

WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR MY LIFE? : PART 1

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A Serious Discussion Regarding Christian Discipleship, Spiritual Transformation, And Finding The Will Of God For Your Life, Helpful Steps For Discovering God's Will For Your Life

While discussing the necessity of Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross as the Final Atonement for our sins, the Apostle Paul quotes from the Book Of Psalms in his Epistle to the Hebrews and writes the following:

"Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God . . . Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."
Hebrews 10:7, 9, KJV

The original prophecy, as written by King David about a thousand years before, is the following:

"Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."
Psalms 40:7-8, KJV

Unlike Jesus Who delighted to do His Father's Will, King Saul was a king of another kind. Rather than acknowledge and obey the voice of the Lord, he relied upon his own wisdom and human understanding. Because of this, God rent the kingdom from him and gave it to David:

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."
Proverbs 3:5-6, KJV

"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king."
1 Samuel 15:22-23, KJV

King David was the exact opposite of Saul. He was in love with the Lord's Spirit, and highly exalted His Word in the Psalms, and fervently sought to do His Will. Consider the first three verses of his very first Psalm which show the reward of delighting in doing God's Will:

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the

ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."
Psalms 1:1-3, KJV

In later Psalms, King David continues to proclaim the reward of those who obey the Word of the Lord as well as his own delight in doing the same:

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."
Psalms 37:4, KJV

"I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word . . . Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors . . . Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight . . . And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved . . . Their heart is as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law . . . Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight . . . I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight."
Psalms 119:16, 24, 35, 47, 70, 77, 174, KJV

Thus we see that obeying the Lord, and knowing what His Will is for our lives is something which should be of concern to every sincere Christian. As with Jesus and King David, it should be a delight to us to do God's Will. But the question then arises: Exactly how do we find out what God's Will is for our lives? Perhaps the best approach to answer this question would be to first establish what we know to be the Will of God; that is, the general Will of God. Once we have established that, perhaps it will be easier to give a more amplified answer. Upon doing a bit of Biblical research, I found the following Scriptures which are applicable to this topic. Let's start with what Jesus had to say about the Will of His Father:

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."
John 4:34, KJV

"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."
John 6:29, KJV

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."
John 6:40, KJV

From the above verses, we can ascertain that the words "work" and "will" are sometimes synonymous. In this case, God's Work, or Will, for Jesus was that He fulfill His Mission of Redemption by giving His Life on the Cross for the sins of the world. Jesus then expands on that thought by adding that it is then God's Will that we believe on what His Son has done for us, that we might obtain Everlasting Life. This then, is the overall Will and Work of God, that

all men everywhere might be saved:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2 Peter 3:9, KJV

Another article which deals with the scope of God's Salvation is entitled "Is the Message of Salvation Meant for All Men?". After explaining what God's overall Will is for humanity, Jesus then narrows things down a little more for us when He tells His Disciples:

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

John 15:16, KJV

This same message is born out in the Gospel of Mark. Notice the interesting numerology between these two verses:

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Mark 16:15, KJV

Once we fulfill God's overall Will for our lives by believing in Jesus, we are then expected to do what we can to carry that same Message to others. As I have explained on other occasions, being saved is like possessing a great treasure. It is something we should want to share with as many as we possibly can, by whatever means we can. Jesus also compared the Kingdom of Heaven to a great treasure in the following:

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

Matthew 13:44, KJV

Now some will argue, "Yes, but preaching the Good News was just for them in those days. That was just for the Disciples whom Jesus had personally hand chosen to spread the Gospel, not for us today. After all, times have changed. I have a family to support. I have bills to pay, etc." This is indeed true. Life has become much more complicated than in those bygone days; although even then they had these same basic responsibilities. They had to support their families. They had to pay the Temple tithe. They had to pay Roman taxes. However, at the same time, allow me to ask you: Has God changed? Is He any less powerful than He was back then? Is He unable to provide for His servants as in the days of old? To say that the Lord is no longer as great as He used to be would be in total contradiction to the Scriptures:

"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:"

Isaiah 59:1, KJV

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may

be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Malachi 3:10, KJV

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19, KJV

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Hebrews 13:8, KJV

What it really comes down to is a matter of personal choice. We must each operate according to our own degree of faith and personal conviction. Jesus is indeed doing the calling, but it is entirely up to us how we choose to respond to His call:

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him."

