

Discovering God's Will

We need to begin today by talking about what we usually mean when talk about discovering God's will for our lives. If I am honest, most of the time I want to know what God's will is for my life so that my life will be better. I want to make the best decisions, the right decisions. Too often, my context of discovering God's will is so that I will benefit. We want to choose the right job, we want to know whether to move or not. How many children to have. I want to make good choices in all areas of my life. And I think that sums up how I usually think about discovering God's will.

I recently heard a pastor tell a story about how he found a tie he really liked in a store in the mall. He showed it to his wife and she also loved it. But when he got to the cash register, he did not feel a peace about buying it. So, he put it back. As they were leaving the mall they were walking through another department store and he saw that same tie for half the price. All of the sudden he had a great peace about buying it, which he did. While God might want us to get a good deal on a tie, I think His will for our lives is a lot bigger than getting a good deal.

So, what does it mean to discover God's will for our lives? As I have studied God's Word on this topic of His will for our lives, I have come to believe that choosing whether or not to follow the biblical answer to this question is the difference between a wasted and an unwasted life. To explain what I mean by this, let's watch this video by John Piper (former pastor of Bethlehem Baptist in Minneapolis)



John Piper Remix The Unwasted Life

Was the pastor for 33 years at Bethlehem Baptist in Minneapolis. Founder of DesiringGod.org

Wrote a book called Don't Waste Your Life

Discovering God's Will

- What does it mean to discover God's Will for our lives?
 - To understand how we can best glorify God in our lives
 - To proclaim the name of Christ
 - To allow God to accomplish His purposes in our lives

I believe this issue of a wasted life compared to a unwasted life is one choosing whether or not we are going to follow God's will for our lives. But, let's be clear about why we should want to discover God's will for our lives. This is not about having more comfort or success or better circumstances in our lives. No, discovering God's will for our lives is all about bringing glory to God. It is all about proclaiming the name of Christ. Making Christ look great. It is about allowing God to accomplish His purposes in our lives.

And this is the key between a wasted life and an unwasted life. Whether we live for ourselves or we live for God.

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- Colossians 3:3
 - For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:3 puts it this way. We should not live for ourselves, but for Christ in God. If life is now about God, it makes sense that we should want to know His will.

It is with that in mind that we begin this two week study on How do we Discover God's Will for our lives.

Three Types of God's Will

- Providential Will of God
- Moral Will of God
- Personal Will of God

There are three types of God's Will. We will talk about the first two in this study.

Three Types of God's Will

- Providential Will of God
 - Represents what God is going to do **no matter what**

God's providential will represents what God will do no matter what.

God's providential will is all about God's ultimate plan and purposes. What is most important to Him.

God's providential will can help us with making decisions.

Let me give you an example of God's Providential Will

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- Acts 23:11-14
 - “Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, **so you must testify also in Rome.**”
 - When it was day, the Jews made a plot and bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. There were more than forty who made this conspiracy. They went to the chief priest and elders and said, “We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food till we have killed Paul.”

Let me give you an example of God's providential will. Did you know that at one point more than 40 terrorists plotted to kill Paul?

The first point is that God told Paul that he would also testify in Rome. God ordained this. It was going to happen no matter what.

Shortly after this, over 40 Jewish terrorists determine to kill Paul or die themselves.

Do you know what happened?

Paul's nephew gets wind of the plot and tells Paul. A Roman commander gets involved and calls 470 armed troops to protect Paul. Paul goes to Rome and testifies. God wins!

Two applications from this

- 1) Don't judge God's Will by circumstances (our MN story)
- 2) Nothing can stand in the way of God's Providential Will. Nothing.

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- Psalm 25:4,5
 - Make me to **know your ways**, O Lord; **teach me your paths**. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation;

This is what our response should be to God's providential will.

Three Types of God's Will

- Why Does the Providential Will of God Matter?
 - You absolutely don't ever want to get on the wrong side of God's Providential Will.
 - God's Will for our lives will never be in conflict with His Providential Will.

Why is it important to know the Providential will of God?

You absolutely don't want to get on the wrong side of God's providential will. You never want to be in the way of what God is going to do no matter what.

It is always God's will for our lives that we get involved in His providential will. God's will for our lives will never be in conflict with His providential will.

Three Types of God's Will

- Providential Will of God
 - Examples from the Bible of God's Providential Will being fulfilled
 - Moses – “Let my people go!”
 - Jonah going to Nineveh
 - Jesus coming to earth and dying on the cross
 - Jesus rising from the dead

Things that were going to happen no matter what and they were fulfilled during Biblical times.

