn 1:7-10; Ac 8:22**

**E. FOR PROTECTION...**

1. Jesus taught us to pray for deliverance from the evil one - **Mt 6:13**
2. And God will provide such protection - cf. **1Co 10:13**

**F. FOR PEACE OF MIND...**

1. The antidote to anxiety is to pray - **Php 4:6**
2. The Christian will find his heart and mind guarded by the peace of God - **Php 4:7**

**G. FOR EMPOWERMENT...**

1. Paul prayed the Ephesians might be strengthened in the inner man - **Ep 3:14-16,20**
2. When we need to be strong, Christians can likewise pray for themselves!

**H. FOR OPPORTUNITY...**

1. Paul knew that the Lord often opened doors for opportunities to serve - **2Co 2:12**
2. He therefore requested prayer that such opportunities would continue - **Col 4:3**

**I. FOR BOLDNESS...**

1. When the apostles needed boldness, they prayed and God delivered - **Ac 4:23-31**
2. When Paul needed boldness, he asked for prayers in his behalf - **Ep 6:19-20**

**J. FOR WISDOM...**

1. Wisdom is insight that makes the best use of the knowledge one has
2. The Christian is promised wisdom through prayer - **Jm 1:5-8**

**K. FOR HEALING...**

1. Those who are sick should ask elders to pray for them - **Jm 5:14-15**
2. Those who have sinned should confess, and we should pray for one another - **Jm 5:16**

**L. FOR TRANQUILITY...**

1. The Scriptures proclaim God has ultimate control over the nations - **Dan 4:17; Ro 13:1-7**
2. Thus we are pray that we may lead a quiet (tranquil, ASV) and peaceable life - **1Ti 2:1-2**

**M. TO THANK GOD...**

1. Paul would have us be vigilant in prayer, with thanksgiving - **Col 4:2**
2. Having an attitude of gratitude, which we intend to examine more closely in our next lesson

[For so many reasons, because there is **power** and **privilege** in prayer, we should pray as often as we can! Which leads to answering our final question...]

**III. HOW YOU CAN PRAY WITHOUT CEASING**

**A. WHAT IT MEANS TO PRAY WITHOUT CEASING...**

1. Does not mean praying constantly, but being persistent and consistent in prayer - **NKJVS**
2. It means not giving up; it does not mean praying at every moment - **NLT**
3. It suggests a mental attitude of prayerfulness, continual personal fellowship with God, and consciousness of being in his presence throughout each day - **ESV**

**B. ESTABLISH SET TIMES TO PRAY...**

1. This can help create the habit of praying
2. Consider the example of great men of prayer
  - a. David, a man after God's own heart - **Ps 55:17**
  - b. Daniel, a man greatly beloved by God - **Dan 6:10**
3. At the very least, find time each day to spend in prayer!

**C. ENGAGE IN SPONTANEOUS PRAYER...**

1. Praying on the spur of the moment as the occasion calls for it
2. Some Biblical examples
  - a. The Israelites in the heat of battle - **1Ch 5:20**
  - b. Nehemiah in response to the king - **Neh 2:4-5**
  - c. Paul and Silas when imprisoned - **Ac 16:25**
3. At any moment, we should be ready to call on God in prayer

**CONCLUSION**

1. How can we fulfill the command to pray without ceasing...?
  - a. Praying **at set times** each day develops experience and persistence in praying
  - b. Praying **spontaneously** as needs arise develops the disposition to pray in every circumstance
  - c. Both help to develop that “mental attitude of prayerfulness, continual personal fellowship with God, and consciousness of being in his presence throughout each day” (**ESVSB**)
2. And why should we strive to pray without ceasing...?
  - a. Because of the **privilege** of prayer made possible by Jesus - **He 4:14-16**
  - b. Because of the **power** of prayer to “obtain mercy and find grace to help” - **ibid.**

And so it is the will of God for you to “**pray without ceasing**”, that you might enjoy both the privilege and power of prayer in your life...!

# God's Will For You

## In Everything Give Thanks

### INTRODUCTION

1. In our previous two lessons, we saw that it is God's will...
  - a. That you **rejoice always**
  - b. That you **pray without ceasing**
2. As we return to our beginning text (**1Th 5:16-18**), we learn that it also God's will...
  - a. That we give thanks in everything - **1Th 5:18**
  - b. "give thanks in all circumstances" - **ESV**
  - c. "be thankful in all circumstances" - **NLT**

[Not only are we to be thankful **in** everything, but **for** everything (Ep 5:20)! To understand why this is God's will for you, let's consider...]

### I. THE NEED TO GIVE THANKS

#### **A. INGRATITUDE DISPLEASES GOD...**

1. It is included among other sins that would be prevalent in "perilous times" - **2Ti 3:1-5**
2. The wrath of God will be revealed against those who are unthankful - **Ro 1:18-21**

#### **B. WE ARE TO HAVE THE ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE...**

1. Thankful for what the Father has done for us - **Col 1:12-14**
2. Abounding in thanksgiving - **Col 2:7**
3. A part of the "garment" we are to put on - **Col 3:12-15**
4. A complement to our prayers - **Col 4:2; 1Ti 2:1**

#### **C. THANKFULNESS IS KEY...**

1. To overcoming anxiety - **Php 4:6**
2. To obtaining the peace of God which surpasses understanding - **Php 4:6-7**
3. To pray without ceasing, and to rejoicing always - **1Th 5:16-18**
  - a. When we give thanks in everything, we will pray without ceasing!
  - b. When we pray without ceasing, we will rejoice always!
4. **NB: thankfulness in everything → praying without ceasing → rejoicing always!**

[If we desire to have the peace which passes understanding, that joy which is inexpressible (**1Pe 1:8**), then we need to develop the attitude of gratitude, being thankful in everything! Some thoughts on...]

### II. HOW TO BE THANKFUL IN EVERYTHING

#### **A. REMEMBER THAT ALL THINGS WORK FOR GOOD...**

1. If we love God and have responded to His call - **Ro 8:28**
  - a. Loving God presumes obedience to His will - **1Jn 5:3**
  - b. Responding to His call presumes obeying the gospel - cf. **2Th 2:13-14**
2. We can therefore glory in **tribulation** - **Ro 5:3-5**



- a. Knowing that it produces character
- b. Which in turn produces hope
3. We can therefore rejoice in **persecution - Mt 5:10-12**
  - a. Knowing that the kingdom of heaven is ours
  - b. Knowing that our reward in heaven will be great
4. We can therefore rejoice in **trials - Jm 1:2-3**
  - a. Knowing that trials produces patience
  - b. Knowing that patience produces perfection and completeness (maturity)

**B. EXPRESS THANKS IN EVERY PRAYER...**

1. We are to include thanksgiving with our prayer requests - **Php 4:6**
  - a. Every time you pray for something, first thank God for something
  - b. “Count your many blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.”  
- **Johnson Oatman, Jr., 1856-1922**
2. Even when we are facing hard times - e.g., **Dan 6:10-11**
  - a. Daniel made the giving of thanks part of his daily prayers
  - b. Even when facing life-threatening crisis, he gave thanks as always

**CONCLUSION**

1. William Hendriksen has beautifully expressed the importance of giving thanks:

*When a person prays without giving thanks, he has clipped the wings of prayer, so that it cannot rise.*

2. Do you want...
  - a. The full benefit of prayer in your life?
  - b. The ability to rejoice always, in every circumstance?

Then take the time to thank God **in everything**, indeed, **for everything (Ep 5:20)**, knowing that God can use it for your good (**Ro 8:28**).

Do this, and you will not only do what is God’s will for you, but you will become “more than conquerors” through the love of Christ and the love of God...! - cf. **Ro 8:35-39**

# God's Will For You

## Your Sanctification

### INTRODUCTION

1. From **1Th 5:16-18**, we learn that it is God's will for you to...
  - a. **Rejoice always**
  - b. **Pray without ceasing**
  - c. **Give thanks in everything**
  
2. Turning to **1Th 4:3**, we learn that God's will includes **your sanctification**...
  - a. The words sanctify and sanctification are translated from the Greek **hagiazo**
  - b. It means to make holy, to set apart for a special purpose
  - c. Related words include holiness, consecration, saint

[Sanctification is a term that is often misunderstood. As we reflect on God's will for us related to sanctification, let's start with...]

### I. OUR NEED FOR SANCTIFICATION

#### **A. GOD IS HOLY...**

1. God who called us into His grace is holy - cf. **Lev 11:44**
2. Thus we are to be holy - **1Pe 1:14-16**

#### **B. WE ARE GOD'S SPECIAL PEOPLE...**

1. Like Israel of old, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation - **Exo 19:5-6**
2. Thus we are in Christ today - **1Pe 2:9-10**

[Because God is holy, we are to be holy (sanctified). Now let's consider what is taught concerning...]

### II. OUR STATE OF SANCTIFICATION

#### **A. CHRISTIANS ARE SANCTIFIED...**

1. Consider the church at Corinth:
    - a. The church was made of people who were sanctified - **1Co 1:2; 6:11**
    - b. Yet many of them were still babes in Christ and carnal - **1Co 3:1-3**
  2. Thus, while Christians are not perfect, they are called "saints"
    - a. Note the use of "saint" in addressing all Christians - **Ro 1:7; 1Co 1:2; Php 1:1; Col 1:2**
    - b. Because they had been "set apart", it was appropriate to be called "saints"
- **This has been called "positional sanctification"**

#### **B. CHRISTIANS ARE BEING SANCTIFIED...**

1. Sanctification is also referred to as an on-going process
  - a. Those in Christ are "being sanctified" - **He 2:11 (NKJV)**
  - b. It begins at conversion, and continues as we grow in the faith
  - c. As Paul prayed for the Thessalonians: "may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely" - **1Th 5:23**

2. Thus Christians are to pursue sanctification (holiness)
    - a. As the Hebrews were admonished - **He 12:14**
    - b. As Paul commanded the Corinthians - **2Co 7:1**
- **This has been called “practical sanctification”**

[Now let’s look at...]

### **III. OUR PRACTICE OF SANCTIFICATION**

#### **A. IN GENERAL TERMS...**

1. We are to be separate from the world - **2Co 6:14-18; 7:1**
2. Which involves conduct different from the world - **1Pe 4:1-4**

#### **B. ACCORDING TO OUR TEXT...**

1. Sanctification involves sexual morality - **1Th 4:3**
  - a. Abstaining from sexual immorality
  - b. I.e., any sexual activity outside the bond of heterosexual marriage
2. We are to possess our “vessel” in sanctification and honor - **1Th 4:4**
  - a. Vessel likely refers to one’s body - cf. **2Co 4:7**
  - b. Vessel possibly refers to one’s wife - cf. **1Pe 3:7**
3. Not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who don’t know God - **1Th 4:5**
  - a. Who in their ignorance are given over to lewdness - cf. **Ep 4:17-19**
  - b. We are not give opportunity for the lusts of the flesh - cf. **Ro 13:13-14**
4. We are not to defraud our brother in such matters - **1Th 4:6**
  - a. E.g., committing adultery with a man’s wife
  - b. E.g., committing fornication with a man’s daughter or sister
5. God will avenge those who practice immorality - **1Th 4:6**; cf. **He 13:4**
  - a. Both in this life (STDs) - cf. **Pro 5:7-14; Ro 1:27**
  - b. And in the life to come (eternal condemnation) - cf. **1Co 6:9-10; Ga 5:19-21**
6. For God has called us to holiness, not uncleanness - **1Th 4:7**
  - a. To be His chosen people - cf. **1Th 1:4**
  - b. To walk worthy of His kingdom and glory - cf. **1Th 2:12**
7. Reject this teaching is to reject God and the gift of His Spirit - **1Th 4:8**
  - a. The Spirit who is promised to all who obey - cf. **Ac 2:38-39; 5:32; Ga 4:6**
  - b. The Spirit who indwells our bodies - cf. **1Co 6:18-20**
  - c. Who empowers us to control the flesh - cf. **Ro 8:12-13; Ep 3:16,20; Ga 5:22-23**

### **CONCLUSION**

1. God’s will for you is to be sanctified in body and in spirit...
  - a. You are to “flee immorality” - **1Co 6:18**
  - b. For your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit - **1Co 6:19**
  - c. And your body belongs to the Lord - **1Co 6:20**
2. By the grace of God, such sanctification is possible...
  - a. First, through the blood of Christ that cleanses from all sin!
  - b. Then, with the aid of the Spirit to empower us in our struggle against sin!

If you are a Christian, are you taking sanctification seriously? It is God’s will for you...!

# God's Will For You

## Do Good

### INTRODUCTION

1. Topics covered thus far in this series...
  - a. Rejoice always
  - b. Pray without ceasing
  - c. Give thanks in everything
  - d. Your sanctification
  
2. In **1Pe 2:11-15**, we read that God's will for you includes doing good...
  - a. That some might glorify God in the day of visitation - **1Pe 2:12**
  - b. That others in their ignorance might be silenced - **1Pe 2:15**

[Let's take a closer look at **the idea of doing good**, beginning with...]

