



**How Can I  
Know  
God's  
Will?**

## How Can I Know God's Will?

Shall I go into Christian service or continue with my present job?

Whom shall I marry?

Where should we attend church?

Is it right for Christians to enter sweepstakes, buy lottery tickets, watch videos, buy and sell on the stock market, use the internet, use credit cards, seek healing through "alternative medicine," or take medication for depression?

Christians face a host of issues in our world today that call for decisions. Obviously, some decisions are major, with far-reaching consequences, and others are relatively minor.

How can we know the will of God?

Some people emphasize "open and closed doors" in discerning God's will. Others emphasize the "inner peace" by which they "know" what God is saying to them.

True, God does lead through circumstances and He does speak by His Spirit, but many people misinterpret

these signs and chart a course that is selfish, declaring they are following God's will.

Following is a checklist of questions you might ask when facing decisions:

1. *How can I best glorify God?*

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31). We should do nothing, say nothing, wear nothing, involve ourselves in nothing that would bring shame to the name of God.

2. *Do I have any selfish motives?*

“Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts” (James 4:3). How easily our selfish motivations crowd into our attempts to know and do God's will.

3. *Am I willing to do whatever God says?*

“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John 7:17). A commitment to obey God, whatever His direction may be, gives us a healthy premise

for discerning God's will. (Study Jeremiah 42.)

4. *Is this within the umbrella of God's universal will?* "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). God will never lead us to do that which His Word forbids or lead us to disobey that which His Word commands.

5. *Is this in harmony with God's purposes for my life?* "Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? Nevertheless we have not used this power" (1 Corinthians 9:6, 12). Within the boundaries of God's will for everyone are boundaries God may set for each individual. To know God's will, we must consider not only what is right and wrong, but also what is best according to what God wants from my life.

6. *What do my authorities say?* "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account" (Hebrews 13:17). God often gives us guidance through

those in authority.

7. *What makes the best use of my resources?* “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much” (Luke 16:10). God expects me to use my resources according to His purposes, not mine.

8. *Is this God’s time?* “Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way” (Psalm 37:7). How easily we are distracted from peace in the Lord’s wisdom and timing when we compare our lives with others!

9. *Has God opened the doors?* “A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries” (1 Corinthians 16:9). God can and does confirm His will through open and closed doors.

10. *Do I have an inner peace?* “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). God can and does speak to the hearts of those who know His voice.

In discerning God's will, a pure heart is imperative. For this reason, we do best to keep the last two points last because they are so subject to our own interpretation—we can convince ourselves God is showing us His will through open doors or through a peace within, when in reality we are following our own desires. We can safely assume that when we truly want to know God's will, He truly wants to show us His will.

Although knowing God's will is important, doing His will is the mark of true wisdom. "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:17).

—John Coblentz