Matthew 4:19-20, KJV

"For many are called, but few are chosen."

Matthew 22:14, KJV

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:"

John 10:27, KJV

As back then, not everyone is willing to just give up everything by forsaking family, friends and material possessions in order to follow Jesus. It takes a special kind of person to do this, and they are indeed far and few. There is a price to pay for such dedicated service to the Lord. Believe me, I know because I have done it:

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

Matthew 10:36-38, KJV

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

Luke 9:23-24, KJV

Because there is such a high price to pay in order to be a fulltime Disciple of Jesus Christ, even back then Jesus admonished those who would follow Him to first count the cost:

"For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was

not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

Luke 14:28-33, KJV

To those who are willing to take this plunge of faith, the Lord offers blessings both in this life, and in the Life to come:

"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first."

Mark 10:28-31, KJV

Again, not everyone is called to this particular kind of ministry. As I said previously, God's overall Will is that we believe in His Son; and that we then do what we can to encourage others to believe in Him as well. Exactly how you go about doing this, and to what degree you do it, is entirely up to you and your personal faith and conviction. Absolutely no one can decide this for you. Beginning with Abraham and the early Patriarchs, each one has had to decide on his own. Finding the Will of God requires a lot of soul searching. It can't be based upon a pretentious faith, but only upon real faith, a knowing in your heart that it is what He has called you to do. While writing about personal faith and conviction concerning the eating of meat, the Apostle Paul made the following comment which also applies to finding the Will of God in one's life:

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Romans 14:5, KJV

God's overall Will can be compared to a mighty river. The river finds its origin in many small mountainside streams. Each of these might be considered one particular aspect of fulfilling God's Will; comparable to different levels of discipleship. When those streams come together, they are all part of that same mighty river and can't be told apart the one from other. They are all a part of God's Will; and they all lead to the same final destination: the ocean. The problem many of us encounter with this example, is in trying to discover in which of those streams we belong. What is our particular calling and ministry? Part of the formula for finding the Will of God can be found in the following verses:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,

acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
Romans 12:1-2, KJV

The first step we have to take in finding God's Will for our lives is to present ourselves as living sacrifices to God. This is not talking about a real blood sacrifice such as was performed by the ancient Patriarchs with the firstfruits of their flocks; but rather it is referring to a surrendering of our personal will and plans for our lives. This is where most of us run into immediate trouble. Let's face it folks; most of us are very selfish individuals. We each put our personal welfare first above everything and everybody else. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians:

"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:"
Ephesians 5:29, KJV

We are our own worst enemies; and not only our flesh, but our minds as well. This is why Paul also tells us that in order to find the Will of God, we cannot conform to the ways of the world; that is, the ways in which the world makes us live, think and act. We must allow the Lord to totally rewire us so that we no longer think on the things of the flesh, but rather on the things of the Spirit. We must allow God's Spirit to totally transform us into new creatures who begin to see and understand things with the mind of Christ:

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."
2 Corinthians 5:17, KJV

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."
1 Corinthians 2:16, KJV

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."
Romans 8:7, KJV

Exactly how does this spiritual transformation occur? The Bible tells us that this process is akin to taking a spiritual bath in the Word of God. Consider these few verses:

"BETH. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."
Psalms 119:9, KJV

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."
John 15:3, KJV

In Jesus' time, this cleansing of mind, body and spirit was the result of the Lord verbally speaking the Word directly to the people. After all, Jesus was/is the Living Word. Just by speaking the Word, people were healed. Just by speaking the Word, demons were cast out. Just by speaking the Word,

men were forgiven for their sins. Just by speaking the Word, men forsook all and followed Jesus. Just by believing the Word, we receive Eternal Life. Today, in the absence of Jesus' physical presence, God has found it fit to speak to us by other means. Primary among these is the Holy Spirit. As I have oft quoted:

