

# KNOWING GOD'S PERFECT WILL

**TEXT: ROMANS 8:26--28**

## **Introduction:**

1. Most Christians, no matter how long they have been saved, occasionally struggle with finding the perfect will of God. There are times when God leads us in a way that is very clear and obvious.
2. But there are other times when it is not so clear. No matter what, we must walk by faith, trusting God will lead us the right way.
3. Proverbs 3:5, 6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."
4. As Christians, we believe that God is in control of our lives. Our Lord said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:29—31).
5. "I sing because I'm happy,  
I sing because I'm free,  
For His eye is on the sparrow,  
And I know He watches me" -- Civilla Martin.
6. God has a plan for our lives. God has a perfect will and He wants to reveal it to us. God wants to speak to us and He does speak to us.
7. Ephesians 5:17 says, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."
8. The Bible has certain principles that will help us to "understand what the will of the Lord is." But to understand the will of the Lord, we must be willing to obey the will of the Lord.
9. We can be certain that God is more interested in revealing His will to us than we may be in knowing what His will is.
10. When we received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, we entered into a special relationship with Him. Our Lord said in John 15:15, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: **but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.**"

11. The Word of God helps us to understand the will of God. Before we deal with specific questions – job, marriage, school, moving, going into the ministry, mission field, etc. – one must first ask this important question, “Am I already doing what God has clearly revealed to me in His Word?” This must be settled first.
12. First, have you been born again? (John 3). To know the will of God, you must be saved. Second Peter 3:9 says that God is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
13. Therefore, we know it is God’s will that you believe in Jesus Christ.
14. Furthermore, it is God’s will that you yield yourself to Him. “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” (Rom. 12:1, 2).
15. It is God’s will that you be holy (cf. I Thess. 4:1–4).
16. God’s will is always good. God’s plans for us are always good. Psalm 84:11 says, “The LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.”
17. God has a perfect plan for your life and mine. God’s plan and purpose for us is good. Not only is God’s plan good, it is perfect. No plan of ours could ever improve on the plan of God.
18. There are various ways in which we can discover God’s will:
  - a. The word of God. The Bible gives us general direction for finding God’s will, for we know that God will never lead us to do something that is contrary to Scripture. For example, God does not want a Christian to marry an unsaved person (II Cor. 6:14).
  - b. Circumstances. God is in control of all things and He uses various circumstances to direct us. We refer to this as the providence of God (cf. Ruth 2:3). God often opens or closes doors of opportunity in order to reveal His will to us (Acts 16:6–10).
  - c. Sometimes Christians “put out a fleece” (Judges 6:36-40). This is often a safe way to discern God’s will, but we must be sure we are being led by the Holy Spirit (cf. Genesis 24:11-27).

- d. Inner witness of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit guides us through inner impressions. If you are led by the Holy Spirit you can understand this. God grants us peace when we carry out His will, but unrest when we do not.
- e. Godly counsel. Proverbs 24:6 says, “In multitude of counsellors there is safety.” When seeking God’s will concerning a particular situation we should seek the counsel of godly Christians. They can often help us see things that we may not have considered. However, we need to be careful. Some friends will just tell us what we want to hear. Furthermore, some people are not wise counselors.
- f. Personal desires. God often places within us a desire for the very thing that will accomplish His will. For example, I Timothy 3:1 says, “If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.” God gives man that desire. But we must be careful so as to not do something out of selfishness. We must be willing to forsake our desires for the sake of God’s will. If we are walking in the Spirit, God will lead us. Psalm 37:4, 5 says, “Delight thyself also in the LORD: and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.”
- g. Special divine intervention. At times God supernaturally intervenes and He reveals His will through miraculous circumstances. In the Bible God used dreams, angelic visitations, a talking donkey, etc. However, these miraculous interventions are not normative. It would be unwise to seek these miracles today as proof of God’s will for your life. This is one of the major problems with Pentecostalism.

## **I. PRAYER – GOD HELPS US**

## **II. PURPOSE – GOD DIRECTS US**

## **III. PROVIDENCE – GOD WORKS EVERYTHING OUT**

## I. PRAYER (ROMANS 8:26, 27). GOD HELPS US.

1. When seeking God's will, prayer must come first. But often Christians pray only after everything else fails.
2. We need to pray, but often we feel inadequate when we pray. We feel incompetent, insufficient, and unable (8:26).
3. The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness ("infirmities") through prayer. He helps us to pray more effectively.
4. The Holy Spirit deals with our ignorance – "for we know not what we should pray for as we ought" (Rom. 8:26).
5. These "infirmities" include our ignorance, our failures, our pride, our inconsistencies, our selfishness, our deadness, our coldness, our prayerlessness, our emptiness, etc.
6. This is why Jesus said in John 15:5, "Without me ye can do nothing."
7. The Holy Spirit helps us and intercedes for us. Romans 8:26 says, "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us."
8. Romans 8:27 says, "He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." We may not know God's will but God certainly does. And the Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us "according to the will of God."
9. Romans 8:34 says that Christ "also maketh intercession for us." The Holy Spirit is called "the Comforter" (John 14—16). In I John 2:1, Christ is called our "Advocate." The same Greek word is used in these Scriptures.
10. Romans 8:26 says, "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." This refers to "yearnings whose depth is beyond the power of words to convey" (James M. Stifler).

