

THE WILL OF GOD AND DECISION MAKING

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Please keep in mind that this information is a partial flow of thought to a very Bible-wide complex intertwined doctrine. This is a general guideline to help start you in an understanding of this doctrine of how to make good decisions. Please use an Authorized King James Version of the Bible. You should look at the verses in your Bible listed along with this study.

There are two “God’s wills” for man: 1. God’s sovereign will, and 2. God’s moral will.

An example of God’s moral will is that a person will trust in the gospel of Jesus Christ, 1 Tim 2:3-6.

An example of God’s sovereign will is that God will give that person certain eternal life, Jn 6:40.

The moral will of God is what we (should) base our decisions upon. God does allow us to fail for making bad decisions. He also always leaves a way to do what is right 1 Cor 10:13. Try as hard as we might, we cannot make sovereign decisions for God 1 Cor 1:25.

Do you know why we are here and why creation exists? See Isa 43:7 & 1 Cor 10:31. You are here and everything exists to Glorify God. If you can keep this one principle in mind at least half of your decision is already made and gives clear direction toward the part of a decision to be made which may still be obscure.

Look at Romans 12:2b. We will look at 4 words and glean from some decision making principles: Prove, Good, Acceptable, and Perfect. Before we look at “Prove” let’s first study the other 3 words.

GOOD: Mat. 5:16 — Good works are indeed good. But who is good and what does it mean and is there a standard we can identify with as “good” in our works?

Mat. 19:16—17 Identifies what is the “good thing” that makes our works “good”. It is the Good Master Jesus Christ. He justifies our works of righteousness according to his commandments as being a good work, because God is good, because his commandments are righteous and good.

ACCEPTABLE: 1 Tim 2:1—4 Identifies some of the (good) and acceptable things God would have us to do. Note that the end of vs 4 says after we are saved to come unto the knowledge of the truth. This is what acceptability is about. Jesus Christ says in Jn 14:6 that He IS the way, the TRUTH, and the life. Jesus further explains in vs 15 that “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” His commandments is what our decisions are based upon. If you are having difficulty making a decision, maybe you need to study principles in the Bible for guidance, God could be using this situation in your life to do that very thing. The Holy Spirit loves to teach you things about Jesus Christ and what He would have for you Jn 14:26.

1 Pet 2:1—5 shows another aspect of what is acceptable. Sometimes sacrificing what we want for God’s glory is the right decision to make. These Scriptures point to the sanctification process portion of the decision making process.

1 Pet 2:15—20 Shows what is acceptable with God and what will glorify your savior.

PERFECT: What we have in the Bible is perfect. 1 Cor. 13:9—10; Rev 22:18—19. The Bible is the Word of God. Jn 1:1,2,14,17 shows that the Word is equal with Jesus Christ and is the specification of Him.

Eph 3:4 If you want to know what is perfect for you, the Bible says “read” not feel or expect visions or special revelations as you make your way through a decision or situation. Beware of persons who base their decisions upon a special leading outside the direction of God’s commandments stated in the Bible. There are approximately 250,000 commandments in the Bible, your decision should be based upon fact finding in these commandments and others in history who both have and have not followed them.

Lk 6:40 Let the Bible show you what God’s commandments are and how various persons applied the principles (right or wrong) in the biblical accounts. Allow what God has already shown you and allowed you to experience or observe in your life to guide you as well. If you want to be mature in your Christian walk, you must become Christ-like in your decision making. The only way to do that is to study Christ (the Bible). This is where reality supersedes fantasy or dreams about reality, to know truth from error. God is not the author of confusion 1 Cor 14:33.

PROVING: Proving is the result of a renewed mind. By exercising your knowledge of God’s commandments in your decision making process, you are proving that God is real in your life. By using God’s commandments you default to proving what is good, acceptable and perfect. Proving should be a daily habit exercised in the thousands of decisions you make every day. If you have a habit of using the Bible and thru it learn God’s commandments, when the big decisions come ie. marriage, career, changes, large investments, life changing sins etc. the pattern for deciding for the good acceptable and perfect way will be more apparent and easier to do - Eph 4:22,23,26.

Freedom to choose or decide presupposes accountability Rom 14:5b,10b,12. Remember the Holy Spirit is with you always, not just part time- Eph 1:13—14, 1 Cor 3:16,19.