### I. THE PURPOSE OF DOING GOOD

#### **A. WE ARE NOT SAVED BY GOOD WORKS...**

1. Good works cannot buy or earn our way into heaven
  2. God saves us by His grace and mercy, not our works - **Ep 2:8-9; Tit 3:4-7**
- **We should be very clear on this point!**

#### **B. WE ARE SAVED TO DO GOOD WORKS...**

1. We have been created in Christ Jesus to do good works! - **Ep 2:10**
  2. We have been redeemed and purified to be zealous for good works! - **Tit 2:11-14**
  3. Thus it is the will of God that we:
    - a. Be ready for every good work - **Tit 3:1**
    - b. Be careful to maintain good works - **Tit 3:8**
    - c. Learn to maintain good works - **Tit 3:14**
- **We need to understand the role of good works!**

#### **C. WE ARE TO DO GOOD WORKS...**

1. Because they bring glory to God - **Mt 5:14-16; 1Pe 2:12**
  2. Because they are necessary to be like Jesus - **Lk 6:40; cf. Ac 10:38**
  3. Because they demonstrate the living nature of our faith - **Jm 2:14-17,20,26**
  4. Because they prepare unbelievers to be more receptive to the gospel - **1Pe 2:12; 3:1-2**
  5. Because they help silence ignorant critics of our faith - **1Pe 2:15**
  6. Because they meet urgent needs of those around us - **Tit 3:14**
- **We must appreciate the importance of good works!**

[With an appreciation of **the role of doing good** in the life of the Christian, let's look at some...]

### II. EXAMPLES OF DOING GOOD

#### **A. CARING FOR WIDOWS AND ORPHANS...**

1. An indicator of pure and undefiled religion before God - **Jm 1:27**; cf. **Ps 68:5**
  2. Two good role models are Job and Tabitha (Dorcas) - **Job 29:12-13**; **Ac 9:36-39**
- **Are we practicing pure and undefiled religion before God?**

**B. SUPPORTING THE WEAK...**

1. As exemplified by Paul, in keeping with Jesus' dictum - **Ac 20:35**
  2. As commanded by Paul, to support and bear their burdens - **1Th 5:14**; **Ga 6:1-2**
- **Are we fulfilling the law of Christ?**

**C. VISITING THE SICK...**

1. Jesus and His apostles cared for the sick during their ministry - **Lk 4:40**; **9:2**; **10:9**
  2. Elders are to pray for the sick - **Jm 5:14-15**
- **Do we care for the sick?**

**D. ENTERTAINING STRANGERS...**

1. To show hospitality, which literally means "love of strangers" - **He 13:2**; **Ro 12:13**
  2. Required of elders, and widows taken into the number - **1Ti 3:2**; **5:9-10**
- **Do we show kindness to strangers?**

**E. REMEMBERING THE PRISONERS...**

1. Especially those who are brethren - **He 13:3**; **10:34**
  2. Like those who visited Paul in prison, or sent him supplies - **Ac 24:23**; **Php 4:14,18**
- **Do we remember our brethren who are in prison?**

**F. SHARING OUR WEALTH...**

1. Affluent brethren are to be ready to give, willing to share - **1Ti 6:17-19**
  2. Sharing with others is a form of spiritual sacrifice that pleases God - **He 13:16**
- **Do we stand ready to offer such spiritual sacrifices?**

**CONCLUSION**

1. As we have **ability** and **opportunity**...
  - a. We are to do good to all men, especially our brethren - **Ga 6:10**
  - b. We are not to grow weary in doing good - **Ga 6:9**; **2Th 3:13**
2. Begin where you live...
  - a. At **home**, do good for your family and neighbors
  - b. At **school**, do good for your friends and those not your friends
  - c. At **work**, do good for your employers, employees, fellow-workers
  - d. At **church**, do good for your brothers and sisters in Christ
  - e. In your **community**, do good for the poor, homeless, even your enemies

Doing good can lead to praising God on one hand, and silencing critics of our faith on the other; so let us not grow weary in doing good to all...!

***“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” - Ga 6:9-10***

# God's Will For You

## Discerning The Will Of God

### INTRODUCTION

1. In this series, we have focused on things explicitly stated as God's will for you...
  - a. Rejoice always - **1Th 5:16**
  - b. Pray without ceasing - **1Th 5:17**
  - c. Give thanks in everything - **1Th 5:18**
  - d. Your sanctification - **1Th 4:3-8**
  - e. Do good - **1Pe 2:11-15**
  
2. In the next four lessons, I would like for us to consider...
  - a. How else we can discern the will of God
  - b. Motivation for doing the will of God
  - c. Making God's will priority one
  - d. Seeking God's permissive will

[In regards to discerning the will of God, let's turn to **Ro 12:2**, where we read how you can prove (**discern, ESV**) what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God. First, we are told...]