"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, KJV

Notice that it says that the Holy Ghost will help His Disciples to remember the things Jesus had spoken unto them. Of course, we modern Christians weren't there in Jesus' day; so we have to rely upon what was passed down to us in the Scriptures in order to know what He said. That is the key. In order for God's Spirit to quicken things to us from His recorded Word, we have to know what it says to begin with. We have to study the Word of God. In Jesus' time, the people came to know and understand God through the things that Jesus did, said and taught. He brought the Old Testament Scriptures alive for them. Today we can do the same by studying His Word. To know and understand the recorded Word is to know and understand God Himself, for as it is written:

"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."

Psalms 138:2, KJV

The more we immerse ourselves in the written Word of God, the more we will not only come to know and understand God, but we will also know what His Will is for our lives. We will learn how God operates and what He expects of each of us as Christians. If you are in tune with God's Spirit, He will speak to you through His recorded Word. Things will just seem to pop out of the pages at you. You might be praying and reading, and all of a sudden there's a verse; and you think to yourself, "Wow! That is exactly what I was looking for! There's the answer right there!" What is truly exciting about this is that the more you read and study God's Word, the more the Spirit can link things together for you and show you the Big Picture. I can honestly say that in writing these articles, this is constantly happening to me. The Lord, by His Spirit, just pours it on, and I just type away putting it all together for you in one compact little package.

You know, sometimes I will get a bit discouraged; especially after I've received a few negative responses from the enemies of Christ; or from some of those self-satisfied religionists who don't like the things I preach. Sometimes I think to myself, "What's the use? I am such a mess myself. Why do I even bother doing this? Nobody really cares what I have to say. Who am I to tell others what to believe or how to live?" When this feeling comes over me, I'll try to shut up for a while and not say anything, and not write anything. But you know folks, it doesn't last very long. Before you know it, it is like God's Spirit within me just kind of bubbles to the surface and I am back at it again! The young

prophet Jeremiah experienced the same thing. He received a lot of persecution for his preaching against the corrupt Jewish elders of his day. On one occasion he said:

"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."

Jeremiah 20:9, KJV

In this case, the word "stay" means he could not stop himself. He couldn't withhold the Lord's Spirit which was trying to speak through him. Some are probably now going to accuse me of presenting myself as some kind of self-styled prophet. Well, I can assure you, I am not a prophet. A prophet is someone to whom the Lord gives something new to say, as in a prediction of the future. All I do is take what has already been said and written and try to present it in a form which is easier for some of you to understand. It is like taking a jigsaw puzzle, or a connect-the-dots, or maybe a color-by-number painting. All I do is endeavor to make a little more sense out of what is already there. I'm nobody special. I am just doing what I can to love the Lord and to love other people by sharing the Truth with them from what I have learned from the Word over the years. If anything, I would consider myself to be just one of many teachers or scribes trying to do what I can to spread the Light around.

But getting back to the main theme of this article, if I could simplify it into one statement, it would be this: To know the Will of God is to know the Word of God. Why? Because in knowing His Word, He can reveal His Will to you. Not only that, with so many false voices and lying spirits in the world today, unless you are familiar with what God's Word does say, you could very easily open yourself up to a voice which is NOT of God! It is important to remember that in revealing something to you, the Lord will never contradict something He has said in His written Word. He may expand upon it, but He will never contradict it. It is when we don't know God's Word that we put ourselves in danger. If you don't believe this, just look at all of the garbage which is currently being espoused by New Age thought advocates who claim to channel Space Brothers and the like. Most of those folks have rejected the true Word of God, so He has sent them their delusions. As I make clear in some of my other articles, this is indeed the Age Of Deception. The Apostle John admonished us in the following manner:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

1 John 4:1, KJV

Within certain branches of Christianity, there are those who believe that we shouldn't make a single step without making sure it is God's Will first. From the minute you wake up, until the moment you go to bed, you are expected to be in the Spirit hearing from the Lord regarding every move you make. Personally, I do not know anyone who is or was that much in tune to the Spirit of God besides Jesus Christ Himself. Not only that, I think the idea of constantly worrying about whether or not you are in God's perfect Will

throughout the day would absolutely drive a person crazy. It sounds like the same bondage as those who won't do a thing without reading their daily horoscope or calling up their favorite psychic. Additionally, it seems to me that this type of walk with the Lord would remove any degree of free will. In essence, you would be a robot, a walking zombie.

