

What Is the Will of God?

Understanding the Will of God (Part 1)

Introduction

- There is great interest in the will of God (e.g. books, Internet, conversations), but there is also much confusion concerning the subject—even among Christians.
- Yet, God demands that we avoid ignorance and fully understand His will – Eph 5:17.
- In this series, we will define and describe the nature, expression, and significance of the will of God, especially highlighting our personal involvement in it.

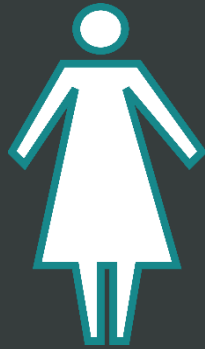
Definition

- All of the words in the Bible translated “will,” whether verbs or nouns, carry the idea of “desire,” “wish,” “intention,” or “plan,” with one exception – see Heb 9:16.
 - “abah” = “willing, consenting” – Deut 10:10
 - “razon” = “favor, acceptance, will” – Ps 40:8
 - “boulamai” and “thelo” = “want, plan” – 2 Pet 3:9; Matt 9:13
 - “thelema” = “desire, action” – Matt 6:10
- The phrase “the will of God” expresses divine intention and purpose coupled with His ability, though not necessarily obligation to perform it.

Categories

- The will of God is multifaceted and must be variously categorized. (Much of the confusion regarding the will of God seems to stem from misunderstanding of this.)
 - the unchangeable will of God – Ps 33:11; Prov 19:21; Isa 46:10; Eph 3:10-11; Gal 1:4
 - the intended will of God – 1 Tim 2:3-6; see Gen 1:26-27
 - the permissive will of God – Jas 4:15; 2 Cor 2:12-13; 1 Cor 7:39-40

Categories



Christian A
Unscripturally Divorced



Christian B
Older



Christian C
Younger



Remain Unmarried

- We must personally discern the will of God, while at the same time avoiding presumption – Rom 12:2; Eph 5:10; Deut 29:29; Gen 50:20; Esther 4:14.

Application

- God expects us to understand His will, which means we should recognize His unchangeable will, submit to His intended will, and use wisdom within His permissive will.
- If we are diligently obeying the intended will of God, we need not worry about His permissive will, because He will providentially do what is best – see Rom 8:28.

Application

- Thus, it is important that we understand some of the most basic expectations within the (intended) will of God for us, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - salvation – 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9
 - Spirit-filling – Eph 5:17-18; Col 3:16
 - sanctification – 1 Thess 4:3; 1 Pet 1:14-16
 - submission – 1 Pet 2:13-17; see Acts 5:29
 - suffering – 1 Pet 4:19; 2:15
 - satisfaction – 1 Thess 5:18; see Rom 1:18-22

Application

- Finally, our eternal destiny depends on whether we are doing the will of God or practicing lawlessness. Which will we choose? – see Matt 7:21-23.