

# How to know God's Perfect Will for your life

The Apostle Paul lists four requirements which must be met in order to know God's perfect will for your life: Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, [1] brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye [2] present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And [3] be not conformed to this world: but [4] be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. You can prove, i.e., know with assurance, God's perfect will for your life if you are: (1) saved, (2) surrendered, (3) separated, and (4) spiritually minded.

- I. You Must be SAVED from your sinful condition and be a child of God through the new birth in order to know God's perfect will for your life: Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God... You must be a brother/sister in Christ!
  - A. Being born once makes you a child of Adam in the family of humanity. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.
  - B. Being born again makes you a child of God, SAVED from the sinful nature you inherited from Adam: John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God... 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again... 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that who so ever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
  - C. All humanity is divided into 2 groups: (1) believers in Christ, and (2) unbelievers.
    1. You must be in the group that believes in Christ in order to know God's perfect will for your life! John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned...
    2. Unbelievers are condemned already: John 3:18 ...but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
- D. God has a perfect will and plan for each of his children, as shown by a multitude of Scriptures: Psalm 143:10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God.. Ephesians 5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Colossians

1:9 ... be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding... 4:12 ... always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. Hebrews 10:9 Then said he [Jesus], Lo, I come to do thy will, O God... 36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. I John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. Luke 22:42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

- II. You must be SURRENDERED unto God in order to know God's perfect will for your life: Romans 12:1 ...that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.
  - A. Jesus said to all who would follow Him: Luke 9:23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. Don't be self-centered, selfishly satisfying personal desires. Don't do it your way; do it God's way!
  - B. Surrendered Christians are servants who have yielded their talents, time, and possessions to God: Romans 6:17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you... 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. I Corinthians 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.
  - C. Be careful of your appearance and the appearance of all your activities: I Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil. Nothing that we do should appear evil!
    1. Men must appear distinctively masculine and women must appear distinctively feminine! Styles and patterns of dress may change, but clear distinctions in appearance for men and women must be maintained!
      - a. Deuteronomy 22:5 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abominations unto the LORD thy God.
      - b. I Corinthians 11:14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? 15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.

2. All activities must be pleasing to the Lord! Colossians 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

3. All conversations must be pleasing to the Lord! James 3:10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be... 3:13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom... 5:12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

- III. You Must be SEPARATED from the world in order to know God's perfect will for your life: Romans 12:2 ...And be not conformed to this world... God gives us many examples to encourage us to separate from the world's sinful activities.

- A. Conform to God's perfections rather than to sinful worldliness: I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him... 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you... 5:19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. John 15:18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you... 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Colossians 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
- B. Conform to God's precepts rather than to worldly principles: Psalm 119:159 Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness.
  1. Avoid worldly principles of sinful men.
    - a. Isaiah 29:13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me... 15 Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?
    - b. Daniel 9:4 And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said... 5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and

have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments... 13 As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth...

2. Honor the precepts of God: Psalm 119:45 And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts... 63 I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts... 93 I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me... 100 I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts... 104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way... 128 Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way... 168 I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies: for all my ways are before thee... 173 Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts.
- C. Conform to God's pleasures rather than yield to worldly lusts. Choose pleasurable activities carefully: Psalm 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Hebrews 11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.
- D. Conform to Godliness with contentment rather than to coveting worldly possessions: I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Matthew 13:22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. I Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. 8 And having food and raiment let us be there with content. 9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

- IV. You must be SPIRITUALLY MINDED in order to know God's perfect will for your life: Romans 12:2 ...but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...
- A. Renew your mind through God's Word: II Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
  - B. Renew your mind with Bible study so that you may do good works: II Timothy 3:16 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 perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.
  - C. Renew your mind in the clean way of God: Psalm 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. 10 With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. 11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.
  - D. Renew your mind and learn to do well: Isaiah 1:17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. 18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Titus 3:14 And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.
  - E. Renew your mind and learn the Truth: Matthew 11:28 Come unto me [Jesus], all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
  - F. Renew your mind and learn NOT the way of evil: Jeremiah 10:2 Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.
- V. You can prove, i.e., know with assurance, God's perfect will for your life if you are: (1) saved, (2) surrendered, (3) separated, and (4) spiritually minded. Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
- A. Prove, i.e., know with assurance, that every action is in harmony with God's perfect will. I Thessalonians 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Ephesians 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

- B. Knowing and doing God's perfect will brings eternal blessings: I John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.
  - C. Understanding God's perfect will brings wisdom: Ephesians 5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
  - D. Knowing and doing God's perfect will is acceptable to God: Psalm 19:14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer. Proverbs 10:32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked speaketh frowardness. Ecclesiastes 12:10 The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. Romans 14:18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.
- VI. Additional notes concerning God's perfect will.
- A. Just do it!! Don't pray about whether you should do something that God's word commands or prohibits. Don't wait for some special vision, miracle, or emotional experience before you do what God commands in His word! Psalm 40:8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.
  - B. Obey God now!! Do what you already understand. Matthew 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
  - C. Do anything God wants!! Be willing to accept God's perfect will before you know it. Psalm 143:10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.
  - D. God will give you correct desires when your life is in harmony with God's perfect will. Proverbs 10:24 ...the desire of the righteous shall be granted. Proverbs 11:23 The desire of the righteous is only good... Isaiah 26:8 Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. Mark 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. He brews 11:16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. I Peter 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.
  - E. Previous disobedience will not stop you from knowing and doing God's perfect will now!
    1. Peter lied at the trial of Jesus, and said with cursing and swearing that he was not a Christian. Mark

14:70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. 71 But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. 72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

- a. When Peter converted (Greek epistrophe—turned) from his sin of denying Christ, he strengthened others: Luke 22:32 But I [Jesus] have prayed for thee [Peter], that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.
  - b. All Christians are still sinners saved by God's grace, and God promises to restore them and use them for His purpose: I John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.
2. Paul (also called Saul) was a great sinner whom God made into a wonderful blessing to all!
- a. Paul (Saul) helped murder faithful Stephen and persecuted Christians; but God saved Paul from his sins: Acts 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his [Stephen's] death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. 3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and halting men and women committed them to prison.
  - b. God saved Paul from his sins, and made Paul an apostle and a blessing to all: I Corinthians 15:9 For I [Paul] am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. Philippians 3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, for getting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press to ward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

VII. God's perfect will brings abundant life. John 7:38 He that believeth on me [Jesus]... out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water... 10:10 I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly... 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

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by Dr. Gail E. Terrell

...that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Romans 12:2)

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a road map of holiness