The way I tend to look at things is like this: We already know from reading the Word what God's general Will is for our lives. He wants us to be saved. He wants us to share the Message of Salvation with others. Exactly how we go about doing it is similar to the example of the river I discussed previously. If you feel that the Lord might be directing you in a particular direction to do something but are not yet sure what it is, the best thing to do is to just wait on it; and to continue doing what you already know is God's Will. For example, perhaps you are praying about whether or not the Lord wants you to go to a certain mission field. While you are waiting to find out, continue to reach those in your immediate area. In this way you are still fulfilling God's general Will for your life as a Christian. One thing I do know is that if something is God's Will, He will put it in your heart to want to do it. Consider the following verse:

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."
Philippians 2:13, KJV

Not only will the Lord put His Will in your heart, but He will also provide the means to enable you to do it. If it requires money, perhaps He will provide the money by some miraculous means. Maybe someone will give you an unexpected monetary gift. Or maybe you will get an unexpected bonus from work. All kinds of things can happen. If it is someone you have considered speaking with about the Bible, perhaps the Lord will do something to put that person in your path. In some cases, if the decision involved a major change in your lifestyle, you might even want to ask the Lord for a specific sign. This is what Gideon did in the book of Judges. Gideon had a miraculous encounter with an angel of the Lord. During this encounter, the angelic messenger informed Gideon that the Lord was going to use him to free the Israelites from the hand of the Midianites who were oppressing them. Gideon listened in disbelief. He wanted some proof, so he asked for a specific sign on two occasions; what has become popularly known as "Gideon's Fleece". He asked for a sign; and once it was fulfilled, he reversed the sign just to make sure. You can find the entire exciting story in Judges chapters six through eight.

As the old saying goes, "Where the Lord guides, He will also provide". If the Lord isn't opening the way, then perhaps it isn't His highest Will for you at that time. As I explained previously, He has promised to provide all of our needs; so if He isn't, then you need to ask yourself why. If the Lord isn't providing for you in a certain direction, then you just have to trust that He knows what is best for you and not push the issue. The worst thing we can do is to try to go ahead in your own strength and wisdom. Remember the verses I shared earlier. This was King Saul's mistake; and it not only cost him his kingdom, but it also cost him his life, and the lives of his sons as well. So it pays to wait

on the Lord, as to do otherwise may indeed lead to nothing but disaster.

It seems that in seeking the Lord's Will, He will usually answer in one of several ways: He might give you the go-ahead to do something. He might show you that it is not His Will at all. Or, He might reveal that something is His Will, but not at that particular time. In other words, maybe He wants you to wait a while. The main thing you have to remember is that if you humbly ask the Lord in all sincerity to reveal His Will to you, He will. He certainly doesn't want you wandering around half-confused not knowing what His Will is for your life. In the book of the Prophet Amos we find the following verse:

"Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."
Amos 3:7, KJV

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

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WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR MY LIFE? : PART 2

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A Serious Discussion Regarding Christian Discipleship, Spiritual Transformation, And Finding The Will Of God For Your Life, Helpful Steps For Discovering God's Will For Your Life

At this point, you may still be wondering exactly how the Lord is going to reveal His Will to you. How and when He will do this for you personally, I cannot say; but allow me to review and expand upon these pointers which should help you to establish God's will for your life:

