

HOW DO I KNOW GOD'S WILL?

01.08.22 Series Title: Questions For God

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Before we begin the "sermon" I want to share my heart for the year:

2023 Theme for Rock of Grace

"Everyone deserves to hear the Gospel"

The mission of Jesus was clear and it must become our mission: "to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). We must share compelling stories of people receiving Christ and what Jesus has done in their life as well as stories of our believers leading someone to a saving knowledge of Jesus. We must teach them HOW to lead someone in salvation. This year's theme is undoubtedly inspired by my sister's life and death. Nancy passed away at the age of 41 suddenly due to a brain tumor. What we didn't realize is how many people she led to the Lord! We simply didn't know. We didn't know that she led her neighbors to the Lord, people in her church, people she met at the store, people she met in Portugal, Africa, the beach in Florida... Nancy believed that EVERYONE deserves to hear the Gospel and know the hope of Jesus Christ! That Jesus can forgive them of their sin and they can have peace with God. We want to carry on that torch!

I am believing for 100 salvations this year. Yes I know that's a lot. But what if all 225 of you here in Kinsman and roughly 75 in Warren, were to take this mission of the GREAT COMMISSION to heart and lead someone to Jesus? What if every believer who calls Rock of Grace home were to pray for ONE PERSON for the next 2 months, have a meal with them and then share the Gospel and lead them to Jesus?!?

God is ready to pour out His Spirit and He's waiting on US to get a burden for the lost like Nancy had - a passion for revival like Nancy had - a desire to see people SAVED! Everyone deserves to hear the Gospel! Who in YOUR LIFE possibly isn't saved? Think about that. Pray about that.

Today we start a 4 week series on **QUESTIONS FOR GOD**

Today's Question: How Do I Know God's Will?

Here's what I want you to know today: **God's will and purposes are revealed in His Word & intentional time spent with Him.**

- If we don't study His Word, we won't know His will. If we don't study His Word, we won't know His ways. God has revealed Himself in endless beautiful ways in His Holy Word! Many of us have it sitting on our nightstand or coffee table but have taken it for granted. Christians in other Countries are risking their very lives to get ahold of it!
- **God's Word tells a story about JESUS** - the entire Bible points to a loving savior - a God-man Messiah who would come and reveal who God is! The more you study God's Word, even when you don't see "JESUS" name in the OT, you will see His person - His will - His likeness.
- **In the OT, we see Jesus**
- In Genesis when God says let US make man in OUR image. God is three in one Father Son & Holy Spirit
- In Judges 6, we see Jesus appear to young Gideon to give him encouragement to face the Midianites and go into battle to rescue His people - the people of Israel. God is victorious while being outnumbered. Gideon himself in that story is a type of Jesus.
- In Joseph's story, we see Joseph as a type of Jesus being betrayed by His brothers, sent to death, staying faithful in the midst of trials and tests, rising to supreme power, forgiving his brothers who betrayed him, giving them land and a home in the midst of their loss and need
- In the fiery furnace the King who threw 3 Hebrew men in because of their rebellion, sees a "fourth man shining like the Son of Man" He saw Jesus standing there in the MIDST OF THE FLAMES! WOW!

AGAIN, God's will and purposes are revealed in His Word

- So what does His WORD say about His will?

ROMANS 12

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will

be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. 4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your[a] faith; 7 if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,[b] do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

COMMENT - so God explains what His will is - His desire for your life - in that chapter! He desires that you hang out with people who aren't always like you! He desires that you share what you have with others, that you pray for them, that you hate evil and love good that you honor and respect and value other people MORE than yourself.


The JOY you want in life is found in KNOWING GOD and being in His will. Look at what King David said quoted in Acts by the disciples.

- 📖 Acts 2:28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'
- I can't tell you how many times I read a scripture in the morning then need that scripture for my OWN growth later in the day OR I use that scripture to encourage or teach someone along my path that day.
- 2022 Verse For The Year - "God has made you sons and daughters in the spirit of adoption" Todd gave me THAT scripture that I wrote down in my journal first week of Jan, 2022 and he read it 1st day of Jan 2023! This is why it's important to read the word - consider even making a scripture for the year.



God's will and purposes are revealed in His Word & intentional time spent with Him.

- Pray and talk to Him. Have something weighing your mind? Ask God in that dedicated time in the morning. God wants to hear you talk to Him. God loves you and God likes you!
- *Transition to next point* Many people try to find joy in life - to be happy. Of course we all want to be happy. But oddly enough happiness and joy isn't found where most people assume it's found - in things like money and possessions - even the right girlfriend, boyfriend or spouse... all of these have limits. Only God and His Word brings true joy - joy that surpasses anything temporary this world has to offer.

📖 // #2 God's will is that you find joy in surrendering to Him; knowing Jesus.