### I. BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD

#### **A. CONFORMITY DEFINED...**

1. To conform to another's pattern - **RWP**
2. E.g., the desire to be like someone else
3. A conformist is often afraid to be different, who feels a need to be like everyone else

#### **B. CONFORMITY DEPICTED...**

1. Doing what others do, imitating how others talk, wearing what others wear
2. Occurs most often during adolescence, but frequently in adults
3. Complicated by advertisers marketing their products, encouraging conformity

#### **C. CONFORMITY'S DANGERS...**

1. The majority is rarely right
  - a. Most are on the path to destruction - **Mt 7:13**
  - b. The way to life is straight and narrow, which few follow - **Mt 7:14**
2. Conformity easily leads to doing things you know are wrong - cf. **1Co 15:33**
  - a. Friends in a car for a joyride, and one begins popping pills
  - b. Men and women at business functions, where alcohol is consumed
3. Conformity to things of this world will separate you from God! - cf. **1Jn 2:15-17**
  - a. By giving way to the lust of the flesh (immorality)
  - b. By succumbing to the lust of the eyes (materialism)
  - c. By yielding to the pride of life (arrogance)

[You will never discern God's will trying to be like those in the world. That is very much the opposite of God's will for you! You will be able to discern God's will for you if you will...]

### II. BE TRANSFORMED BY RENEWING YOUR MIND

**A. TRANSFORMATION DEFINED...**

1. The Greek word is **metamorphoo**
  - a. “to change into another form” - **Vine**
  - b. From which comes the word **metamorphosis**
  - c. A change of form, as when a caterpillar becomes a butterfly
2. In the NT, this word is used to describe:
  - a. What happened to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration - **Mt 17:1-2**
  - b. What is to happen to Christians in their service to God - **Ro 12:1-2**

**B. TRANSFORMATION DEPICTED...**

1. Christians are to “undergo a complete change, which under the power of God, will find expression in character and conduct” - **Vine**
2. We are to become like Christ
  - a. The purpose of discipleship and our salvation - **Lk 6:40; Ro 8:29**
  - b. The goal of Christian living - **Col 3:9-10**
  - c. Slowly, but surely, we are transformed to be like Christ - cf. **2Co 3:18**
3. Note that Paul uses the passive voice in our text - **Ro 12:2**
  - a. Indicating that transformation is something we allow to be done to us
  - b. Not something we do by our own power alone
  - c. We submit to God’s power, and by His grace we are “changed into another form” and become a “new creation” - cf. **2Co 5:17**

**C. TRANSFORMATION DEVELOPED...**

1. Begins with being in Christ (**2Co 5:17**), which requires baptism
  - a. Whereby we put on Christ - **Ga 3:27**
  - b. Which is a washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit - **Tit 3:5**
2. Continues by renewing our minds - **Ro 12:2; cf. Ep 4:20-24**
  - a. Setting our minds on things above - **Col 3:1-2**
  - b. Setting our minds on the things of the Spirit - **Ro 8:5**
3. With our minds “renewed” we can experience a true transformation!
  - a. Putting off the old man and putting on the new man - **Col 3:2,5-10**
  - b. Living according to the Spirit - cf. **Ro 8:5,13**
4. The process of transformation is really quite simple - cf. **Ac 2:42**
  - a. Studying and contemplating God and His Word
  - b. Keeping in regular communication with God via prayer
  - c. Involving your mind in spiritual worship via frequent assembling with others

**CONCLUSION**

1. Discerning God’s will for you does not come through **conformity** to the world...
  - a. Letting the world determine your standard of dress, speech and conduct
  - b. Letting worldly people influence you with their evil behavior - cf. **1Co 15:33**
2. Discerning God’s will for you comes through a remarkable **transformation**...
  - a. With the aid of the Spirit of God in conversion and regeneration
  - b. With God’s word renewing your mind so that you may discern good and evil - cf. **He 5:11-14**

Are you willing to let God and His Word transform your life in doing His will...?

# God's Will For You

## Motivation To Do God's Will

### INTRODUCTION

1. In this study, we have considered...
  - a. Things explicitly stated as God's will for you
  - b. How to be transformed to discern God's will in general
2. In this lesson, we shall talk about motivation...
  - a. Why we should want to do God's will
  - b. Reasons given in the Scriptures for wanting to do the will of God

[Let's begin by turning to Jesus, Himself highly motivated to do the will of His Father in heaven (cf., **Jn 4:34; 6:38**). In His sermon on the mount, He offers one compelling reason to do the will of God...]

### I. TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN - Mt 7:21-23

#### **A. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN...**

1. Broadly defined, it is the rule of God in or from heaven
2. Manifested today in the reign of His Son - **Mt 28:18; Ep 1:20-22; 1Pe 3:22; Re 1:5**
3. Experienced in the lives of those who submit to Jesus, i.e., the church - **Col 1:13; Re 1:9**
4. A reign with both present (the church) and future (heaven) aspects - **2Ti 4:18; 2Pe 1:11**
5. Its future aspect described in various ways
  - a. As a great house with many rooms - **Jn 14:1-3**
  - b. As a great marriage feast - **Rev 19:9**
  - c. As a new city in a new heavens and new earth - **Re 21:1-22:5**

#### **B. TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN...**

1. We must do the will of God - **Mt 7:21**
2. It is not enough to simply believe on the Lord or confess Him as Lord - *ibid.*
3. Nor to do many wonderful and amazing things in His name - **Mt 7:22-23**

[On another occasion, as His physical family drew near to speak to Him, Jesus gave another reason why we should want to do the will of God...]

