

Center for Global Ministries

Discipleship Materials

Liberty University

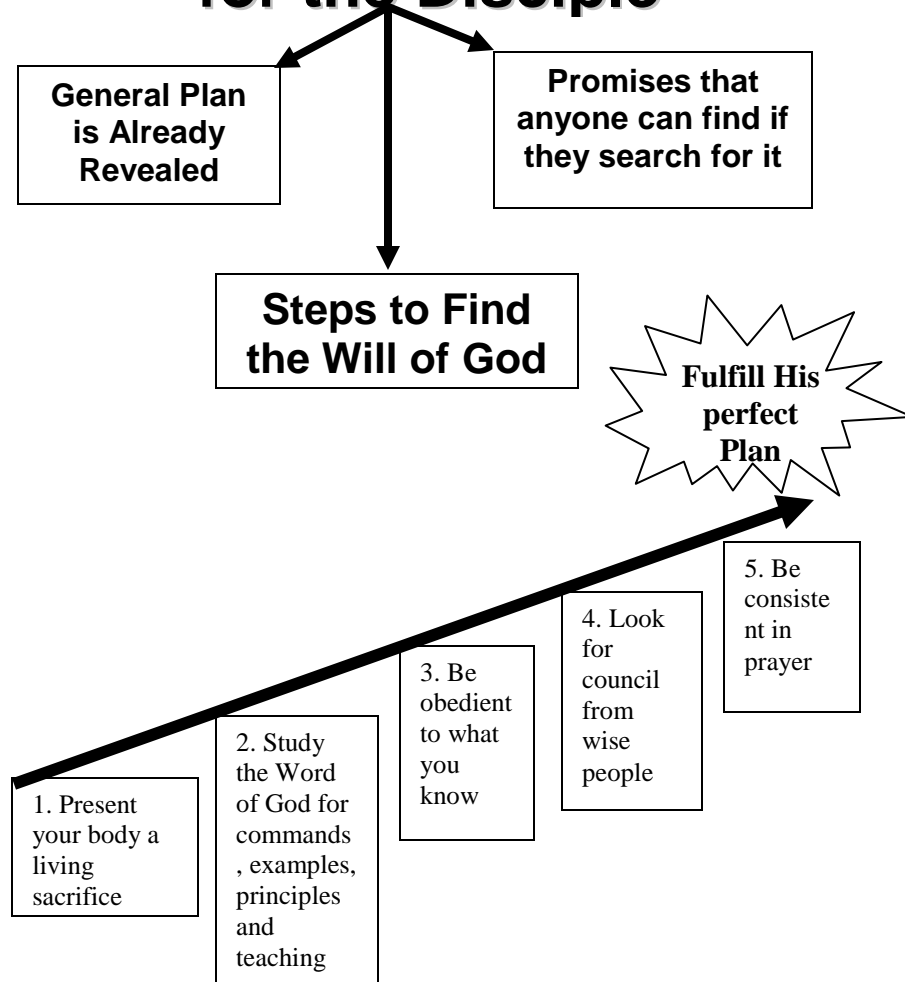
Year 2009

Step 9: What is the “will of God” and
How do I discover it?

Don Fanning
Liberty University, dfanning@liberty.edu

Step 9: Will of God for the Disciple

The Will of God for the Disciple



Step 9: Will of God for the Disciple

DISCERNING THE WILL OF GOD

Salvation IS a living relationship with a Person who loves us and wants the best for our lives. God not only gives us eternal life but He also gives us clear and daily direction in this life.

In **Romans 2:18** How do we know the will of God? _____

The “law” refers to the Bible, especially the Old Testament. We must be instructed by the “law” in order to know the will of God, and we must be committed to know the Word in order to be sure of making right decisions.

THE GENERAL PLAN FOR OUR LIVES

Many of us have wrong concepts about the character and personality of God. Because we sometimes think that God only wants to punish us or that He really is not interested in us, we tend to be afraid of yielding complete control to Him. How does **Jeremiah (29:11)** express God’s attitude toward us? _____

God does want all the best for us: “...plans to prosper you...to give you hope and a future”. This verse encourages us to trust in God and be obedient to His will because His purpose is to benefit us. What are the three adjectives that Paul used to describe the will of God in **Romans 12:2**?

a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

5. Which of the three is found in **Jeremiah 29:11**? _____

God’s plan for us is not only good, but it is also “agreeable”. This Word means “good, fulfilling, and delightful.” God’s will is designed to give us purpose and fulfillment. What is the result of obeying the will of God as we see it in **John 15:11**? _____

For the obedient believer God’s will brings joy. The third adjective in **Romans 12:2** is “perfect.” This implies that God’s plan will surely fulfill His purpose for us. In **Ephesians 2:10** there are several important concepts:

How are we equipped to do “good works” (His will)? _____

Step 9: Will of God for the Disciple

When were these (good works) planned in detail (God's will)? _____

His "workmanship" prepared us to place us in His plan "in advance". Any other plan is secondary. Can you see why it is important to get involved in His plan from the beginning of your Christian life?

