

# Discerning the Will of God

“Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven”

So, what IS the Will of God?

# Some Scripture on the Will of God

**1 Peter 4:2** As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

**1 John 2:17** The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

**Mark 3:35** Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother.

**Romans 12:2** Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

**II Cor. 7:10** For the sorrow that is according to *the will of God* produces a repentance without regret, *leading* to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

**Col. 4:12** Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.

**I Thess. 4:3** For this is **the will of God**, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality

**Hebrews 10:36** You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

**1 Peter 2:15,16** For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

**1 Peter 4:19** Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

**1 Thess. 5:18** ...give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

## Key Questions to ask when reading the Bible:

1. Is there a command to obey?
2. Is there an example to follow?
3. Is there a promise to claim?
4. Is there a sin to avoid?
5. Is there a principle to follow?

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# A Command to Obey?

The Bible is filled with divine commands for you and me to obey. There is no question what God's will is in these areas. Our obedience to His commandments leads us precisely into the center of His will. For example, "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). This is clear-cut. Non-negotiable. Black and white. There is no doubt what God's will is in this matter. His track will always—I repeat, always—be found within the boundaries of obedience to His commandments.

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How do we understand the will of  
God in the Scriptures?

# How do we understand the will of God in the Scriptures?

*#1: Pay attention to the*  
Imperative verbs!

# Imperative Verbs

<sup>4</sup> Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

<sup>5</sup> Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. <sup>7</sup> Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. <sup>8</sup> Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup> Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

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# Imperative Verbs

<sup>12</sup> Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. <sup>13</sup> Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. <sup>14</sup> And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. <sup>15</sup> Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.

I Thessalonians 5:12-15

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# How do we understand the will of God in the Scriptures?

*#2: Pay attention to the*  
context!

# A Teaching Joke:

**Matthew 27:5** So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.

**Luke 10:37** Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

**John 13:27** So Jesus told him, "What you are about to do, do quickly."

# The Context of Imperative Verbs

<sup>15</sup> The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, <sup>16</sup> “When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live.”

Exodus 1:15-16

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<sup>10</sup> “‘What shall I do, Lord?’ I asked. “ ‘Get up,’ the Lord said, ‘and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.’ <sup>11</sup> My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the brilliance of the light had blinded me.

<sup>12</sup> “A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. <sup>13</sup> He stood beside me and said, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight!’ And at that very moment I was able to see him.

Acts 22:10-13

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# Tonight's Wrap-up

- Discerning God's will begins with the stated imperatives of Scripture.
- Look to the imperatives which are universal in their address and/or applicability.
- Beware of imperatives directed specifically to individuals or couched in narratives.
- Watch for Old Testament imperatives recognized as valid by the Apostolic authors.
- Pay special attention to imperatives directed to Christians in the New Testament

Let us pray...