

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THIS?

What Does the Bible Say About God's Will for My Life?

What is God's Will?

Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT) ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

- A definition of the will of God: The will of God is God's sovereign plan, desire, and purpose for all creation, revealed through *His Word*, accomplished through *His Son*, and guided by *His Spirit*.
- Aspects of God's will include:
 - *His Sovereign Will* - is what God, by his limitless power and knowledge, has eternally ordered and determined to happen from beginning to end in all of his creation, all for His glory. *Psalms 33:11 (NLT) ¹¹ But the LORD's plans stand firm forever; his intentions can never be shaken.*
 - *His General Will* - is what God, by his limitless perfection and holiness, has revealed about His character and the righteous requirements for humanity who live under His Sovereign rule and reign. *Matthew 7:21 Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.'*
 - *His Specific Will* - is the unique, personal path and purpose God has for each individual believer. *Ephesians 2:10 (NLT) ¹⁰ For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

God's Sovereign Will

1. *God's Sovereign Will Is Unstoppable*
 - "I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted." (Job 42:2)
 - God's sovereign will isn't limited by human weakness, sin, or failure.
2. *God's Sovereign Will Works All Things for Our Good*
 - "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." (Romans 8:28)
 - Even suffering, loss, and disappointment are woven into God's greater purpose.
3. *God's Sovereign Will Leads Us to Salvation & Eternal Life*
 - "He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight." (Ephesians 1:4–5)
 - God's sovereign will is that we belong to Him, redeemed by Christ, and conformed to His image.
4. *God's Sovereign Will Gives Us Security & Hope*
 - "The LORD Almighty has sworn, 'Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will happen.'" (Isaiah 14:24)
 - Because God is sovereign, nothing happens outside His control.

God's General Will

- God's general will is for all believers
 1. *Salvation & Relationship with Him*
 - "[God] wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:3–4)
 - God's first and greatest will is that we know Him through Jesus Christ.

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2. Sanctification & Holiness

- *"It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality."* (1 Thessalonians 4:3)
- God desires believers to grow in holiness, becoming more like Christ.

3. Thankfulness in All Circumstances

- *"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."* (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- Gratitude is God's will because it shifts our perspective from self to Him.

4. Doing Justice, Loving Mercy, Walking Humbly

- *"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."* (Micah 6:8)
- God's will includes living ethically, loving others, and remaining humble before Him.

5. Obedience to His Word

- *"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."* (James 1:22)
- God's will is for us to be doers of His Word, not just hearers only

6. Loving One Another

- *"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."* (John 15:12)
- Love is the foundation of God's will—it fulfills the law *Romans 13:10 (NLT)* 10 *Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God's law.*

God's Specific Will

- God's Specific Will is your unique calling and purpose

1. God's Specific Will Is Rooted in Your Design

- *"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."* (Ephesians 2:10)
- God created you intentionally—your talents, personality, and passions are clues to your calling.
- Just as different parts of a body serve distinct functions (1 Corinthians 12:27), our individual characteristics serve a unique purpose in the larger body of believers.
- Your gifts and passions can serve as a *spiritual compass* for discerning your calling.
- When your passions and talents align, they are powerful motivators for service to God and others.

2. God's Specific Will Is Revealed Through the Holy Spirit

- *"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth."* (John 16:13)
- The Holy Spirit gives direction, conviction, and confirmation as we walk with Him.
- One of the ways the Holy Spirit reveals God's will is *peace* about the matter
- The Spirit is like a compass—it always points true north (God's will), even when the path seems unclear.

3. God's Specific Will Is Confirmed by Wise Counsel & Open Doors

- *"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."* (Proverbs 15:22)
- God often uses godly mentors, pastors, and community to confirm His will.
- God's *specific will* is often like traffic lights; God uses "green lights" (open doors), "red lights" (closed doors), and "yellow lights" (wait) to guide us

4. God's Specific Will Is Discovered in Obedience & Small Steps

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- *"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much."* (Luke 16:10)
- Start serving where you are; God expands influence as you prove faithful.
- You're volunteering to teach a Sunday school class, you may discover a passion, that may lead training other teachers, or having a teaching ministry
- God's will is like a staircase—He reveals it *one step at a time*, not the whole staircase.

