

What Is The Will Of God?

Paul wrote about the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. In Romans 12:1-2 Paul wrote, " I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." There is a way to live, a way to worship, a way to love and a way to serve. The way is to determine the will of God in every phase of our life and do it. In Christ we are new creatures and our conversation or manner of life must be controlled by the will of God. (2 Corinthians 5:17) The will of God involves that which He commands us to do. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 7:21) "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John 2:17) Immerse yourself in the idea of learning and doing the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

What is the will of God concerning salvation? The price was paid for our salvation by the death of Jesus. (Isaiah 53) Now we must lovingly respond to God. Faith is the beginning point for salvation and for all acceptable service to God. "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17) Faith is the motivation for all obedience toward God. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6) Repentance is also required. Repentance is a change of mind or heart that results in a change in life. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9) It is either repent or perish. Confession of faith in Jesus as Lord also plays a part in our salvation. (Romans 10:9-10) A simple confession of one's faith in Jesus as Lord and Christ is a necessary step in conversion. The final step in becoming a Christian is baptism into Christ. "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:27) Every command of God is important and baptism is a command of God. (Mark 16:16) This is the will of God concerning salvation and salvation can be obtained in no other way!

What is the will of God concerning salvation worship? Acts 2:42 expresses the will of God concerning New Testament worship. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." New Testament worship included: (1) the apostles' teaching. The church must be taught so it can be edified. (1 Corinthians 14:19) (2) The collections were to be made weekly; on the first day. Christians were to give and this giving was called "fellowship." (3) Breaking bread or the Lord's Supper was also part of first day worship. (Acts 2:42) Paul delivered to us what Jesus had delivered to him concerning communion. (1 Corinthians 11:23) (4) Prayers are offered as a part of Christian worship. (Acts 2:42), and (5) Praising God in song is part of New Testament worship. (Acts 2:47) The Corinthian Christians were commanded to sing. (1 Corinthians 14:15) Let us never forsake the will of God in our worship, either by our absence or by and human modifications of God's pattern. (Hebrews 10:25)

What is the will of God concerning church organization? The church of Jesus Christ is organized under Jesus, the Chief Shepherd. (1 Peter 5:4) He is the head of the church. (Ephesians 1:22-23) Elders serve under our Chief Shepherd to oversee the flock, the church.

(Acts 14:23) Elders must be qualified men. (1 Timothy 3:1-7) The church also has qualified men who serve, called deacons. (1 Timothy 3:8-13) There are also evangelists or preachers who use God's authority in their teaching. (Acts 21:8) Preachers work and live under the oversight of the elders. Each local church is self-governing and is answerable only to God. The will of God for church organization will work in any culture and at any time.

What is the will of God concerning benevolence? Jesus said, "You have the poor with you always." (Matthew 26:1) Jesus went about doing good. (Acts 10:38) Let us follow His example. Christians are to work to meet their own needs and to assist those who need help. (Ephesians 4:28) The will of God concerning benevolence is simple and productive. "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith." (Galatians 6:10) Proverbs 14:21 is a great principle that is still true today. "He who despises his neighbor sins; But he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he." Caring for the needy is practicing pure religion. (James 1:27) Those who honor the will of God have mercy on the poor and do their best to relieve their suffering.

What is the will of God concerning Christian growth? Growth is necessary for all living things. In the life of a Christian there must be growth or there will soon be spiritual death. (2 Peter 3:18) Peter describes Christian growth in the following words: "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior." (2 Peter 1:5-11) The will of God is that Christians grow spiritually. The alternative to growth is spiritual death.

What is the will of God concerning evangelism? Church growth is simple when the will of God is followed: "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Timothy 2:2) Soul winning puts purpose and meaning into Christian living. "Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him." (Psalm 126:5-6) The purpose of a Christian is to produce other Christians. (Matthew 7:19-21) The will of God is simple. You have learned the truth. Now, go and tell others!

Both in his living and in his writing the apostle Paul was concerned about doing the will of God. (1 Thessalonians 4:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:18) Knowing God's will and living in obedience to that will is the key to all of life! Surrender daily to the will of God and allow Him to mold you into His likeness.

By Charles Box, Walnut Street Church of Christ, 306 Walnut Street, Greenville, Alabama 36037 USA