11. God searches the hearts of man and He knows what is the mind of the Holy Spirit (8:27). Therefore these “groanings” are “according to the will of God.”
12. The Holy Spirit knows our need. He knows we want to find the will of God, and so He intercedes in us and for us, and leads us to the perfect will of God.

## II. PURPOSE – GOD DIRECTS US

1. The word “purpose” in Romans 8:28 is a key word here. “Purpose means an intelligent decision which the will is bent to accomplish” (William. R. Newell).
2. Man’s purpose is often hindered, but God’s purpose is never hindered. God’s purpose is not based upon contingencies.
3. I knew a preacher who used to say, “Has it ever occurred to you, that nothing has ever occurred to God?”
4. Ephesians 3:11 refers to “the eternal purpose” which God purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.
5. God has a purpose for us and it is our job to find out what that purpose is. Obviously it begins with our salvation. Second Timothy 1:9 says God “hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”
6. Those of us that have trusted Christ are referred to in Romans 8:28 as “the called.” We have been “called according to His purpose.”
7. God’s purpose is based upon His infinite wisdom. God knows the future. Yea, God holds the future.
8. And since God loves us and knows all about us, He directs us “according to His purpose.”
9. We can sing with great joy and confidence:  
  
“Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,  
Pilgrim through this barren land.

I am weak, but Thou art mighty;  
Hold me with Thy powerful hand.”

10. Acts 15:18 says, “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” God has a plan, a purpose, and a program – and it will surely come to pass. This brings us to our next point.

### III. PROVIDENCE – GOD WORKS EVERYTHING OUT

1. Webster’s Dictionary defines “providence” as “divine guidance or care; God is conceived as the power sustaining and guiding human destiny.”
2. The Westminster Confession of Faith says, “God the great Creator of all things doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least by His most wise and holy providence, according to His infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will, to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.”
3. I preach often on the providence of God because I consider it one of the great themes of the Bible.
4. Around Christmas, I preached on the providence of God in the birth of our Lord. God moved Mary and Joseph down to Bethlehem in order to fulfill Micah’s prophecy. It was the Lord, not Caesar Augustus, who directed Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. (Luke 2:1-7; Micah 5:2).
5. God is the Lord of history, and the actions of Caesar Augustus in far-away Rome set forward God’s plan and purpose in Bethlehem.
6. Proverbs 21:1 says, “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will.”
7. The student of Scripture sees the providence of God all throughout the Word of God (e.g., story of Joseph in Egypt, the story of Ruth, Jonah, the epistle to Philemon, etc.).

8. Romans 8:28 reminds us that the providence of God is absolutely limitless. God is omnipotent. God is eternal. God is sovereign. Therefore, “we know that all things work together for good to them that love God” (Rom. 8:28).
9. The great evangelist RA Torrey called Romans 8:28 “a soft pillow for a tired heart.”
10. “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God” (8:24).
11. Do you know this? How do we know this?
12. We know this because all things worked for good for Abraham and Isaac and Rebekah. Abraham’s servant said, “I being in the way, the LORD led me” (Genesis 24:27).
13. We know because all things worked together for good for Joseph and his family – even though Joseph’s brothers threw him into a pit and sold him into slavery. Years later, Joseph said to his brothers, “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good” (Gen. 50:20).

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Christian friend: do you know God’s will? Do you understand God’s purpose for your life?
2. Do you know God is working all things are working for good in your life?
3. Unsaved friend: there is only one restriction on this great promise, but it is an important restriction.
4. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God...” Do you love God?

5. Let me be blunt: all things are not working together for good for unsaved people. In fact, it could be said that all things were working against them.
6. John 3:18 says they are condemned.
7. John 3:36 says they are under the wrath of God.
8. Romans 3:17 says the way of peace have they not known.
9. Romans 3:18 says, "There is no fear of God before their eyes."
10. Ephesians 2:1 says they are dead in trespasses and sins.
11. Revelation 20:15 says that unless they repent they will be cast into the lake of fire.

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