

How to know God's will? Part 1 of 3

Ephesians 1:9 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁹ He **made known to us** the mystery of **His will**, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him.

Introduction

This morning, I am beginning a new sermon series: *How to know God's will*. Over 35 years of preaching, this topic, God's will, has been one of the most frequently requested topics—second only to anger.

For the next three Sundays, we'll walk through this subject together. Part 1 (today): why we must know God's will. Part 2: The obstacles that keep us from knowing God's will. Part 3: How we can practically discover and walk in His will.

My prayer is that this series will bring clarity, confidence, and joy in following God's will for your life.

Content

Knowing and doing God's will is not optional—it is essential.

God **makes known to us** of His will (Ephesians 1:9). He **expects** us to live out His will in our daily lives (*"For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother"* —Matthew 12:50). He **prepares** us with everything good to do His will (Hebrews 13:21). He **rewards** those who do His will with eternal blessings (1 John 2:17). Here's

Why We Must Know God's Will. So that we may understand His will and not miss out God's blessings. So that we may live wisely (Ephesians 5:17). So that we may accomplish His work. So that we may walk close with God. So that we may faithfully and effectively live out God's purpose here on earth and advance His Kingdom on earth.

Here's another reason why we must know God's will, because our eternal destiny depends on it. If we don't know God's will, we will not understand His will. If we don't understand His will, we won't be able to do His will. And, if we don't do the will of our heavenly Father, we will not enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 7:21). Listen to Jesus.

E.g., Matthew 7: 21-23²¹ *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **he who does the will of My Father** who is in heaven will enter."*²² Many

will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

Four Lies About God's Will

One of the tragedies in the Church today is that many of us remain ignorant of God's will. Furthermore, some believers live in certain lies regarding God's will. I can identify four lies. Let's expose them. The first lie is,

#1. You **don't have to know God's will** for you. Our enemy Satan constantly whispers this lie to our ears. Never ever believe in his lie! Get this: God the Father wants us to have an abundant life in Christ. Our enemy doesn't. He wants to steal, kill and destroy us (John 10:10). In order for us to enjoy an abundant life in Jesus, we ought to walk in the light. The devil wants us to stay in darkness instead. God wants us to live in love, joy, peace, and righteousness, yet our enemy wants to keep us in discontent, lusts, envy, hate, and unforgiveness.

If we don't make efforts to know God's will, we will end up living our lives like non-believers according to own fleshly desires. God repeatedly says to us, "Know My will and don't settle for less." Say it with me, please: **I will know God's will. I will not settle for less.**

Lie #1: *You don't have to know God's will.*

Truth: *God calls us to know His will so we can live in light, not in darkness.*

The next lie is:

#2. You **don't deserve to know God's will**. This lie flatly contradicts what God has called you for. It denies that you are God's child. God has called you to be His child, not a slave. Your Father in Heaven wants you to be fully assured in **every** will of His (Colossians 4:12). If you still believe that you are not worthy to know His will, you deceive yourself with the devil's lie. It is as bad as telling yourself that you are a slave, not a child of God, who doesn't deserve to know what your heavenly Father is doing.

Listen again: you are God's child; therefore, you have the right to know your Father's will. You are not a slave or an outsider. You are a member of God's family. Jesus declares that you are in the know: **No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you** (John 15:15). Say after me once more: **I am a child of God. I have every right / to know my Father's will for me.**

Lie #2: *You don't deserve to know God's will.*

Truth: *As God's child, you have every right to know your Father's will.*

The third lie is:

#3. It is **impolite to ask of God** to reveal His will to us (this is equally bad as keeping Him as an impersonal and indifferent God from our daily struggles). It is like teaching a child to never inquire of her parents' will because it is very impolite of her to do so.

God welcomes your questions. Asking is part of relationship.

After all, it is God who commands us to ask for His will and wisdom (*But **if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God**, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him—James 1:5*). Here's another promise: *This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, **if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us**—1 John 5:14*).

Say it with me: **every day / I will ask for God's will with confidence.**

Lie #3: *It's impolite to ask.*

Truth: *God delights when you ask for His will.*

The fourth and the biggest lie is:

#4. It is **impossible to know God's will** (this is equal to agnosticism). This lie contradicts God's Word, because Scripture says that it is absolutely possible to know God's will. How? **First**, God reveals His will to us through His Word, His Spirit, and prayer. Take the Ten Commandments, for example. They are God's will for all people, aren't they? God also reveals His will that applies to certain individuals (e.g., 'Should I take this job or not?').

Next, God reveals His will when we ask. Listen to Jesus again: ***ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you*** (Matthew 7:7). E.g., Jesus prayed for God's will in the garden of Gethsemane. E.g. 2, Paul asked for God's will for his illness. When asked by His children, Father God lets us know His will. Please say after me: **it is absolutely possible to know God's will by asking for it.**

Here's the point: knowing God's will is **not an option**. It is a command. We **must know God's will** so that we may lead an abundant life in Christ. Say after me, please: **I must know God's will for me.**

Please keep in mind here: walking in God's will is an integral part of genuine Christian experience for all God's children, not a special and isolated experience for a few believers. God wants you to be familiar with His will and walk in it.

Lie #4: *It's impossible to know God's will.*

Truth: *It is absolutely possible, because God reveals His will through His Word, His Spirit, and prayer.*

Please notice here that

Doing God's will Is Not an Occasional Thing. It is an everyday thing. Make it a daily practice like the way we breathe and eat. Treat it like your food. Jesus says, "*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work*" (John 4:34). Don't we all pray the Lord's Prayer which says, "Thy will be done **on earth** as it is in heaven"? Here, 'on earth' also means 'in our lives.' And God fulfills His will through our lives. So, we are to say to God, "Your will be done in my life today and every day."

Some of you may ask,

What Are the Benefits of Knowing God's Will? Three benefits:

First, *knowing God's will saves us from wasting time.* When we know God's will, we will not be deceived (John 7:17) or chase meaningless things. For example, Jesus commands us to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44). To love our enemies and bless them is God's will. So, when we bless them, not curse, we won't waste any breath on wrong prayers. We do what's pleasing to the Lord, and the Lord will bless us.

Second, *knowing God's will helps us live life to the fullest.* By understanding His will, we will learn to do God's will. Obeying God's will brings us reconciliation, peace, and even health. E.g., Do not let the Sun go down on your anger (Ephesians 4:26).

Third, *knowing God's will shapes us into the image of Christ.* The more faithfully we walk in His will daily, the closer we become like Jesus (Ephesians 5:1, 2 Corinthians 3:18). God transforms us into Christ's image when we obey His will daily.

Conclusion

God wants you to **know** His will (Acts 22:14). He **reveals** His will to you (Ephesians 1:9). He wants you to **understand** His will (Ephesians 5:17). He expects you to **do** His will (Matthew 7:21).

Say after me one last time: **God wants me to know His will. I will walk in His will every day.** Let's pray.

Closing Prayer: *Father in Heaven, be glorified in our lives. Thank you that we are Your children. Help us to know and understand Your will. It is absolutely possible to know Your will, because You reveal it to us. We will do Your will every day. We will not settle for less than Your will. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.*