### II. TO BE A MEMBER OF CHRIST'S FAMILY - Mt 12:48-50

#### **A. THE FAMILY OF GOD...**

1. Not every person is a member of God's family
  - a. We may be God's creatures, so in one sense part of the "brotherhood of man"
  - b. But not everyone can rightly call God their "Father" - **Jn 8:42-44**
2. Those in God's family enjoy wonderful relationships
  - a. With God as their heavenly father - **Mt 6:9**
  - b. With Christ as their brother - **He 2:11-12**
  - c. With Christians as their brothers and sisters - **Mk 10:29-30; 1Ti 5:1-2**



**B. TO BE A MEMBER OF CHRIST'S FAMILY....**

1. We must do the will of God - **Mt 12:48-50**
2. We must become disciples of Jesus Christ - **ibid.**
3. Which involves baptism followed by discipleship - **Mt 28:19-20**
4. This places us in the body of Christ, His church - **Ac 2:41,47; 1Co 12:13**
5. Which church is the household or family of God - **1Ti 3:15**

[On yet another occasion Jesus spoke of the value of doing God's will as a means...]

**III. TO GAIN ASSURANCE - Jn 7:17**

**A. ASSURANCE OF SALVATION...**

1. One can easily have a false sense of assurance
  - a. There is a way that may seem right, but be wrong - **Pr 16:25**; e.g., **Ac 26:9**
  - b. It not within man's heart alone to know what is right - **Jer 10:23**
2. But the very meaning of the word 'hope' implies assurance
  - a. Hope means desire plus expectation
  - b. And we have been saved to have hope - e.g., **Ro 5:1-2; 8:24**

**B. WE GAIN ASSURANCE...**

1. As we do the will of God - **Jn 7:17**
2. Such as keeping His commandments - **1Jn 2:3-5**
3. Especially to love one another - **1Jn 3:18-23**

[Jesus certainly gives us motivation to learn and do God's will. And so do His apostles. For example...]

**IV. TO RECEIVE THE PROMISE - He 10:36**

**A. WHICH PROMISE...?**

1. We have exceedingly great and precious promises - **2Pe 1:4**
2. The promise of eternal life - **2Ti 1:1; 1Jn 2:25**
3. The promise of a heavenly rest - **He 4:1,11**
4. The promise of Christ's coming - **2Pe 3:4,9-12**
5. The promise of the resurrection - **Ac 24:15; 1Th 4:13-18**
6. The promise of a new heavens and new earth - **2Pe 3:13**

**B. WE SHALL RECEIVE SUCH PROMISES...**

1. After we have done the will of God - **He 10:36**
2. With endurance, faith, and patience - **ibid., He 6:12**

[Finally, in the words of John the beloved disciple, we are given another motivation to do God's will...]

**V. TO ABIDE FOREVER - 1Jn 2:17**

**A. WHAT WILL ABIDE FOREVER...?**

1. Not this world, nor this universe - **1Jn 2:17; 2Pe 3:10-12**
2. The words of Jesus will abide forever - **Mt 24:35**
3. The one who believes in Jesus - **Jn 11:25**

**B. TO ABIDE FOREVER...**

1. We must do the will of God - **1Jn 2:17**
2. Which involves not loving the world or the things in the world - **1Jn 2:15-16**

**CONCLUSION**

1. Here, then, are five reasons to motivate us to do the will of God...
  - a. To enter the kingdom of heaven
  - b. To be a member of Christ's family
  - c. To gain assurance
  - d. To receive the promise
  - e. To abide forever
2. Are not these sufficient motivators...?
  - a. To seek out the will of God for our lives?
  - b. To learn what is explicitly stated as God's will for you?
  - c. To be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may discern His will?
  - d. To do that which has been proven time again to be the good, acceptable and perfect will of God?

I pray that in some way this series of lessons is encouraging you to **want** to do the will of God, starting with obeying the gospel of Christ if you have not yet done so... - cf. **Mk 16:15-16; Ac 2:38; 22:16; 2Th 1:7-9**

***"...for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." - 1Th 5:8***

# God's Will For You

## Making God's Will Priority One

### INTRODUCTION

1. We have been examining what is God's will for you in this series of lessons...
  - a. But it is not enough to simply know what is God's will
  - b. We must also make doing His will our number one priority
2. In His sermon on the mount, Jesus talks about the importance of priority...
  - a. In overcoming anxiety - **Mt 6:25-27**
  - b. In experiencing the providential care of God - **Mt 6:28-32**
  - b. By seeking first the kingdom of God - **Mt 6:33-34**

[Beginning with **Mt 6:33**, let's first look at what is involved in...]

### I. SEEKING THE WILL OF GOD

#### **A. INVOLVES THE REIGN OF GOD...**

1. Jesus said to "seek first the kingdom of God" - **Mt 6:33**
2. Broadly defined, the kingdom of God is the rule or reign of God via His will
3. Thus Jesus could use "kingdom" and "will" in synonymous parallelism - cf. **Mt 6:10**
4. Thus we must seek out what is God's will for us, live it out in our lives - e.g., **Jn 4:34; 6:38**  
-- **Seeking the will of God means looking to Him reigning over our lives**

#### **B. INVOLVES THE DUTY OF DISCIPLESHIP...**

1. It is God's will that we listen to His Son - **Mt 17:5; 28:18**
2. Jesus has all authority, and He desires that we become His disciples - **Mt 28:18-20**
3. Whereby we learn from Him, finding rest for our souls - **Mt 11:28-30**  
-- **Seeking the will of God means becoming disciples of Jesus Christ**

#### **C. INVOLVES THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH...**

1. Jesus came to establish His church - **Mt 16:18**
2. The church is that community of disciples who obey Him - **Ac 2:41,47**
3. Such obedience involves fellowship, assembling together - **Ac 2:42; He 10:24-25**  
-- **Seeking the will of God means participation in the local congregation**

[But it is not sufficient to simply give the will of God a place in our lives, the will of God which involves God's reign, discipleship and the church must be "priority one" in our lives...!]

### II. PRIORITIZING THE WILL OF GOD

#### **A. OVER SELF...**

1. Jesus taught this in regards to discipleship - **Lk 9:23**
2. We must deny self, making the will of God number one
3. As Jesus prayed, "not as I will, but as You will" - **Mt 26:39**
4. This actually makes us better persons, as it undoubtedly did for Timothy - cf. **1Ti 4:12-16**

-- **The will of God must take priority over personal interests**

**B. OVER FAMILY...**

1. Jesus taught this in regards to discipleship - **Mt 10:34-37; Lk 14:26**
2. Thus we must put God's will before family
3. As Jesus demonstrated with His physical family - **Mt 12:46-50**
4. This actually creates better families, where love and respect abides - cf. **Ep 5:22-33**

-- **The will of God must take priority over familial interests**

**C. OVER BUSINESS...**

1. The apostles demonstrated this in answering the call to discipleship - **Mt 4:18-20; 9:9**
2. Thus we must put God's will before business affairs
3. How will we provide for family? With God's providential help! - **Mt 6:30-34**
4. This can actually lead to greater success in our business ventures - cf. **Gen 39:2-3; Dan 1:9**

-- **The will of God must take priority over occupational interests**

**D. OVER EVERYTHING...**

1. Jesus taught this in regards to discipleship - **Lk 14:33**
  2. Thus we must put God's will over everything else
  3. As Paul demonstrated in his own life - **Php 3:4-11**
- **The will of God must take priority over everything!**

**CONCLUSION**

1. We need to understand what is really important in life...
  - a. It is easy to be preoccupied with many things in this life - cf. **Lk 10:40-41**
  - b. We must chose the good part, that which is truly important - cf. **Lk 10:42**
2. We have seen that the "good part" regarding the will of God involves...
  - a. Seeking the rule of Christ in our lives
  - b. Serving as disciples of Jesus Christ
  - c. Involvement in the church of Christ
3. In the parable of the great supper, Jesus illustrated...
  - a. The danger of making excuses - **Lk 14:16-18**
  - b. How many will use family or business duties to keep them away - **Lk 14:18-20**
  - c. The displeasure of God when people do not put His will first - **Lk 14:21-24**

But when we truly understand what is God's will for us, the blessings experienced by doing His will, then making God's will "priority one" will not be a problem for us.

Have you made God's will "priority one" in your life, by submitting to the reign of Christ, becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ, and giving His church the proper place in your life?

May we all be willing to say to God as Jesus Himself did...

***"Not as I will, but as You will" - Mt 26:39***

# God's Will For You

## Seeking God's Providential Will

### INTRODUCTION

1. "What is God's will for my life?"
  - a. What devout person has not asked a question like this?
  - b. Often asked pertaining to things like one's career, where to live, etc.