PROMISES CONCERNING THE WILL OF GOD

God's specific will for your life happens as you apply biblical truths in your daily living. A life lived in daily obedience is a life lived in the "will of God. These promises will give you confidence to follow the Lord's will:

★ God has promised us specific direction.

He wants us to feel secure in the knowledge of His will in each situation that may come. Read these verses:

Psalms 25:8-10 To whom does God promise His direction? _____

What does He specifically promise to give us? _____

A **meek** person is one who can be controlled by his superior, one who voluntarily puts himself under another's authority. The promise is for **understanding and judgment** (wisdom to make decisions).

★ God has promised to give us WISDOM to discover His will.

He does not want to hide his will from us, but neither does he make it too obvious. Only a person truly interested and committed will take the time to investigate the information the Lord has left us. Read Proverbs 2:1-4. Write the eight verbs that describe this kind of investigation:

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____ 6. _____
7. _____ 8. _____

Getting wisdom (knowing His will) requires Accepting it, Storing it, Listening to it, Applying it, Calling out for it, Crying out for it, Looking for it and Searching for it in the Scriptures.. That is to say, discovering the will of God

Step 9: Will of God for the Disciple

requires **committing yourself to the Word of God**. What does God promise in James 1:5? _____

When Paul prayed for the Colossians (**Colossians 1:9**), he used two terms to describe the will of God. What are they?

- a. _____
- b. _____

"Wisdom" comes as we learn the principles of the Word, and use "spiritual intelligence" as we apply these to our daily lives.

★ God has promised to work in us so that we desire to do His will.

God is engineering our lives long before it is time to make a decision. Read **Philippians 2:13**. What does God promise to do in us? _____

He will help us "to will and to do" as He prepares us to accomplish what He wants. God can transform us as we delight ourselves in Him. Read **Psalm 37:4**. If we delight ourselves in the Lord, what does He promise? _____

★ God has promised to correct us when we fail to do His will.

Read **Colossians 3:15**. The peace of God does not cause us to know the will of God, but it will be the result of obeying God's Word. What will we lose if we disobey His will? _____

That which will govern our hearts and lives is the peace of God. The word "*govern*", in Greek means "the decision making authority of a judge in an athletic event". We are to protect the unity and bond of peace in the church at all costs to us and our rights.

STEPS FOR FINDING THE WILL OF GOD

Life is a series of decisions made for different motives and objectives for which the Bible helps us control our attitudes and goals. These steps will help you in making those decisions according to God's will.

Step 9: Will of God for the Disciple

STEP #1: PRESENT YOUR BODY TO THE LORD AS A LIVING SACRIFICE

We humans have a tendency to be egotistical and selfish. In the Old Testament, God asked his people to sacrifice the best of their flocks and other possessions. In the New Testament, He asks us to sacrifice our bodies. In **Romans 12:1** what should motivate us to be a “*living sacrifice*”? _____

The more you recognize how great is God’s pardon and mercy toward sinners, the easier it will be to yield to Jesus the direction of your life.

When the Christians of Macedonia contributed to Paul’s ministry, what were the two steps they took, according to **2 Corinthians 8:5**?

- _____
- _____

Being a “*living sacrifice*” is **giving yourself to the Lord**. Once we have allowed Christ to govern our lives, we are committed to the “*will of God*”, revealed in His Word.

In 1 Corinthians 6:19, what had the Corinthians forgotten? _____

We do not own our bodies. How can God demand this response to His direction? Read **1 Corinthians 6:20** _____

We have been washed in the blood of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:11), and bought through His death on the cross. Therefore, we should learn obedience. Write in your own words why we should be submissive to His will. _____

STEP #2: STUDY THE WORD OF GOD

Step 9: Will of God for the Disciple

Since most of our decisions are made according to our goals and attitudes, we should be very careful to form our goals and attitudes according to the Word of God.

What goals do these verses set for us?

- 1 Corinthians 10:31 _____
- Romans 14:19 _____
- Galatians 6:9-10 _____
- 1 Corinthians 10:32-33 _____
- Colossians 1:10 _____
- 1 Corinthians 6:12 _____

When I am about to make an important decision, I should ask myself:

- If I accept this opportunity, will it help me accomplish my goals for Christ?
- If there are more than one biblical options, which one would be of maximum benefit toward accomplishing my biblical objectives?

