

Discovering God's Will

Quick review of last week.

Tell me one thing that stood out to you last week.

Review

God's providential will can help us with making decisions. For example, we know that it is part of God's providential will to work through the church, which is His bride. This will happen with or without us. Thus, be careful of decisions that will take you away from the church. Vacation home. 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

God's moral law to help you make decisions. 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 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?

Three Types of God's Will

- Personal Will of God
 - Represents what God's Personal Will for us
 - God's Personal Will is always in the context of His Providential and Moral Will, but it will manifest itself uniquely for each individual

This is the third type of God's will

This is the more complicated one to discern. But, it is important to understand that God's personal will is always consistent with His providential and moral will. These will never contradict one another.

We have to start by understanding this about God's Personal Will.

Discovering God's Will

- God wants us to know His Will!
- I John 5:14,15
 - “This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything **according to His Will**, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.
- Psalm 37:4
 - “Delight yourself **in the Lord**, and He will give you the desires of your heart.”

God wants us to know His will.

The trick is to have our desires be His desires!!

So, how do we discern this Personal Will that God wants us to know?

Personal Will of God

- How to Discern the Personal Will of God?
 - Bible study and prayer
 - We have to focus on what God wants, not what we want
 - Study the Bible to understand God's desires
 - Pray to become more aligned to God's desires

We have to know what His desires are, and we have to pray and seek to make His desires our desires. Often times we make this way harder than it is.

Studying the Bible is how we learn what God's desires are and and praying is how we transform our desires to be in line with His desires.

The issue of willingness.

Go to CS Lewis clip. CS Lewis clip from Shadowlands
His wife Joy was dying of cancer in this scene



CS Lewis clip from Shadowlands

Listen to what Mark Batterson says about prayer in his book *Draw the Circle*

Personal Will of God

■ Prayer

- “If we change the way we pray, everything changes. It changes the way we work, the way we parent, and the way we lead. It changes the way we prioritize and strategize. It changes the way think, the way we feel, and the way we speak. Prayer changes everything from the inside out. Prayer is the difference between the best we can do and the best God can do.”

■ *Draw the Circle* by Mark Batterson

By changing the way we pray, we are talking about God's desires becoming our desires. Too often when I pray I am praying for what I want, not necessarily what God wants.

Reemember, we need to read the Bible to understand God's desires and we need to pray to become more aligned to God's desires.

So what are the purposes and desires of God that we discover when we study the Bible?

I always like to start the answer to this question by watching this scene from City Slickers



City Slickers One Thing

Curly and Mitch

But you know what, we don't have to figure out the answer. We have the answer. Does anyone know what it is? What is the secret of life?

The Purpose of All Christians

■ The Secret of Life

■ To Glorify God

■ Isaiah 43:7

everyone who is called by my name, whom I **created for my glory**, whom I formed and made.

■ 1 Corinthians 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the **glory** of God.

Where most people miss out of determining their purpose is that they think it is all about themselves. The sooner we realize that it is all about God, the sooner we will start living purpose filled lives.

How do we glorify God? Let's look at God's Five Purpose for Your Life to get a better understanding of how we glorify Him

The Purpose of All Christians

- God's Five Purposes for Your Life to Glorify Him
 - Love God with all of your heart (Matt 22:37)
 - Obedience
 - Love your neighbor as yourself (Matt 22:39)
 - Service
 - Go and make disciples (Matt 28:19)
 - Evangelism
 - Devote yourselves to fellowship (Acts 2:42)
 - Fellowship
 - Teach them to do all things (Matt 28:20)
 - Discipleship

These apply to all Christians. We all share these. How these manifest themselves in each of our lives is different, but we all start with these same purposes.

Matthew 22:37

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

Matthew 22:39

And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Matthew 28:19

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Acts 2:42

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Matthew 28:20

teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

You can understand a lot more about God's Personal Will for your life when you make decisions around these five purposes. Which decision will help you to love God more, love others more, evangelize, devote yourself to fellowship,

disciple others.

The Purpose of All Christians

- The decisions we make must be framed within the overarching purpose of glorifying God through His five purposes

This is why we should never make decisions based solely on money or anything else that really does not fall under these five purposes. What does money have to do with God's five major purposes?

4 characteristics to evaluate in taking a job

Honorable

A platform for witness and/or discipleship

Does it draw you to or away from God?

Allow you to grow as a Christian?

Personal Will of God

■ How to Discern the Personal Will of God

■ Wise counsel

- Proverbs 12:15 “The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.”
- Proverbs 15:22 “Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.”
- Be dependent on wise counsel – those who are wise in God’s providential and moral will

Tell a personal story of you how God used wise counsel in your life to help you determine His personal will for you. Chris Dardamen

What wise counsel looks like

Look for timeless truths that predict
outcomes of behaviors and attitudes

You reap what you sow

Walk with the wise...

Maximum freedom is found under God’s authority

Wise counsel will encourage you to make decisions that allow you to use and maximize your spiritual gifts. Consistent with spiritual gifts. If you have the gift of evangelism, maybe being in an environment where you rarely interact with non-believers is not the best. Working in a Christian company may not be the best fit. If you have the gift of teaching, make sure you are in an environment where you have opportunities to teach.

Wise counsel will make sure you are not using circumstances to determine whether or not you are in God’s will.

The people you get advice from need to have nothing to lose by telling you the truth. They need to be further along than you are. Ask more than one person.

Personal Will of God

- Questions to ask to these wise people
 - Where can I best glorify God?
 - Are any of the options I am considering outside of the boundaries of God's Word?
 - What do you think is the wise thing for me to do?
 - What would you do if you were me?

Are any of the options I am considering outside of the boundaries of God's Word?

What do you think is the wise thing for me to do?

What would you do if you were me?

Introduce "Why we don't ask for directions" video clip



Why men don't ask for directions.

We have to get over this. We must be willing to seek wise counsel from others in order to be more successful in discerning God's personal will for our lives.

Personal Will of God

■ Vision

- Understand God's vision for your life. The clearer the vision, decisions get easier
 - Nehemiah 6:2 I am doing a great work and I cannot come down
 - Like a puzzle that becomes more clear as pieces find their place
 - Where do you want to end up? What is God's vision for your life?

All of these things we have discussed so far (studying God's Word, praying, glorifying God by focusing on His five purposes, and seeking wise counsel) should help us understand God's vision for our lives.

Anything that contributes to God's vision for my life is a yes, anything that distracts is a no. Pray for God's vision in major areas of your life. Live in an intentional way! Write down God's vision for your life. Act according to that vision.

Nehemiah knew that it was God's will for him to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. He was not going to allow himself to be distracted. Thus, he would not come down off of the ladder, because he was doing a great work.

If you just want to be married, then you will have an average marriage.

God's vision for your life is His specific purpose for you, which will always be in the context of His providential and moral will.

Personal Will of God

- Study the Bible to understand God's desires
- Pray to become more aligned with God's desires
- Make decisions that enhance your ability to live within God's major purposes for all Christians
- Seek wise counsel
- Know God's vision for your life

How to discover God's Personal Will

Summary

- Romans 12:2 (ESV)
 - Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will.

Hand out cards

Summary

- **Providential Will of God**
 - Represents what God will do no matter what
- **Moral Will of God**
 - Represents what God clearly says in Scripture
- **Personal Will of God**
 - Represents what God's personal will for you, which is always in the context of His providential and moral will

You might consider laminating some small cards to give to the guys. Have this slide on the front of the card and the verse Romans 12:2 on the back of the card.