1. Begin by submitting yourself to God and having no will of your own:

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
James 4:7, KJV

2. Look for possible opportunities which might point in the direction you are to take:

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand,

and when ye turn to the left."
Isaiah 30:21, KJV

3. Take note if the Lord is providing the means for you to go in that direction:

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
Philippians 4:19, KJV

4. If you have the faith for it, do as Gideon did and ask the Lord for some specific sign of confirmation:

"And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me."
Judges 6:17, KJV

5. Look for similar examples or situations in the Bible which might shed light on what God's Will might be for you:

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."
1 Corinthians 10:11, KJV

6. Take counsel with those who may be older in the Lord than you are. They may possess wisdom or insights which you do not. The Bible is full of Scriptures which encourage this practice. Here are a few of them:

"Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety."
Proverbs 11:14, KJV

"Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established."
Proverbs 15:22, KJV

"For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety."
Proverbs 24:6, KJV

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."
Matthew 18:16, KJV

"This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."
2 Corinthians 13:1, KJV

7. Listen to the still small voice of God speaking to your heart. It takes time to learn to recognize it, but you will eventually. In my experience, it seems that Satan usually speaks in a loud intrusive voice which seems to be more directed at your head. The Lord, on the other hand, speaks in a quiet almost imperceptible voice to your heart:

"And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and

strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice."

1 Kings 19:11-12, KJV

I don't know how else to describe it except to say that it is a Voice very deep within you. Sometimes I will wake up in the morning with Scriptures coming to me which I need to add to an article I have already written and which I thought I was already done with. It is almost as if sometimes I wake up in the middle of a conversation with the Lord, or with one of His angelic agents, or with the Voice of His Spirit; whatever you want to call it. I am no spiritual giant, but I do know that the Lord does speak to me with Scriptures all the time. If it doesn't contain the Word, I tend to be kind of doubtful that it is the Lord. But beware, because Satan also knows the Word and can quote it as well. Remember Jesus' temptation by Satan in the wilderness?

At any rate, I am sure that you will know what God's Will is for you if you are prayerfully watching and waiting for Him to reveal it to you. Sometimes that can be the hardest part of finding God's Will; doing the waiting. In this day and age of fast living, it seems we are always in a hurry to get things done. For some of us, patience is a very rare virtue; but the Bible is full of verses which exhort us to strive to exercise this virtue. Here is one popular example:

"But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."
James 1:4, KJV

It is when we patiently wait on the Lord that all of our needs will be met. It is when we patiently wait on the Lord that He will also reveal His Will to us. In the Book of Psalms King David expressed this very thought when he said:

"Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD."
Psalms 27:14, KJV

That brings us right back to the verse I shared earlier from Paul's epistle to the Romans. Once the Lord has revealed His Will to you, you have to be yielded enough to Him to want to do it. You have to present your body as a living sacrifice to Him; and that can be the hardest part. You must be willing; otherwise, all of the waiting will have been to no avail. There is no use in asking the Lord what His Will is if you have no intentions of doing it once He reveals it to you.

So we must ask ourselves: What if we choose not to obey the Lord in something He reveals to us? In the case of some important lesson He might be trying to teach us, failure on our part to yield this area to Him will probably result in our spiritual growth being stunted. We might continue to grow in other areas, but it might be a lop-sided growth. For example, we might have a great knowledge of the Word, but we might be very short on patience which will affect our

ability to effectively minister the Word of God to others. Or maybe we are great at singing songs to the Lord, but we have a terrible problem with being critical and judgmental of others.

As I have said previously, it really comes down to personal choice. If we offer resistance, the Lord may still take us where we are at and try to use us as best as He can, but it might not be His best and highest calling for our lives. Using the example of the river again, we might still be swimming in the Great River of His Will, but we might not be in the part of the River where we can do the most good; where we can save the most people from drowning. This is indeed tragic; but under this present Age of Grace, God will not force Himself or His Will upon anyone. Even during the Millennium when the Lord will be ruling with a rod of iron, I believe that people will still have the freedom of personal choice. Hopefully, under the Lord's direct guidance, many will choose the Way of Life over the way of Death; just as they had to do in the days of Moses:

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:"

Deuteronomy 30:19, KJV

One final area worth covering in this article concerns those who either choose not to serve the Lord when it is offered to them, or who insist on doing something which they know in their hearts is not God's Will. In the case of the former, I am reminded of the story of the rich man in Matthew chapter nineteen. In the story, which I encourage you to read in its entirety, the rich man apparently has a very high opinion of himself. Outwardly, he feels that he has done all of the right things in order to inherit Eternal Life. In his own righteousness and desire to exalt his own goodness, he continues to prod Jesus for answers. After several responses from the Lord, the man is apparently feeling good about himself; but then the Lord is forced to expose the insincerity in the man's questions. Here is the final outcome of the story:

"The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions."

Matthew 19:20-22, KJV

Rather than experiencing the joy which one acquires when following the Lord, this man went away sorrowful. He is but one example of those who come to the Light, but then refuse to continue to bathe in its midst when they realize that there is a price to pay. The rich man went away in sorrow, probably to be cast upon God's junk heap reserved for those who were found unfit for fulltime discipleship. Think of how his whole attitude must have changed after that encounter with Jesus. His whole world of plastic self-righteous living must have been blown apart by the Lord's revealing words;

for as we are told in Hebrews:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

It is a sad thing to fail the Lord, particularly when we know we have failed Him, and have to live with that thought for the rest of our days. Of course, as with the story of the prodigal son in Luke chapter fifteen, the Lord is always willing to take us back into His arms of fellowship once we come to our senses and acknowledge our mistakes. In the Old Testament, we are told many times that the Lord is married to the backslider. Contrary to the belief held by some, I do not believe that God loses children. He will no more permanently cast us off than we will our own flesh children. We may be angry with them for a time, and we may have to chastise them, but if we are true parents, we will always find a place in our hearts to receive them back again eventually. Our Heavenly Father is the same way as is made clear in the following verses:

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

John 6:37, KJV

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

John 10:28, KJV

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Hebrews 13:5, KJV

But what about those who go against God's Will and do something they know is not of Him? The Bible offers a very clear answer to this issue as we have already seen in the example of stubborn King Saul. Another example can be found in the story of Ahab the King of Israel who was insistent on fighting his enemies the Assyrians. All of the false prophets had encouraged the king telling him that the Lord was with him and would grant him victory. This man was not really interested in what the Lord had to say. His mind was already made up.

However, when Ahab counseled with Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah, Jehoshaphat had some reservations; so he called for a prophet of God named Micaiah. Initially, Micaiah lied; probably to save his own skin because King Ahab didn't like him. However, when Jehoshaphat insisted on hearing the truth, Micaiah told them that the Lord had sent a lying spirit into the mouths of all of Ahab's false prophets. Because of his boldness in speaking the truth, Ahab had Micaiah thrown into prison. The chapter concludes with Ahab dying at the hands of his Assyrian enemies. If you wish to read the whole story, it can be found in 1 Kings chapter twenty-two. In contrast to evil King Ahab, Hezekiah was one of the few kings whose heart was right before the Lord.

While the story of Ahab is an extreme example, it does bring out a key point in our current discussion: If you are so stubborn that you will purposely and consciously go against what the Lord knows is best for you, then you must be prepared to pay the consequences. Not only that, the Lord might even choose to allow you to believe your delusion as when He sent the lying spirit to the false prophets. Sadly, this very same condition exists in our world today. So many people have rejected the Truth that God is allowing them to live their delusions; in fact, He will choose their delusions for them. Here are a few verses to support this view:

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:"
2 Thessalonians 2:10-11, KJV

"I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not."
Isaiah 66:4, KJV

So, as can be seen, knowing what the Will of the Lord is or isn't, is indeed an important issue. Following through on what He shows you is equally as important. But, if you are not yet sure what God's Will is for your life, then just be patient and wait until He does show you. Don't try to move ahead in your own strength. And while you are waiting, do what you already know you are supposed to be doing; be a faithful witness in whatever capacity you can. As Jesus said:

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
Matthew 5:16, KJV

That is something you can do anywhere anytime while you are waiting on the other. I hope this article is a help and a blessing to many. If you would like additional information on this topic, please refer to other articles such as "Free Will and Personal Choice".

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