Principles for Discovering God's Will

1. Surrender Your Will to God's Will

- *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice... Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed... Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."* (Romans 12:1–2)
- God's will is revealed to surrendered hearts, not stubborn ones.
- Why do you think surrender must come before clarity about God's will?
- Surrender positions us to hear God clearly.
- God reveals His will to those who are yielded to Him
- Surrender aligns us with God's *purposes*, not just our "preferences"
- Without surrender, clarity could be dangerous
- Surrender is like turning the radio dial to the right frequency. Without it, we get static. With it, God's signal comes through clearly.

2. Trust God's Guidance Through His Word & Prayer

- *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."* (Proverbs 3:5–6)
- God's Word and prayer are the primary ways He guides His people.
- Just as a compass always points north; God's Word *always points* to truth, even when our emotions waver.

3. Delight in God and Align Desires with His

- *"Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart."* (Psalm 37:4)
- To "delight" in the Lord means to find your greatest joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment in Him—not in your own ambitions or plans
- This verse doesn't mean God will "rubber-stamp" every wish you have, instead, as you delight in Him, God shapes and refines your desires.
- The desires He places in you become the very pathway to discovering His will.

4. Be Faithful in the Small Things

- *"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much."* (Luke 16:10)
- God reveals greater assignments to those who prove faithful with small responsibilities.
- Before God entrusts us with greater assignments, He watches how we handle the daily, ordinary, "small" responsibilities—our time, relationships, finances, and ministry opportunities.
- Discovering God's will begins with obedience to what you *already* know.

5. Seek Wise Counsel & Confirmation

- *"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."* (Proverbs 15:22)
- God often confirms His will through mentors, leaders, and trusted believers.
- Discovering God's will often happens as we *test* our ideas against the wisdom of godly, trusted voices.

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- Wise counsel protects us from blind spots, immaturity, or self-deception.
 - The counsel of others brings clarity and balance
 - God often uses seasoned believers, mentors, or leaders to bring clarity we might miss on our own.
 - The counsel of others guards against pride and independence
 - Seeking counsel is an act of humility—it acknowledges, “I don’t know it all.”
 - While God speaks to us personally, He often confirms His direction through the wisdom of others who walk closely with Him.
6. *Wait Patiently and Walk by Faith*
- “Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him...” (Psalm 37:7)
 - God’s *timing* is as important as God’s *direction*
 - Being “still before the Lord” means resting in His presence without rushing or striving.
 - God’s will is revealed when we quiet our hearts to listen.
 - Psalms 37:7 calls us to “wait patiently.” God’s will isn’t always revealed instantly
 - Sometimes the waiting itself shapes us for what He has planned.
 - Our *waiting time* is not “wasted time”; it’s preparation for walking in His will.
 - Your calling is unique; focus on God’s timing *for you*

Living in God's Will

1. *Live for God's Glory*
- “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)
 - God’s will isn’t just about “big life decisions,” it’s about honoring Him in ordinary, everyday actions
 - Let’s ask ourselves in every decision: “*Will this bring glory to God?*”
2. *Serve Others with Love*
- “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45)
 - Living in God’s will means living a life of service and sacrifice for others.
 - Serving others takes *nothing* away from you
 - **Assignment:** Identify one way to serve someone selflessly this week.
3. *Make Disciples & Share the Gospel*
- “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19–20)
 - Every believer’s *ultimate purpose* is to share Jesus and help others grow in Him.
 - If you found a cure for cancer, you’d share it. The gospel is *the cure* for sin; we must share it
 - **Assignment:** Pray for one person in your life who needs Jesus and take steps to minister to them
4. *Stay Faithful in Your Calling*
- “Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.” (1 Corinthians 4:2)
 - Living in God’s will is about consistency, not just moments of inspiration
 - We can faithfully live out whatever we do for a living in a way that impacts lives for Christ every day
 - Stay committed to the assignment God has given you now, even if it feels small.