Three Types of God's Will

- Providential Will of God
 - Don't ever get on the wrong side of God's Providential Will.
 - Pharaoh and his army ended up at the bottom of the Red Sea
 - Jonah got swallowed by a giant fish
 - Peter was rebuked by Jesus as being Satan
 - Those that crucified Jesus

You absolutely don't want to get on the wrong side of God's providential will. You never want to be in the way of what God is going to do no matter what. Being on the wrong side of God's providential law left Pharaoh and his army at the bottom of the Red Sea.

Peter got rebuked by Jesus as being Satan in Matt 16:23. Jesus had just told His disciples that He must die and Peter said, "This shall never happen to you, Lord!"

While we absolutely do not want to be in opposition to God's providential will, we also must get involved in the providential will of God. These are things that are going to happen.

Three Types of God's Will

- Providential Will of God
 - Examples of what we know God is going to do, no matter what, from this point forward
 - Bringing the Gospel to the entire world
 - God working through the church
 - God working through marriage and the family
 - Restoration of Israel
 - The return of Jesus

The gospel will reach the entire world with or without us. But what a great privilege that God invites us to be part of this. Going ourselves, giving, be involved. It is God's Will.

The church will always be the bride of Christ. We know it is part of God's providential will to work through the church, which is His bride. The church is where the purpose of God is accomplished through Christ. Eph 3:10 "So that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places." The church is the bride of Christ Eph 5:25-27. God's glory is displayed in and through the church. Be in the church, be for the church. This will happen with or without us. Thus, be very careful about decisions that take you away from the church (vacation home, kid's activities). Get involved in the church.

Marriage is ordained by God to reflect the relationship between Christ and the church Eph 5:24-25,32. Don't be a part of breaking up something that God has put together.

The family - Don't ever be involved in breaking up a family. Be a leader in your families. Help other families.

Israel - Gen 12:3 God will bless those who bless Israel. God will eventually bring Israel to recognize Jesus as Messiah.

Three Types of God's Will

- Providential Will of God
 - We need to be involved in and for God's plan and His purposes
 - God creates a perfect world
 - Sin messes it all up
 - God rises up His chosen nation of Israel from which Jesus comes
 - Jesus lives a perfect life, is crucified, and rises from the dead
 - The Gospel will be spread to all corners of the earth
 - Jesus will come again
 - God will restore mankind and all of creation back to perfection (heaven)

What is important to God? What is God up to? How is God going to accomplish His purposes? What are His purposes? How is He going to accomplish His purposes. Get involved in these. It is always God's Will for us to be involved in His Providential Will. We must understand the big picture to understand god's will for our lives.

The biggest of big pictures.

God creates a perfect world.

Sin messes it all up.

He rises up His chosen nation of Israel from which the Messiah comes.

The Gospel will be spread to all corners of the earth.

Jesus will come again.

God will restore mankind and all of creation back to perfection for the glory of God.

It is all about the praise and glory of God Eph 1:9-10 "Making know to us the mystery of his will according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heave and things on earth."

Three Types of God's Will

- Moral Will of God
 - Represents what God clearly says in Scripture
 - Do not get drunk
 - Submit to authority
 - In everything give thanks
 - Do not commit adultery

Do not get drunk. Straight forward. But take it a step further. If you struggle with the temptation of alcohol, going to a top party school like Penn State or Wisconsin and joining a fraternity is probably not a good idea because of God's moral law. Heather Stigal and addiction prevention

Submit to authority – If your parents tell you that your curfew is 12 midnight, that is God's will for you. No further questions or explanation needed. It is God's moral law. If the laws of our country don't conflict with God's Word, we must obey them.

Do not commit adultery – remember in Guardrails we talked about how almost all affairs start with a meal. Use God's moral law to help you make decisions.

Three Types of God's Will

- Moral Will of God
 - We must know the Bible to understand God's Moral Will
 - God's moral law always, always reflects God's Will for our lives. God's Will never contradicts the Bible.

1,663 commands in the Bible, 1,050 in the New Testament

You don't have to pray about these. So much of God's Will for our lives can be found in what has already been written in the Bible.



Describe what this is.

God's moral law is like a plumb line. Need picture of a plumb line. It sets the standard by which everything else is built.

It is critical to know and understand the Bible in order to know the Moral Will of God.

Wise people understand this and always look to Scripture to understand how to act and react.

The plumb Bob and the plumb line.

The providential will of God and the moral will of God are the plumb line for His personal will for our lives.

The providential will of God and the moral will of God set the standard for all other decisions.

Which decision will keep me more in line with God's providential and moral will?

Three Types of God's Will

- The more familiar we are with the Providential Will of God and the more obedient we are to the Moral Will of God, the easier it will be to discover God's Personal Will for our lives.

God's personal will for your life will be determined by this plumb line. All other decisions we make should be based off of this plumb line.

We need to think about decisions in the context of God's Providential and Moral law.

Know what God is up to. Know what He is going to do no matter what. Know what is important to Him. Understand His promises. Know and obey his commands.

Are we willing to follow His will no matter what?