We should not only seek biblical goals, but also the attitudes that will honor God. Study these biblical attitudes.

God’s will for our ATTITUDES...

___IS...	IS NOT...	Key Passages:
Love	Desire	1 Cor 13:1-3
Humility	Pride	Phil. 2:3-8
Clean Conscience	Guilt	Ro 14:22-23
Integrity	Irresponsibility	Col 3:17,22
Gratitude	Presumption	Col. 3:17
Diligence	Laziness	Col. 3:23
Longing	Obligation	1 Pt 5:2
Generosity	Egotism	1 Tim. 6:17-19
Submission	Rebellion	1 Pt 5:5-6
Courage	Cowardliness	John 16:33
Contentment	Love of money	Heb. 13:5

This is only the beginning. The Bible is full of instructions for our lives, and we must study to find them.

According to 2 Peter 1:3-4, what has been given to us so that we may live the Christian life to the fullest? _____

Step 9: Will of God for the Disciple

It is wonderful to know that everything we need to be in right relationship with Christ (piety) has been given to us through His “great and precious promises”. It is worth the effort it takes to find all His instructions and put them into practice.

STEP #3: OBEY AS WE UNDERSTAND

In each of these verses there are two steps we must take in order to achieve a progressive growth in the knowledge of His will. Write the steps you find.

John 7:17 a. _____
b. _____

John 13:17 a. _____
b. _____

First we must **desire to do** His will before the power to **understand** the Word. Once we know it, then can come the **blessing** if we obey or the **punishment** if we do not.

The following are verses that give us different ways to gain understanding of the Word of God. Write what you find as you study:

1 Timothy 4:13 _____
2 Timothy 2:7 _____
1 Peter 1:10-11 _____
2 Timothy 2:15 _____
Joshua 1:8 _____
Philippians 4:9 _____

This process requires time and personal effort. With each commitment to obey what we know, spiritual growth will take us further into spiritual maturity.

STEP #4: SEEK THE ADVICE OF MATURE CHRISTIANS

Counsel from mature Christians is not the same authority’s the Bible, however, it is an important fountain of wisdom. They can provide concepts and information we need in our decision making.

What is the common element for victory that we find in the following verses?

Proverbs 11:14 _____
Proverbs 24:6 _____

Step 9: Will of God for the Disciple

In the abundance of counselors there is victory. Instead of asking for opinions about your specific situation, it is better to ask questions such as: “What Bible verses would apply in this circumstance?” or “Have you had an experience that would help in this decision?”

Why is it good to get counsel from others? _____

STEP #5: BE CONSTANT IN PRAYER

God does not want us to be anxious in regard to the future. In **Philippians 4:6**, what should we do to avoid worry? _____

In prayer we can express our trust, consciously leaving the future or the consequences of our obedience in the hands of our sovereign God. This verse not only teaches us to bring our petitions to God, but also our _____?

The more we give thanks in the circumstances of life, the more God will “guard” our hearts and minds (vs. 7). Through prayer we experience the freedom from the tension of being responsible for the direction of our lives.

We find another principle in 2 Thessalonians 1:11. Who is praying for whom?

34. Paul’s team prayed regularly for the Thessalonians. He prayed that they would be “worthy” and that God would “fulfill every good purpose” of theirs and every act prompted by their faith. This is the principle: while others pray for you that God would work powerfully in your life, you should be praying for them. **WE ALL NEED OTHERS TO PRAY FOR US AND WE FOR THEM.**

35. **Conclusion:** We have the tendency to want to know God’s great purpose for us, to see if we want what He wants. The person with this attitude will not be able to know the will of God.

If God is God, and He is, , He expects us to commit to obey Him without knowing where He will take us. When we prove our obedience in small things, then God will guide us into His will in big and more important things.

In the meantime, God wants us to invest in the lives of others, building them up in the things of the Lord and evangelizing those who do not know Him.

REVIEW #9: THE WILL OF GOD

1. What are the three adjectives or descriptions of the will of God in Romans 12:2? The will of God is...
G _____
P _____
P _____

2. There are three key principles for remembering the will of God. Beside each biblical reference, write the principle in your own words.
 - a. James 1:5 _____
(for the mind)
 - b. Philippians 2:13 _____
(for the will)
 - c. Colossians 3:15 _____
(for the heart)

3. What is a “living sacrifice? What verse talks about this?

4. How does Bible study help us to find the will of God?

5. How can others help us discover God’s will for us?

6. How do we avoid worry over the future?

7. Fill in the blanks with the steps in finding and doing the will of God.
 - a. Present your B _____ as a L _____ S
 - b. Study the W _____ of G _____
 - c. Be O _____ to that which you know.
 - d. Seek C _____ from other M _____
believers.
 - e. Be consistent in P _____