

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, May 13, 2015 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

## KNOWING AND DOING THE WILL OF GOD God's Determined Will and Desire Will *Various Scripture*

What frustrates you most about “God’s will?” What are some methods that you have tried to use in determining God’s will for your life? Believers who feel frustrated by the Christian life lack two critical pieces of knowledge:

### **2 Critical Pieces of Knowledge for the Christian Life:**

- 1. An understanding of God's will**
- 2. An awareness of the steps to discover His will (or plan) for our lives**

A lot has been written and said about knowing and doing the will of God. Many theologians and Christian leaders have shared their thoughts and sometimes their frustration with knowing God’s will even in their own lives. Listen as the following quotes are read and respond to the following questions concerning each:

- (1) What is this quote saying about God’s will?
- (2) Do you agree or disagree with this quote/statement? Why or why not?
- (3) How might this quote help you in knowing and doing God’s will?

### **Quotes:**

*“The will of God will never take you to where the grace of God will not protect you”  
– Author Unknown*

*“True holiness consists in doing God's will with a smile” – Mother Teresa*

*“God will not suffer man to have a knowledge of things to come; for if he had prescience (foreknowledge, insight) of his prosperity, he would be careless; and if understanding of his adversity, he would be despairing and senseless” – Augustine*

*“We can only learn to know ourselves and do what we can / namely, surrender our will and fulfill God's will in us.” – St. Teresa of Avila*

*“I am Thy servant to do Thy will, and that will is sweeter to me than position or riches or fame, and I choose it above all things on Earth or in Heaven.” – A.W. Tozer*

*“God doesn't work on our timetable. He has a plan that He will execute perfectly and for the highest, greatest good of all, and for His ultimate glory.” – Dr. Charles Swindoll*

*“There are no 'if's' in God's world. And no places that are safer than other places. The center of His will is our only safety - let us pray that we may always know it!” — Corrie ten Boom*

*“The will of God is not something you add to your life. It's a course you choose. You either line yourself up with the Son of God...or you capitulate to the principle which governs the rest of the world.” — Elisabeth Elliot*

*“In many cases, our need to wonder about or be told what God wants in a certain situation is nothing short of a clear indication of how little we are engaged in His work.” – Dallas Willard*

*“It will be very interesting one day to follow the pattern of our life as it is spread out like a beautiful tapestry. As long as we live here we see only the reverse side of the weaving, and very often the pattern, with its threads running wildly, doesn't seem to make sense. Some day, however, we shall understand. In looking back over the years we can discover how a red thread goes through the pattern of our life: the Will of God.” – Maria Augusta von Trapp*

*“How wise should we be if, with joyful certainty, we accepted each unfolding of His will as a proof of His faithfulness and love!” – Susannah Spurgeon (Charles Haddon Spurgeon's wife)*

*“Doing the will of God leaves me no time for disputing about His plans.”  
– George MacDonald*

Just in the way of review from our introduction to our study, “Knowing and Doing the Will of God,” we concluded our study last week by stating three things that we need to remember concerning the will of God. Let's briefly re-state these three things as we dig deeper into God's will.

### **3 Things to Remember About God's Will As We Begin Our Study:**

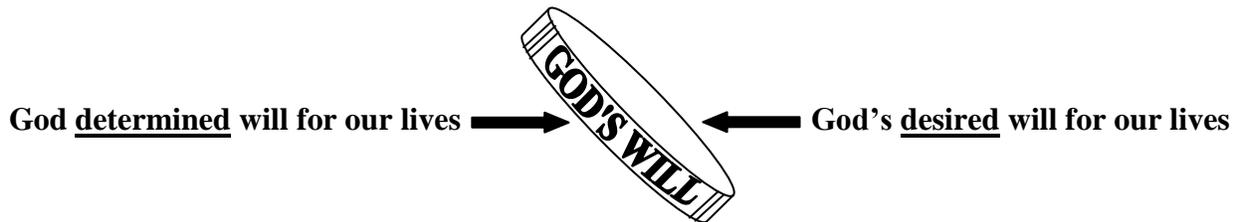
- 1. Even when our hearts is right and our motives pure, the will of God is not always set forth in a crystal clear manner**
- 2. God's will for your life is much more concerned with how you love and live each day, than it is with what job you take, where you choose to live, or what house or car to buy**
- 3. God's will is rooted in relationship... with Him**

Our key take away statement for our study is an important reminder not only what God's will is truly about, but also what must ground our understanding of His will.

