

You Can Know God's Will for Your Life

Philippians 3:15-19

15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you¹⁶ Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things.

Knowing the will of God for your life is not as hard as some make it out to be. Our biggest problem is not in knowing the will of God but in surrendering our will to His will.

Time and again in the OT we find people who clearly knew the will of God but just simply chose another way instead.

God wants us to know His will for our lives. He does not play hide and seek with it. He has not placed it out of the way, but rather right before us. God wants us to know Him and His will.

But Paul was an expert in knowing and in following the will of God. He should be able to tell all that our hearts desire in the quest for knowing the will of God for our lives.

But we must have an earnest desire to know God's will in order for us to find it. Jn 7:17 **If anyone wills to do His will**, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.

“If we are going to come to the point where we are willing in advance to do God's will, we must recognize first that in ourselves we do not want to do it. If you are saying to yourself, “Oh, but I have always wanted to do the Lord's will,” you are kidding yourself. For “the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so” (Rom. 8:7). There is a great deal of the sinful mind in all of us.” *Boice, J. M. (2000). Philippians: An expository commentary (204). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.*

- I. The Mature Christian, “*Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind;*”
 - A. Spiritual growth determines maturity level.
 1. 3:15 “as many as are perfect” This is the same term “perfect” as v. 12 but Paul is using it in two different senses. Christians can be mature without being sinless (cf. I Cor. 2:6; 14:20; Eph. 4:13; Heb. 5:14; 6:1). Utley, R. J. (1997). Vol. 8: Paul Bound, the Gospel Unbound:
 2. **This mind** refers to the things that Paul has recently mentioned.
 - a. The pressing on to know Him, the power of the resurrection and fellowship of His suffering.
 - b. Paul could encourage others to follow him as he followed Christ.

- (1) 1 Corinthians 4:16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.
- (2) 1 Corinthians 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. KJV

3. The Bible teaches that we are to grow spiritually.

- a. The healthy baby will mature, provided everything is given to them.
- b. Ro 15:1 We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.
 - (1) Believers are described as both strong and weak
- c. 1Co 14:20 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.
 - (1) Once again Paul refers to young and mature believers.
- d. Heb 5:12-14 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. NKJV
 - (1) Here we see that there are some who are immature when they should be mature.
 - (2) Paul in patience is willing to tell them again, but he wants them to move on in their growth.

B. Our contact with the Word of God affects maturity.

- 1. The word is like food to the newborn.
 - a. 1 Pet 2:1 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,
- 2. 2 Tim 3:15-17 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- 3. John 17:17 (NKJV) 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.
- 4. Ps 119:9 ¶ How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed

according to Your word.

5. Ps 119:11 ¶ Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!

II. We are to yield to the leading of the Holy Spirit, “*and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you*”

A. Every believer has within them the Holy Spirit working.

1. Ro 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
2. Jn 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.
3. 1 Co 2:13 These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

B. But this will mean that we have to be close to God in our living.

1. For our Heavenly Father would guide us with His eye.
2. Ps 32:8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.
3. Not a parent here does not know what that means.

III. We must live at our maturity level, “*16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.*”

A. At the foot of one of the Swiss Alps is a marker honoring a man who fell to his death attempting the ascent. The marker gives his name and this brief epitaph: "He died climbing." The epitaph of every Christian should be that they died climbing the upward path toward the prize of Christlikeness. MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Philippians.

IV. Christian maturity is to be in community, “*17 Brethren, join in following my example*”

A. Eph 4:11-16 11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head -- Christ --16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. NKJV

1. Now God could have personally given each one of us all the spiritual instruction that we need, but that is not how He has chosen to do it.
 2. God means for individual believers to be united in a church where they can grow together in Christ v-15
 3. A Christian once said to his minister, "I can worship God and enter into the Holy of Holies just as easily in my garden as I can in a church pew." Later on the two men were sitting before a fireplace in which the embers glowed cheerily. Silently the minister went to the fireplace, took the tongs, and lifted a single glowing coal from the fire and placed it alone on the hearth. Soon it became black ash. The church-neglecting Christian said, "Ah, you need not say a word. I understand what you mean. I cannot worship alone any more than I can live alone. I'll be in my place at the church next Sunday." The environment of the church is basic to Christian growth, providing it's the right kind of church. Ask yourself two questions before joining: Is Christ preeminent there? Is the Holy Spirit at work?
- B. So as the Spirit teaches and gifts each of us, we are to minister to one another.
1. 1 Pe 4:10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.
- V. Not all walk in Christian maturity, *“and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things”*
- A. Paul once again refers to those false teachers from before.
1. This may be a different group.
 2. But there was more than one false teaching in that first century.
 3. Some think these were antinomian.
 4. What ever they were they were not the qualities of the Christian life.
- B. Paul weep over them, which means to me that he knew them and had worked with them.
1. They may be likened to the ground of Mark 4 that received the seed but produced no fruit.
 2. 2Pe 2:22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."
 3. Heb 6:9 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner.