

Looking for God's Will

"This is the will of God, your sanctification" (v. 3).

- [1 Thessalonians 4:3-8](#)

Though Paul was an Apostle, he did not have automatic insight into all of the plans of God and His will in each specific situation. We see this implicitly in Paul's request for the Romans to pray that the Jerusalem Christians would find the support from the Gentile churches acceptable ([Rom. 15:31](#)). At the time he wrote, Paul did not know whether the Jews would accept the offering. He did know, of course, that if God had ordained it, the Jews would certainly receive the monies in gladness. But the only reason for him to ask for such a specific result was that he did not know the Lord's will in the matter. After all, if he knew it was not God's will for the Jews to receive the monies, there would have been no point in asking for prayer, because to pray against God's will is futile.

Paul's request for prayer is based in part on the fact that he did not know what God willed in that specific situation, and this raises the issue of how we can know God's will. In order to help us get a better idea of how we may discern the will of the Lord and please Him in all that we do, we will now take a short break from our study of Romans and look at what Scripture says about God's will using Dr. R.C. Sproul's teaching series *Knowing God's Will*.

Life presents us with many opportunities for trying to discern God's will for us. We face many situations in which we must make a choice between two good options, and we are unsure which one is what the Lord has willed for us. This is especially difficult when neither option seems to be more advantageous than the other. At such times, we often ask God to intervene in a special way to show us the way forward. Most of us, of course, can think of times when the Lord seemed to give us special aid. One of the good opportunities might inexplicably vanish. Maybe we get an unexpected phone call from a friend and the conversation turns out to have bearing on the matter even if we never mention it. Still, even though such things may happen, they are extraordinary. The Lord does not ordinarily guide our decision-making in such ways. We need to know

how to make God-pleasing decisions when no special providence is forthcoming, and we need to know how to distinguish what seems to be providential direction from our own imagination.

The first place to turn when we must make a choice is our Creator's wisdom in Scripture. His Word says that above all, His will for us is our sanctification ([1 Thess. 4:3](#)). Thus, anything that works against our personal holiness is to be rejected.

Application of God

If we are fretting about God's will for us in a particular situation and one of the options available is ungodly, we may fret no longer. We are never allowed to disobey our Creator's revealed standards, and if one of our options would require us to do that, we must immediately choose otherwise. The Lord's will for us is our sanctification, so we must study Scripture diligently in order to know His will and to understand what the holiness He demands looks like.

Passages for Further Study

[Psalm 25:4-5](#)

[1 Peter 2:15](#)