Examples of Biblical decisions:

1. Gen. 3:6 is a good example of a biblical decision making process. Wanting to eat is not a sin, wanting something pleasant is not a sin, wanting to be wise is not a sin. The point made here is that the same process can be used to decide to sin, or to do what is right. What made it a sin in Gen. 3:6 is that it was against the commandment of God. God will not bless a bad decision, ignorance of God’s Word is a bad decision in and of itself. Remember to glorify God in your decisions (to be Christ-like), not yourself-like, it may seem unfair or the long way about, but doing what is good, acceptable and perfect is always best in the long run. God’s commandments rarely come with justification or explanation, but they always come with a promise.

2. Philip 2:23, 24, 25a, 28, 29 Study the thought process of this passage. What was the good thing to do, what would the decision accomplish for God, and what did the decision do for Paul and the Philippians.

3. 1 Thes 3:1—9 Study the thought process for the decision, what was the good thing to do, what would the decision accomplish for God, and what did the decision do for Paul and the Thessalonians.

In the Genesis decision, the decision was made to bring glory to self not God. It produced another to sin (Adam) guilt and shame after the bad decision had run its course. God wants us to take care of our bodies, have you ever gone to bed knowing you did not brush your teeth and felt a little guilty for skipping it? This is the same concept. The “size” or “ultimate result” of the decision is not the issue, right or wrong, truth or error is the issue. If you cannot grasp this concept it may be why you may be having trouble in some of your decisions. If you have a hard time with small decisions, of course you will have difficulty with big decisions. The will of God is that you do what is right as a habit, not when it’s convenient for you. Kind of like prayer life.

In the Phlipians and Thessalonian decisions I hope you saw that joy was the end product of the decision. Joy is the satisfaction of making a good, acceptable and perfect decision, in other words, knowing what you are doing is right because you have a reliable basis for your decision. How do you know what the will of God is for your life? Here is the big answer: Do you have JOY in the Lord as the result of your decisions.

God’s commandments are not burdensome (or grievous) 1 Jn 5:3. The Lord taught us this truth in Jn 15:10-11. Also the Bible reproves this teaching in 1 Jn 1:3-4 and 1 Pet 1:5-9. The word “joy” in these verses is translated from the Greek word khar-ah’ meaning calmly happy (satisfied) it satisfies the commandments including “thou shalt not covet” etc. 1 Thes 2:19; Phlip 4:1. In Jude 24-25 the word “joy” is the Greek word ag-al-lee’as-is meaning exaltation plus welcome, this is something to look forward to as a fulfillment of a sovereign decision of the will of God made toward you. Joy is still the result of that decision.

Weather your trying to decide what shoes to wear or life long commitments, make them to the glory of God and with Bible principles for direction.

A big decision everyone faces is how to deal with “Grief”, so I want to at least mention it. Grief is the intervention by the sovereign will of God to cause a change through a loss. It is personal and to get your attention. Grief can come from job loss, death, disaster, health, loss of vigor etc. As you go through the grieving process, as difficult and painful as the loss may be, choose to glorify God and to go on with your life the very best way you can, to experience an added dimension of joy in your life from a different perspective than you may have previously enjoyed or expected. While going down that path may be a fearful thing at first, by faith do the good, acceptable and perfect thing. Never belittle grief, accept it, work through it and go on. God will deliver you, never leave you alone and give you that joy only He can give. Make right decisions in the moral will of God for your life, in dealing with the sovereign will of God imposed upon your life.

One point we did not discuss but should be mentioned is that your decisions are YOUR decisions, not someone else’s. An obese person needs to stop eating, a starving person needs to eat, a hard worker needs to rest, a lazy person needs to work etc. God is dealing with everyone on a personal level. This is where love, fruit and forbearance comes in. Decisions which have two good arguments can be shared by people and still be enjoyed by each. Be sure to take the biblical context of your decision making situation. Take the “should kids be allowed to play with toy guns” issue. We have made our decision on this issue but we know it is not shared with everyone. I can live with that and still have joy in my decision. Ps 90:12; Eph 4:17; Gal 5:22-23.

Your most important decision: Am I going to spend eternity with God, or not?

Rom. 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Cor. 15:1-6 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

Gal. 1:6-12 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any [man] preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. 11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:10-12 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. 11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Rom 10:9-13 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

1 JN 5:12-13 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

JN 1:12-13 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God .

May God give you joy in your decisions.

Bob Frey

JN 3:12