We're seeing more and more video clips go viral on social media that subtly distort the message of the Bible and therefore the heart of God. Many videos from sermons and pastors are circulating that illustrate this concept: God just wants to make you happy. They don't come right out and say that but it's certainly implied. It's implied with quippy lines like "God only let's some people into your life for a season because they can't go as high as you're going. They were just there to help you get to where you're going..." More and more of these clips are going viral it's a distorted Gospel. Here's the truth:  **God does want to make you happy but first, He wants to make you holy.**

Scriptures Distorted that distort God's will when improperly taught: Psalms 37:4 "God will give you the desires of your heart." true But the whole verse is this:

- Does this tie in with the Bottom Line? Yes; if we know God's Word and surrender to it daily, we'll find the joy that we all long for.
-  Ps 37:4-7 Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him" ESV
-  Jn 15:7-10 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. **8** By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. **9** As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. **10** If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. **11** These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

- Jesus wants His Father glorified - THAT is God's will. How is the Father glorified? When we abide in Jesus - come to know and love Jesus on a personal, deep level. In that abiding/knowing we get a desire to obey His commandments - to do the right thing simply because it's the right thing.
- 📖 2 JN 1:6 And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it


But how do we know what God has commanded? It's all in His Word. Even the Old Testament illustrates many principles and truths and commandments - how we're to be compassionate to the marginalized of society (leaving crops for the poor) how we're to be generous and not stingy. How we're to be morally pure in our thinking and speech ...

- 📖 MT 6:33 "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well!"

📖 // Main Point #3 God's will is sometimes unknown, especially in a time of grief or pain.

- Christians sometimes give up on faith after a while because some of their prayers aren't answered. This is due to a misunderstanding of our relationship to God. God is not our heavenly butler who moves and serves at our command. He is all supreme Creator and a loving Father who knows what's best and sometimes allows pain and suffering that we simply can't explain or understand. This is where we must learn to trust Him and believe (have faith) that He is good and is working out HIS plan (not our plan)

- **Brittany's Story**

-  Romans 8:28 "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose"
- Isaiah 55:9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and My thoughts higher than your thoughts."

We accidentally assume that God works all good things ... no. He works ALL things for good - even the bad things.

STORY> Make it real.

Even Nancy's death - a very BAD thing. The kids are heartbroken. Damian is heartbroken. The family too... but countless people have told us that they are recommitting to Christ and recommitting to leading people to Jesus because of Nancy's life and impact.

Jesus, being 100% God and yet 100% man, had to consistently submit HIS will to His Father's will! WOW! He was doing this to teach us that we can submit our desires to His. Jesus was giving us an example to follow.

Even Jesus, the Son of God in his form as a man was submitted to the Father's will - surrendering HIS will to His father's.

Campus Pastor's personal story of something "wrong" or prayer not answered - turning out to be a good thing - God spared you from ...

How do we know God's will? How can God's will include suffering or pain? We can't understand why. Most the time we can't know WHY something painful happens. But we can trust in the God who Created and all things and revealed His love towards us by sending His Son to suffer and die in our place so we can have eternal life!

In the midst of pain, we assume God doesn't care or isn't good.

We have to remember that God suffered immeasurable pain when He illustrated His love for us by sacrificing His own son so we could become the sons and daughters of God as well!

God's will is that ALL are saved - that ALL know Jesus - that ALL trust in our Creator & Savior!

God's will is that you seek HIM and seek to do good - to serve others - to do right by people and to worship your Creator! Look at this verse.

Amos 5:14-15

"Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the Lord God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is. 15 Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts."

// Conclusion

- **How would your life change if you spent at least 20 minutes every single day in God's Word?**
- Before the daily grind hits. Before the kids wake up. Before the stress of daily life hits you in the face. Before... PLACE your FOCUS on GOD. The One who loves you, created you, saved you and has good things in store for you. The One who wants to guide you and give you wisdom for the day, wisdom for the week, even wisdom and guidance for the year! How would you feel if you were pleasing God?
- How would GOD feel if you start to illustrate and prove your dependence upon Him? How would God SMILE and get joy?!
- Pull out your smart phone or grab a pen in front of you and I want to invite you to write something down: **Select a time and place each day to spend with God reading His Word.** Simple postcard size: maybe John 15:9-10 printed on the top of it small italics.

// Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the distractions that keep us from daily reading God's Word?
2. How can we develop discipline in this area of studying God's Word being it's the number one way that we both hear from God and know His will?
3. Why are so many Christians disagreeing on many of today's moral issues? Because they don't read the Bible as much as they should. That leaves them simply parroting other speakers /authors... instead of the Author of Life
4. Can I be OUT of God's Will? Yes and no. God is sovereign so if you're aiming to please Him in all that you do then spiritually speaking you ARE in His will. But you can be missing out on part of God's will (blessing/adventure) if you refuse to take a risk and obey Him in doing something risky or difficult or new.
5. How can we be a conduit of God's will and blessing to others? *We can be missional.*