-- **How can we live in harmony with the will of God?**
  
2. Paul mentioned his desire to live in harmony with God's will... - **Ro 1:9-10**
  - a. As he made plans to visit his brethren in Rome
  - b. As he prayed regarding such plans

-- **He sought to "find a way in the will of God" to come to them**

[Paul's comments provide an opportunity for us to consider some final thoughts related to the will of God, especially on determining God's will for our lives. It might be of benefit to first review some...]

### I. FACETS OF GOD'S WILL

#### **A. THERE IS GOD'S PROCLAIMED WILL...**

1. God has made His will known in many respects - e.g., **1Th 5:18; 1Pe 2:15**
  2. This He has done through revelation
    - a. By sending inspired prophets in the past - **He 1:1**
    - b. By sending His own Son - **He 1:2**
    - c. By having the Spirit guide the apostles - **Jn 16:12-13; e.g., 1Co 14:36-37**
  3. It is this proclaimed will of God that we must do to be saved - cf. **Mt 7:21**
- **That which is essential to know, God has revealed through Scripture - 2Ti 3:16-17**

#### **B. THERE IS GOD'S PERMISSIVE WILL...**

1. God allows things to happen that are not necessarily according to His desired will
  2. He permits people to sin and even hurt other people
    - a. He is not pleased, and will one day render judgment - **Ac 17:30-31**
    - b. He is able to fulfill His own will, despite such rebellion - cf. **Isa 10:5-7**
  3. God permits people to do things that are indifferent to Him
    - a. There are some matters of indifference to God - e.g., **Ro 14:5-6**
    - b. Likewise, some decisions we make might not really matter to God
- **Thus not all choices please God, nor are they necessarily required by God**

#### **C. THERE IS GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL WILL...**

1. God acts providentially in our lives, as implied in our text - **Ro 1:10; also 15:32**
  2. If we seek to coincide our plans with His will, He will bless us - **Pr 3:5-6**
  3. For such reasons we should pray regarding our plans - **Jm 4:13-15**
  4. Our requests are answered if they suit God's will - cf. **1Jn 5:14**
- **It is God's providential will that is of primary interest to us in this lesson**

[Since our focus in this lesson is on **God's providential will** in our lives, let's turn our attention to...]

## **II. SEEKING GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL WILL**

### **A. BEGIN WITH THE PROCLAIMED WILL OF GOD...**

1. I.e., study diligently to learn what God has revealed
  - a. If you don't embrace and practice the revealed will of God...
  - b. ...what difference does it make to seek other areas of God's will unknown to you?
2. The value of focusing on the proclaimed will of God
  - a. We will not be ignorant of what is essential for us to know and do
  - b. We can avoid choices that are clearly contrary to God's will

### **B. SEEK ADVICE FROM OTHERS...**

1. Discuss your alternatives with older, mature Christians - **Pr 11:14; 12:15**
2. Consult the wisdom found in the Bible (especially in books like Proverbs, Ecclesiastes)

### **C. ASK GOD FOR WISDOM...**

1. I.e., pray diligently for the ability to discern wisely - **Jm 1:5-8**
2. Wisdom is that spiritual insight that enables you to evaluate situations clearly, and helps utilize what options and abilities you have
3. Use such wisdom to eliminate what appears less acceptable

### **D. COMMIT YOUR WAY TO THE LORD...**

1. Whatever you do, do it for the Lord's sake - cf. **Ps 37:5-6,23-26**
2. Make your plans subject to God's will, both proclaimed and providential - **Jm 4:15**
3. Give God permission to close the door on your choice if that is His will - **Mt 26:39**
4. If He closes the door on your choice, look for alternatives

### **E. SOME OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER...**

1. God is not like a train, He is able to run on more than one track
2. A choice may not be between good and bad, but between good and better
3. God can use us in many different ways
4. If you need not choose right away, wait; that will give you time to grow and gain wisdom
5. Whatever your hands find to do in your existing circumstances, do it with all your might

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Our goal should be to **"stand perfect and complete in all the will of God"** - cf. **Col 4:12**
  - a. Especially as it pertains to the proclaimed will of God
  - b. As much as possible in the providential and permissive will of God
2. Epaphras' desire for his brethren serves as a good example; as does that of our Lord...
  - a. Who taught us to pray, "Your will be done on earth as it in heaven" - **Mt 6:10**
  - b. Who Himself prayed, "Not as I will, but as You will..." - **Mt 26:39-42**

Are you seeking to **"find a way in the will of God"** as it pertains to your plans in life? You will if you are really committed to obeying **"God's Will For You" ...!**