

How to be Successful

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I say “part of his secret” because there was another factor that was not mentioned here. Paul’s testimony throughout the New Testament makes it clear what it was. It was God’s will that Paul, the one-time enemy of God and His people, got saved, become an apostle, and let himself be used of God. He did what God showed him to do. His obedience to God was his real “secret” of success.

This distinction between “God’s will” and obeying God’s commandments is very important. After being saved, most have a purpose in God’s mind. None of us are saved just to sit and soak up God’s goodness. There is a spiritual war raging in this world (Ephesians 6:12). It is always God’s will that every soldier of God takes part in the battle.

I believe most are convicted of God’s will for them, at least once in their lives. The Spirit of God makes all feel guilty sometime in life for their sin. Many hear His “voice” encourage them to be saved or to repent of their iniquity. At times, they feel uncomfortable in their life-styles and have a great desire to change. Some heed God’s encouragement to do His will. Unfortunately, too many ignore it.

The Holy Spirit’s encouragement often is not heeded to do God’s will. Eventually, because they chose not to obey it, the “voice” of the Holy Spirit no longer “speaks” to

them. They never get used by God because they have chosen not to obey Him.



Paul ignored the “pricks” (Acts 9:5) of the Holy Spirit for a long time. He disregarded God’s convicting him of his wrong-doing as he watched his acquaintances kill the first martyr for Christ. Paul closed his ears to the cries and pleas of the Christians he had killed and persecuted.

One day, however, God’s will was clear to Paul. In his case, he audibly heard the voice of the Son of God on the Damascus road, and he obeyed what Jesus told him to do. His life was different after that decision, and the world has never been the same because of his obedience.

God’s will for every one of us is to do something for Him. This, sadly, does not happen in too many cases. Many get saved. Some obey for a while. God has grand plans to use them, but they never get used in the way God intended because of some disobedience. The actual key to ever being used effectively by God is to be obedient to do what one is shown to do, as was in Paul’s case.

It is God’s will that all that are saved and serve Him. It is not His will that we disobey Him by putting off or ignoring what He has placed in our hearts to do. We can also have a life effective for the cause of Christ if we, too, will obey what God’s will for our life is!

The Bible View



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Knowing God’s Will

Bill Brinkworth

Gideon had a problem in his land. His country was overrun with Midianites, Amalekites, and the “children of the east.” He was willing to battle the enemies that took from his land and his people, but he wanted to know for sure that God was leading him to do so.



Desiring to make a decision based on God’s will and way was a wise goal. Gideon knew a move without God’s help would not have His blessing

and surely would lead to defeat or trouble.

People of all ages have also sought God’s will and way in decisions they have had to make. They, too often, make wrong choices and pay for it.

God is perfect, and following His direction should be the way any would want to go. His will, if followed, will always be the right path to follow.

How can a person know if they are doing what God wants them to do or not? Is it possible to have His direction?

Gideon was like many. The leader wanted a clear sign from God in what should be done. After Gideon got the sign, he would know God’s will, and he would or would not lead the army against the enemies. Gideon asked God to do something supernatural that would prove it was Him that was answering the leader’s prayer.

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Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:” II Cor. 1:1

In the introduction to his second letter to the Corinthian church, Paul reveals part of the secret to his success. The preacher was used of God because it was the “will of God” (II Cor. 1:1).

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Knowing God's Will

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The Israelite leader put out a fleece of wool on the ground and asked for a sign. If God wanted him to lead the battle, Gideon requested that God make the fleece wet from the dew and the earth dry.

The next morning an unnatural occurrence was seen. The fleece was soaked, but the nearby ground was dry.

Still doubting that it may have just been a coincidence, as can happen when people request "signs" from God, Gideon requested more proof. He asked God once more to prove His intervention by doing the impossible. This time he desired that the fleece be dry and the ground be wet.

The next morning the miracle was performed. The fleece was dry, but the surrounding earth was wet. Gideon knew God's direction, and he successfully battled the enemy.

"Well, Gideon sought proof of direction, may I also?" many ask. I have asked similar proofs in my past and have gotten direction by His answer. God does hear the prayers and requests of His own. However, that was

"There is but one question, and that is 'What is the will of God?' The answer should settle all other questions and doubts."

— William E. Gladstone

when I was a younger Christian. God may have blessed my spiritual immaturity and encouraged my weak faith. I soon learned that we are to live by faith and not always by sight.

Proof by sight does not necessarily make one a stronger or a more trusting Christian. Gideon asked twice because the first sign was not enough.

God desires us to trust Him unconditionally, without doubt or lack of trust. Trusting Him to supply without proof is the faith He wants. When Gideon sought God's will, he did not have the entire written Word of God as we do today to guide him. We have a leadership and guidance Gideon did not have.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

John 15:16

Sometimes God will honor our request for a miracle to discern His leadership. Much of the time, when He knows our faith should be more mature and trusting, He expects us to determine His will in other ways. Some biblical principles for knowing God's direction include:

☘ Does what you desire line-up with what the Bible teaches? Is the direction or answer to your question scriptural? Is it something of which God approves?

"To live for self or the Lord is a decision all make."

— Author Unknown

I have known folks who have asked God to provide His direction in a way that was very sinful. They should have known better than to expect God to approve of their iniquity.

☘ Are there open doors of opportunity for the direction you are seeking?

☘ If you want God's will, allow Him to stop you from doing or going where you desire.

☘ If your idea is not possible, accept that as His will. If you misread His direction, He can always create a directing opportunity again.

☘ Has God already closed the door of opportunity, and perhaps you are prying open a door so you can have your way rather than His?

☘ Do you believe it is God leading you to do or change what is on your heart?

☘ Do people more spiritual and/or experienced than you, discern it could be God's will for your life.

"Where no counsel is, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety." Pro. 11:14

☘ Have you asked God before about direction in the matter and does it seem to be answered prayer?

☘ If you do not know what to do or God's direction is not clear, continue to do what God has already shown you to do until He shows you otherwise!

God does not desire to play guessing games with those that want to follow His leading. He will make his direction for you clear in His timing.

Will you let God say "no" to your request if He so desires, and will you obey His direction if He shows you? If so, God will lead you in a plain path if you ask and wait for His clear leadership.

Jump, or Just Thinking About It?

Author Unknown

A teacher once gave this problem to a class. "Three frogs sat together on a log, and one decided to jump off. How many were left?"

"Two," promptly replied one pupil.

"Wrong," corrected the teacher. "The third frog only decided to jump off. He didn't jump."

Many folks are like that frog. They decide to "jump" for the Lord. They want to do something for Him, but never do. Their action never gets further than their thought process. Do not just think about doing God's will; do it!

