

4 MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT GOD'S WILL

MYTH #1:

God's will is always something I won't want to do.

People look at God's will like getting a bad "Chance" card in Monopoly: "Go directly to Africa. Do not pass GO. Do not collect \$200."

God has created each of us with specific gifts and talents, and many times his will for us is in the direction of those things we most enjoy. Even when God leads us in unexpected directions, he leads us to fulfillment and joy—not misery. I have, however, met people who were actively fighting or avoiding what they believed God wanted; they were miserable. Psalm 37:4 says, "Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart."

God wants the best for us; he proved that when he sent his son (see John 3:16-17).

MYTH #2:

God's will is a hidden mystery.

Often people describe God's will as though it were an illusive secret, as if God plays cosmic hide-and-seek.

In fact, the Bible already reveals most of his will to us. The principles and commands there guide us within his will on a day-to-day basis (see Psalm 119:105). If you have decided to tell the truth or lie, or if you have the desire to rearrange a classmate's face, it shouldn't take hours of prayer to know God's will.

MYTH #3:

God's will is like a blueprint that details his plan for the rest of my life.

If we ever saw such a blueprint, it would probably scare us. The whole concept of God's will seems so awesome because we expect to see the whole picture.

Instead, God leads one step at a time. When you finish reading this

article, you may discover that your little brother or sister has just used your favorite blouse or shirt to play tug of war with the dog. How you respond will be a tiny step toward or away from God's will.

MYTH #4:

I've blown it so badly I can never catch up to God's will.

God's will is not like a freight train that roars by leaving you forever in the dust. It's more like a stream of fresh water. You may be standing on the bank roasting in the sun. You may feel you've passed up every opportunity to be in the center of the cool brook.

But we have a loving and forgiving Lord; at any moment you can turn to him and be in God's will. From right where you are you can step into the center of the refreshing stream and be caught up in the exciting current of experiencing and doing his will.

HOW TO KNOW GOD'S WILL

1. Decide to do what God wants. Your attitude and motivation are important. Remember that God wants what's best for you; he wants you to desire his will.

2. Read the Bible, pray and gather information. "If you want to know what God wants you to do, ask him, and he will gladly tell you," we are told in James 1:5. Also ask other Christians for advice about the decision or situation you are facing.

Then ask yourself some questions: Which option will help me be the kind of person I know God wants me to be? Will my decision help me to be closer to him? Will it be harmful to myself or others?

You may respond, "What if both choices appear to be good?"

Perhaps you are considering two excellent colleges. If finances, educational quality and all other factors appear equal, then by all means make your choice.

3. Take that first step. Be brave. Only a moving vehicle can be steered in the right direction. You may not be 100 percent sure of a decision, but you can be sure that God will help you do what's right (see Philippians 2:13). Remember, it is your heart and desire he wants; then all other things will fall into place (see Matthew 6:33 and Romans 8:28).

In a very real sense, God doesn't have to do anything more to reveal his will to you.

But, you need to do something. ☐

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