

I. What is God's Will for Your Life?

- A. Many of us have found ourselves in various seasons where we have wrestled with this question. Only our heavenly Father has perfect understanding and He has a plan for how we each ideally fit and contribute to partnering with Him in His kingdom. We all have a desire to partner with His plan and be in line with His will.
- B. The question of God's will for your life usually is asked in the context of decisions that guide the course of your life. The question of God's plan or will comes up often when considering new jobs, moving, dating, pursuing specialized education, etc...
- C. Here are some general biblical guidelines to consider when your desiring to hear God's voice concerning His will or plan for your life.
 - 1. The scriptures speak very clearly of God's general will for all humanity and these types of scriptures far outweigh the scriptures that talk of unique or specific plans for individuals. With this in mind let us place the appropriate weight on walking in the general will of God. (Eph. 1:3-10; 1 Thes. 4:1-6, 5:14-18; 2 Tim. 2:19-26; 2 Pet. 1:1-4)

Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. (Mat. 22:27-40)

- 2. The truths contained in the written word alone are more than sufficient for you to walk in God's will for your life. If the decisions you're making are in contradiction to these truths and righteous guidelines than you are not walking in God's will. (Pro. 6:23; Ps. 19:7-11; 1 Tim. 3:16-17)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path. (Ps. 119:105)

- 3. There is a popular notion that doing God's will and walking in His plan for your life is synonymous with easy circumstances and successful results. This is a great error and leads many to disillusionment and rejection of God. (Jhn. 16:33; 1 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 5:6-11)

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive." (Gen. 50:20)

II. Lifestyle of Communing

A. Maturity in hearing God's voice does not happen in a vacuum or out of desperation to hear in urgent circumstances. There are a few key values that we see in the individuals in the bible who lived a lifestyle of communion. Incorporating these values will position you to hear God's voice and also help you grow. Even though these values will take up a few pages, it really only takes a few minutes for put them all together and commune with Jesus.

1. **Set an Appointment** – I find that in order to set an appointment to commune with Jesus I have to give up time that I am normally doing something else rather than finding free time in my schedule. Give the Lord the best part of your day, not the most convenient part of your day. If you're a morning person then set your appointment in the morning. (Dan. 6:10; Mat. 14:23; Mar 6:46; Lk 6:12, 9:28; Acts 3:1, 10:9)
2. **Worship** – God designed worship to shift our souls to be in tune with His presence and voice. Turn on worship, or do your own worship if you have the talent. Sing with your voice or with your heart. (2 Ki. 3:15; Jhn. 4:23-24; Acts 16:25; Eph. 5:18-19; Col 3:16)
3. **Read for Conversation** – God's word found in Scripture gives us the conversational material for our prayer lives. Talking to God as we read the Word makes communion easy and enjoyable. We speak the truths of the Word back to God as we read. Move from "study mode" to "dialogue mode" when you read.

Jesus corrected the Pharisees for thinking they would experience God's life or presence simply by knowing the Bible. He was saying, in essence, "You study the Bible, but you are not willing to come to Me in an ongoing conversation that you may experience God's presence." We were created to talk to God in conversation more than we were created for anything else (Job. 23:12; Mat. 4:4; Rom. 10:17, 15:4; Col. 3:16; Heb. 4:12; 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)

4. **Listen** - Often when He "talks," He does not use audible words but gives us impressions, sensitizing our emotions so we can feel His nearness, or speak through His Word. He gives subtle impressions that release His power on our minds and hearts. God often leads us by the still, small voice in our inner man similar to the still small voice He used to speak to Elijah. (Jer. 33:3; Jn. 5:39-40, 10:27, 16:13 Rom. 10:17)
5. **Write your Conversation** - Journaling serves to record your conversations with God and it helps in making those conversations more impactful upon your soul. Do not just record requests, but what he is teaching and revealing to you, and what you are saying to him. (1 Ch. 16:12; Ps. 77:11, 111:4)
6. **Resist Sin, Pursue Righteousness** – Having areas of compromise in you life produces death in your mind, will, and emotions. Sin shuts down your heart and quenches the Holy Spirit's voice. Giving, serving, fasting, blessing your enemies all position your heart in greater ways to hear and encounter Jesus. (Jhn 10:10; Eph. 4:30; Jas. 1:15; 4:7-9)

III. Prioritizing the General Voice

- A. I find that many people are trying to hear specific directional words from the Lord without the habit of hearing the general words of His heart every day. They are attempting to hear God out of necessity of circumstances rather than the normalcy of communing with Jesus. (Lk 10:38-42)

Your call will become clear as your mind is transformed by the reading of scripture and the internal work of Gods Spirit. The Lord never hides his will from us. In time, as you obey to do the first things, your destiny will unfold before you. The difficulty lies in keeping other concerns from diverting your attention from the first things. - Charles Swindoll