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Kowing God's Will

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How many times have I been asked by Christians how one can know God's will. I admit that I had to work to find an answer. I found that it really isn't hard, and there are a few basic principles.

I personally sought to learn God's will, but again as with Bible study, there wasn't much available for a new Christian. My first encounter with the subject was on a tape by Stuart Briscoe that a friend gave me. The next was a book by Nelson entitled, *How to Know God's Will* (Moody Press).

Then I ran across a little book by Bob Mumford entitled, *Take Another Look at Guidance*. More recently, a useful new book by Howard entitled, *Knowing God's Will and Doing It!* has been available.

All have helped me, but the shortest and most useful was a tape by Stuart Briscoe. Much of what he outlined is repeated here. As this is highly scriptural and brief, I have found it easiest to remember.

Briscoe states that there are three aspects to God's will in our lives:

- I. Desiring God's Will (Rom. 12:2)
- II. Discovering God's Will (Rom. 12:2)
- III. Doing God's Will (1 Pet. 2:15)

I. Desiring God's Will

A. Matt. 6:10 -- The Lord's Prayer. Thy Will be done. We shouldn't say it unless we desire His will!

B. God has a plan for each of us. It is to have abundant life and eternal life.

1. It has a goal
2. We are not to drift
3. We are not to just exist

There is a narrow gate to Life -- Matt. 7:13

C. God's plan for us is a good one

1. Mark 10:17-31 -- Abundant life

2. Rom. 12:1-2 -- Make yourselves a living sacrifice. Do not conform to the world but let God change you inwardly so you can know His will.

D. God's plan has basic guidelines

1. I Thess. 4:3 -- Be holy and free from immorality

2. I Thess. 5:18 -- Be thankful in all circumstances; this is what God wants of you in your life in Christ Jesus.

3. John 6:30 -- This is what He who sent me wants me to do; that I should not lose any of all those he has given me, but I should raise them all to life on the last day.

4. I Peter 2:15 -- For this is God's will, he wants you to silence the ignorant talk of foolish men by the good things you do.

5. I Peter 4:19 -- So they -- those who suffer because this is God's will for you, should by their good deeds trust themselves completely to their creator who always keeps his promise.

E. God's plan should be understood. Eph. 5:17 -- Don't be fools then, but try to find out what the Lord wants you to do.

F. Be filled with knowledge of God's will. Col. 1:9 -- For this reason we always pray for you, ever since we heard about you. We ask God to fill you with knowledge of His will and with all wisdom and understanding that his spirit gives.

II. Discovering God's Will

A. God reveals His will to those who desire His will

Again, Rom. 12 -- Are you conformed to this world?

B. God's will is spiritually revealed

I Cor. 2:10 -- But it was to us that God made known his secret by means of his spirit. The spirit searches everything even the hidden depths of God's purposes.

C. It is based on spiritual principles

1. Prov. 3:5-6 -- If you want favor with both God and man and a reputation for good judgment and common sense then trust the Lord completely;

but don't ever trust yourself in everything you do, but put God first and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success.

2. Ps. 37:4-5 -- Be delighted with the Lord. Then he will give you your heart's desire - commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust Him to help you do it and he will.

a. In Psalm 37 -- are promises and conditions. Meet the conditions!

b. Conditions

Delight

c. Promises

He will bring it to pass.

(1) Commit

(2) Trust

D. Now, there are practical principles. Briscoe lists five; Nelson lists seven; Briscoe's are easier to remember.

1. Internal convictions

2. The Bible is authority - search

3. External circumstances

4. Advice of Christian friends

5. Common sense

III. Doing God's Will

John 2:1-12 -- Jesus was at the wedding in Cana. The hosts ran out of wine. His response was to tell her not to tell him what to do. Even so she turned to the servants and said to them, "Do whatever he tells you to do."

A. Obedience is a requirement of the Christian life

1. Earliest requirement of God in Old Covenant (Gen 9:9, Exo. 12:24, Deut. 30:2-5)

2. Reaffirmed in David's reign (2 Sam 23:5, I Kings 3:14)

3. In prophetic utterances (Neh. 1:8,9, Jer. 7:21-23)

4. Jesus reaffirmed necessity of doing God's will. Especially in John - Be obedient - Spirit of God is given Him (Matt. 19:17, John 14:15, 14:23, 15:10, Rom. 2:13)

5. Paul affirmed this in Phil. 2:13 - The Spirit helps us to be obedient

B. Obedience brings rewards (Deut 30:15-18)

"No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them. I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess."