

## THE WILL OF GOD

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The idea of the unknown variable used to terrify me at times. I'd go through all the "steps" to find God's will for my life: extended fasts, tons of cry-my-eyes-out prayers, and bugging my pastor endlessly just to get some answers. I just wanted a blueprint, street signs, a treasure map—anything! Why wouldn't God just speak in an audible voice and tell me I was called to move here, go to this college, study this topic, and have this job? If He would say it, I would do it. I just needed some direction.

Why is finding God's will for our lives so difficult? The better question may be, why do we make God's will for our lives so difficult? I've come to realize it really isn't all that complex. Of course, we need to pray, fast, and seek the counsel of our elders and spiritual leaders, but we often complicate God's will much more than necessary. With the pressures that will come our way with various life decisions, it is important to understand God's first and most important plan for each of us is salvation and complete devotion to Him. That is God's will, plain and simple.

I don't think He has a secret agenda for our lives that He's not telling us about. He has given each of us free will along with special talents and abilities for a reason. He wants us to make decisions and work with the gifts and talents He has given us. I don't recall in the parable of the Talents that the master gave precise instructions as to what each servant should do with His talents. He gave them the talents, and they returned the product of their work to him. He gave them room for making decisions, mistakes, and success. Our decisions should undoubtedly be made with the wisdom and discretion only God gives, and I believe in the free will God has given each of us to live our lives with the gifts we've been given in order to please Him.

A professor at St. Louis Christian College once said, "Discerning God's direction is an ongoing process that is more concerned about who you are becoming than what you are doing. More simply: relation before vocation. Relationship with God is life-long; vocation is temporary." Throughout the entire Bible, there are clear calls to relationship with God. Any relationship with God will always, always, always be marked by faith and obedience. We worry so much about God's will for us, when what He wants most is our devotion. We're seeking direction when He has already laid out His plan and expectations for us.

The biggest decision we will ever make is not which career to take or car to buy, but whether or not we will commit ourselves to Him and His plan. Our dedication to God will always be the prerequisite to any truly successful future.