**Key Take Away Statement: “God's will is rooted in relationship... with Him.”**

The Apostle Paul wrote, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, these words in **Ephesians 5:17**, **“So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”** Such verses prod us off the fence of indecision, yet we are anxious not to do something “foolish” in the process. Even when our hearts is right and our motives pure, the will of God is not always set forth in a crystal

clear manner. Maybe it will help if we divide the subject into two parts or two sides of the same coin.



## **GOD'S DETERMINED WILL**

Again, believers who feel frustrated by the Christian life lack two critical pieces of knowledge: an understanding of God's will and an awareness of the steps to discover His plan for our lives. So let's begin by looking at God's will as that which He has determined "will" occur. What do we mean by God's determined will for our lives.

**A Definition of God's Determined Will:** *"God predetermined and unchangeable plans for the world and for our lives."* As Sovereign God, He has the ultimate say in how things go and if we believe that God is who He claims to be (i.e. Omnipotent... All-Powerful, Omnipresent... All-Everywhere, Omniscient... All-Knowing/All-Seeing) we must believe that ultimately He is in control, on His throne, nothing catches Him off-guard, and He is the great mover of all thing.

Daniel 4:35 says it like this, *"<sup>35</sup> All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done?'"* **What does this verse teach about God's "determined" will?**

### **5 Characteristic of God's Determined Will:**

- 1. It is unchangeable in nature** - The "determined will" of God includes His unchangeable plans for the world. As the sovereign ruler, He is in total control... no government rises to power and no physical ailment occurs unless He allows it. He is determined to carry out the plan that He developed long before creation. It, God's determined will, is inevitable, unconditional, irresistible, and fixed.
- 2. It is often clouded in mystery** - The Lord reveals very little of His determined will to mankind. We can anticipate only those events He has disclosed, such as Christ's return and the great white throne judgment. (Rev. 19:11; 20:11-15) Much of the knowledge we have comes from our experience and Bible reading. We know, for example, that the Lord has given us limited free will and that He has a plan for redeeming us from the sin in our life.
- 3. It is not shaped by our faith in it** - The Lord will have His way, whether we believe in His sovereignty or not. His plan is far bigger than we can grasp, and it was designed in a way that will glorify Him while revealing our need for Him.
- 4. It is all about His glory** - God's purpose is His glory. Because our limited human perspective sees only the evil of crime, disease, and war, people wonder how He can allow these. But we know "God causes all things to work together for good" (Rom. 8:28). Just look at the cross-God's greatest expression of good and glory!

- 5. It includes God's predetermined plan for every life (including yours)** - It includes and involves everything, such as our circumstances, decisions, achievements, failures, joys and sorrows, sufferings and sins, blessings and calamities, birth and death.

Notice how Paul says it in **Ephesians 1:3-14** (READ), *“<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup> For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—<sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, <sup>9</sup> he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, <sup>10</sup> to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ <sup>11</sup> In 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, <sup>12</sup> in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.”* **What are these verses teaching about God's “determined” will?**

God, our sovereign and immutable Master, open declares that life is not some “luck of the draw,” “happenstance,” “will ‘o the wisp” happening. His determined will is being accomplished free of frustration. The plan is comprehensive in scope and complete down to the tiniest detail. And it is all for His glory. Rather than causing us to fear, this truth is designed to put us at ease and clam our anxieties. **Why? How?**

**Some Important Question:**

1. *What about sin?*
2. *What part does sin and suffering play in God's determined will?*
3. *Does this make God responsible for our sin?*

What about sin? Was sin and its ensuing suffering introduced to the world by the fall a part of God's determined will? Yes, it was. It neither shocked nor frustrated our eternal God when sin occurred in the Garden of Eden. His eternal plan included the sacrificial death of His Son for sinful man. Notice the following passages/verses of Scripture and what they are saying... teaching us about God's will:

**4 Important Bible Passages/Verses:**

1. **1 Peter 1:18-21** - 1 Peter 1:18-21, *“<sup>18</sup> For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. <sup>20</sup> He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times*

for your sake. <sup>21</sup> Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.”

2. **Acts 2:23** - Acts 2:23, “<sup>23</sup> This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.” \* This is Peter’s Pentecost Sermon on the Day of Pentecost and the at the birth of the New Testament Church.
3. **Luke 22:22** - Luke 22:22, “<sup>22</sup> The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!” \*This is Jesus speaking to His disciples at the Last Supper just prior to crucifixion.
4. **James 1:13-15** - Christ’s payment for our sin was not divine afterthought. But doesn’t this make God responsible for sin? No... in no way! I love what James says in James 1:13-15, “<sup>13</sup> When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; <sup>14</sup> but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” Scripture never points a finger of blame at God regarding sin. When we humans commit sin, it is a human responsibility.

### **GOD’S DESIRED WILL**

Jesus said in Matthew 23:37, “<sup>37</sup> Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.” This verse helps us see that there is another side of the coin. The Lord Jesus Christ declared with a heavy heart that He often wanted to gather the citizens of Jerusalem around Him, but they resisted and refused. His “desire” was to meet them and have them respond positively to His offer of love, but they were “unwilling.”

**A Definition of God’s Desired Will:** “God’s desired will for our lives that may be resistible and conditional.” In other words, we have a choice to do things our way or His. Now ultimately, we must acknowledge that in His sovereignty God knows whether we will or not, and He desires us to follow His desired will, but on this side of the choir we have a choice.

Jeremiah 29:11-13, “<sup>11</sup> For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” **What does this verse teach about God’s “determined” will?**

### **Five Characteristic of God’s Desired Will:**

1. **It is resistible and conditional in nature** – While God’s “determined will” includes His unchangeable plans for the world. His desired will, as already stated is subject to us choosing or not choosing to do it.
2. **It is not clouded in mystery** - The Lord designs a specific plan utilizing a believer’s unique gifts and talents for the kingdom. He wants to share His desired will so that we can live successfully.
3. **It is shaped by our faith** - God desires that we follow the moral laws, like the Ten Commandments, which apply to everyone. Throughout Scripture, we find principles that can add joy and meaning to our lives, such as the instruction always to give thanks and put aside bitterness in favor of forgiveness.(1 Thessalonians 5:18, Ephesians 4:31-32) Following those

basic principles allows us to clearly discover the second part of God’s desired will—His intentions for our personal life. One good example is vocation. Before our birth, God predestined us to have specific skills, talents, and spiritual gifts, which suit us for certain types of work. Our vocation may change, but with divine guidance, our work will consistently “fit” us. Other examples of His intentions include (but aren’t limited to) spouse, finances, and ministry.

4. **It is all about His glory** - God's purpose is His glory... always, whether it is His determined or desired will. He desires you to follow His plan for your life, to His glory.
5. **It is active in our daily life** - God’s desired will is active in our daily life. What interests us interests Him, no matter how trivial. We have all sent up desperate prayers when something we needed was missing. Often we find the object within moments because a caring Father leads us right to it. The Lord wants to work in our life, and He will send blessings if we follow Him. It is impossible to get less than the best when we do things His way.

### **CONTRASTING GOD’S DETERMINED AND DESIRED WILL**

You see, God’s desired will calls for a human response... which leaves room for His desire not be fulfilled. A simple chart will help to distinguish between the two:

#### **God Determined Will vs. God’s Desired Will Chart**

<b>God’s Determined Will</b>	<b>God’s Desired Will</b>
Predestined	Calls for our cooperation
Comprehensive, eternal	Limited, temporal
It will occur	It may or may not occur
Cannot be frustrated	It can be resisted
Emphasis: God’s sovereignty	Emphasis: Man’s responsibility
Purpose: To glorify God	Purpose: To glorify God

Having come to terms with this clarification, we are now able to pursue the solution crucial questions:

#### **2 Important Questions to Consider:**

1. **How does God make His will known?**
2. **How can I know if I am in His will?**

Stay tuned!!!