

## What is God's will for my life?

Christians often spend a lot of energy trying to discern the will of God in their lives. They earnestly seek God's direction in which job to take, how to raise their children, what house to buy, etc. They expect to hear a voice from Heaven with clear, specific instructions for living their lives. If things work out, they attribute it to God's will for them; if they don't, they begin to doubt their faith or, even worse, wonder why God seems unconcerned about them. They become paralyzed with fear and even doubt whether their relationship with God is real.

Quite simply, the will of God for all believers is to walk by faith in Jesus Christ, allowing Him to live His life through them. As Romans 12:2 explains,

*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will."*

In Classic Christianity, Bob George explains that Romans 12:1-2 is describing an attitude of total surrender. The motivation Paul offers is "in view of God's mercy." What's that? The love and grace of God. In view of God's mercy, the most reasonable, logical thing you can do is to offer yourself without reservation to a God who loves you beyond comprehension.

Notice that Paul does not talk about commitment. Commitment and surrender are two different things. Commitment is what I am promising to do for God. Surrender is placing myself and my life in His hands to do with as He pleases. We are surrendering ourselves to a loving God and Father, who will take charge of our lives in His perfect wisdom and control. Why would we ever hesitate, once we have learned of His love for us?

After exhorting us to adopt this attitude, the first thing Paul says is to "be transformed by the renewing of your mind." In other words, allow God to begin teaching your mind His truth to replace the error of natural thinking. Based on His Word, begin looking at yourself and life from God's perspective, rather than from man's perspective.

One of the most fundamental things you are surrendering to Christ is all claim to personal rights. Things like a "right" to happiness, the "right" to be noticed, the "right" for life to be fair, the "right" to be appreciated, the "right" to get your own way.

*Life's Toughest Questions:*  
8. What is God's will for my life?

There's a very simple reason why this must be so: *You can't hold onto your rights and maintain a thankful spirit at the same time.* The essence of a life of faith is a thankful heart. It is expressed concisely in a single verse, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Giving thanks is a concrete expression of our faith in God – that our lives are in His hands, and that we are trusting Him to fulfill His promise in Romans 8:28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." The result of trusting God with our lives and expressing that faith through giving thanks is a freedom and peace that is supernatural:

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6,7).*

If you find yourself wondering whether to accept one job or another, instead of waiting for divine acknowledgment of which to take, spend time thanking God for both opportunities, thanking Him for the choice before you, thanking Him that He will be with you no matter which job you choose, and thanking Him for His promise to *work all things together for your good.* Then you will begin to experience the peace that comes from living a life of dependence on Him and resting in His good, pleasing and perfect will.

