

## **INVITATION, TEMPTATION, OR TEST: HOW TO DISCOVER & DO GOD'S WILL**

By: Paul R. Shockley:

[www.prshockley.org](http://www.prshockley.org).

This is the second of 4 message series titled, "When you come to a fork in the road, don't pull out a knife!" The series will focus on the choices in life we make, the habits we create, and the consequences we live with.

In my first lesson on moral decision-making I closed with a statement from Oswald Chambers. Referring to Chamber's May 25<sup>th</sup> devotional of *My Utmost for His Highest* I said that the one of the greatest enemies of the life of faith in God is not sin, but good choices which are not quite good enough. Don't merely make good choices, for good choices can be an enemy of the best choices. Always seek to make the best choice even among a set of good choices. It would seem that making the best choice would have to be one whereby my choices align with God's will.

But that begs another set of questions. What is God's will for my life? How do I discover and do God's will? Lastly, am I doing God's will? So, I'm grouping these questions under one title, "**How to Discover and Do God's Will!**"

### **II. INTRODUCTION:**

When it comes to discovering God's will for your life consider the following approaches and see if they resonate with the way you have made choices in your past.

#### **A. First approach appeals to incidental circumstances in seeking God's will:**

A lady had a lifetime ambition of going to the Holy Land. She got a pamphlet on the Holy Land tour and read it over carefully. She had the time and the money to make the trip, but she wasn't certain if it was God's will. So before going to bed that night, she read the pamphlet and noticed in the details of the plan that they would be traveling on a 747 jumbo jet, there and back. She wrestled through the night, tossed back and forth, wondering what God's will might be. And she woke up the next morning, looked at her digital clock, and it read 7:47. It convinced her it was God's will for her to make the trip.

#### **B. Second approach appeals to reading one's situation in Scripture in seeking God's will:**

There was a pastor who was for many years a deacon in several churches before God called him into vocational service as minister before he was ever ordained. And then while a minister he was tempted to buy a doctor's degree from a degree mill. He read in his King James Bible the words of 1 Timothy 3:13 and he got his answer from God: "for they that have used the office of deacon will, purchase to themselves a high degree..."

#### **C. Third method appeals to holding out a fleece before God in seeking God's will:**

A man who was wrestling with knowing God's will, prayed as he was driving, "If it is Your will for me to do this, then may the light at the next corner stay green until I get there." Another one wrestling with God's will said, "Lord, may my phone ring at 9:21 tonight if Your answer to me is yes."

**D. Fourth account appeals to the open window method in seeking God's will:**

You put your Bible by a window and (whew!) the pages blow and you put your finger on a verse. One man did that and pointed to the verse, "Judas went and hanged himself." Not a very good life verse, and he did it again. This time he put his finger on the verse that said, "God and do thou likewise." The third verse he found was, "Whatsoever thou doest, do quickly."

*Transition:*

- E. As I share with you my thoughts from Scripture on this subject on how to do discover God's will I want you to know that it is a very difficult subject. I'm no expert on it but my intent is to share with you my gleanings from Scripture on this issue. To be sure, brilliant and godly men and women differ on the particulars. However, I do think that what I have to share flows from Scripture and resonates with careful reflection on the issue that will hopefully motivate you to make your life count for something great: to live for Him beyond what you ever thought possible. To be sure, it is not my intent to bring a full treatise on the subject.
- F. What are the repercussions if we choose to go our own way rather yield to God's will for our lives? Here are some of the problems we will experience as stated from Scripture:
1. **Proverbs 14:12:** There is a way *which seems* right to a person, but its end is the way of death.
  2. Jeremiah also clearly states the problem of man's inability to direct his life. In **Jeremiah 10:23** he said, "*Lord, we know that people do not control their own destiny. It is not in their power to determine what will happen to them.*"
  3. **Isaiah 55:8-9:** "*Indeed, my plans are not like your plans, and my deeds are not like your deeds, 9 for just as the sky is higher than the earth, so my deeds are superior to your deeds and my plans superior to your plans.*"
  4. **1 Corinthians 1:25:** "*For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.*"
- G. Therefore, realizing that trying to doing it our own way is futile, foolish, and deadly, isn't it better to seek God's will since he knows us better than we know ourselves:
1. **Psalm 139:13-14:** "*Certainly you made my mind and heart; you wove me together in my mother's womb. 14 I will give you thanks because your deeds are awesome and amazing. You knew me thoroughly;*"
- H. Scripture is rather clear that God wants to direct our lives. I take great hope, comfort, and peace because He not only cares for us but wants to govern our lives. But pause and consider who it is that wants to govern your life. It is the God of the Bible, who is the sum-total of His infinite perfections. He is omniscient, omnipotent, & omnipresent; He is our creator and loves us with an infinite love. Therefore, even though I may never know why I've had to experience suffering, loss, and pain, I know that I can trust Him because God will never do anything less than His infinite perfect best. Therefore, consider the following portions of Scripture:

1. **Proverbs 3:5-6:** *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding. 6 Acknowledge him in all your ways, and he will make your paths straight.*
  2. **Proverbs 16:1-4:** *The intentions of the heart belong to a man, but the answer of the tongue comes from the Lord. 2 All the ways of a person seem right in his own opinion, but the Lord weighs the motives.3 Commit your works to the Lord, and your plans will be established. 4 The Lord works everything for its own ends—even the wicked for the day of disaster.*
  3. **Proverbs 16:9:** *A person plans his course, but the Lord directs his steps.*
  4. **James 1:5:** *But if anyone is deficient in wisdom, he should ask God, who gives to all generously and without reprimand, and it will be given to him.*
  5. **1 Peter 5:6-7:** *And God will exalt you in due time, if you humble yourselves under his mighty hand 7 by casting all your cares on him because he cares for you.*
- I. When you ask the question, “*What is God’s will for my life,*” what issues are you wrestling about? Typically they are:
- Whom do I marry?
  - Where do I work? .
  - Where should I live? .
  - What should I do with my life?
  - What car should I buy?
  - What house should I buy?
  - Should I go to college, and if so, where should I go?
1. Certainly we should seek God’s guidance and pray about such things as James warned us when he wrote:
    - a. Instead, you ought to say, “*If the Lord wills, we shall live and also do this or that*’ (James 4:15).”
    - b. Paul wrote, “*and I always ask in my prayers, if perhaps now at last I may succeed in visiting you according to the will of God.*” (Rom. 1:10).
    - c. Proverbs 16:3 says, “*Commit your works to the LORD, and your plans will be established.*”
  2. However, if these are the only types of questions we are asking (which I term as horizontal questions), I can’t help but think that our lives are not reflecting what should be our greater quest as Christians. I’m fearful that we have become *consumer-oriented* rather than *God-centered*.
- J. If we look at Scripture where the words of “*will of God*” are found, we see that God is primarily concerned our spiritual and moral center (vertical questions). I believe if we settle

this issue here, then our questions will be reflective a greater purpose in life. Consider the following passages where “*the will of God*” is mentioned:

1. **1 Corinthians 1:1-2:** *From Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, 2 to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.*
2. **2 Corinthians 1:1:** *From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, with all the saints who are in all Achaia.*
3. **Ephesians 6:6:** *not like those who do their work only when someone is watching—as people-pleasers—but as slaves of Christ doing the will of God from the heart.*
4. **Colossians 4:12:** *Epaphras, who is one of you and a slave of Christ, greets you. He is always struggling in prayer on your behalf, so that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.*
5. **1 Thessalonians 4:3:** *For this is God’s will: that you become holy, that you keep away from sexual immorality,*
6. **1 Peter 2:15:** *For God wants you to silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good.*
7. **1 Peter 4:2:** *In that he spends the rest of his time on earth concerned about the will of God and not human desires.*
8. **1 Peter 5:2:** *Give a shepherd’s care to God’s flock among you, exercising oversight not merely as a duty but willingly under God’s direction, not for shameful profit but eagerly.*

### III. HOW TO DISCOVER GOD’S WILL?

- A. So far, we’ve learned that Scripture is rather clear on two important issues:
  1. It is foolish, futile, and deadly to seek to live your life apart from doing God’s will.
  2. In order to discover God’s will we need to examine ourselves and see whether the questions we ask regarding God’s will are self-serving or God’s-centered. God is primarily concerned with our spiritual and moral center and I believe the reason why is that if we make it our aim to be pleasing to Him, then everything else will adjust accordingly.
- B. Do you want to discover and do God’s will? Make it your life ambition to please and glorify God. If you do these things, then I believe God will address the “big” questions we ask in life (e.g., what kind of a spouse should I marry; what should be my vocation in life?):
  1. **Psalm 25:12:** *The Lord shows his faithful followers the way they should live.*

2. **Psalm 37:4-5:** *Then you will take delight in the Lord, and he will answer your prayers. 5 Commit your future to the Lord! Trust in him, and he will act on your behalf.*
3. **1 Thessalonians 4:1:** *Finally then, brothers and sisters, we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received instruction from us about how you must live and please God (as you are in fact living) that you do so more and more.*
4. **James 4:3-4:** *you ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly, so you can spend it on your passions.4 Adulterers, do you not know that friendship with the world means hostility toward God? So whoever decides to be the world's friend makes himself God's enemy.*
5. **Ephesians 6:6:** *... not like those who do their work only when someone is watching—as people-pleasers—but as slaves of Christ doing the will of God from the heart.*
6. **2 Timothy 2:4:** *No one in military service gets entangled in matters of everyday life; otherwise he will not please the one who recruited him.*

In order to discover and do God's will I do believe that another issue needs to be settled. I rarely read this being discussed but I do believe it is the most important truth when seeking to discover and do God's will. If you want to discover and do God's will for your life, then you must recognize your identity first.

### C. THE DOCTRINE OF IDENTIFICATION:

#### Consider the following by Lewis S. Chafer:

*“To be in Christ is to be in the sphere of His own infinite Person, power, and glory. He surrounds, He protects, He separates from all else, and He indwells the one in Him. He also supplies in Himself all that a soul will ever need in time or eternity.”<sup>1</sup>*

1. The doctrine of identification is the teaching that *believers* are identified with Jesus Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and glorification whereby believers died with Christ (Gal. 2:20), were buried with Christ (Rom. 6:4), rose with Christ (Rom. 6:4-5), ascended with Christ, and glorified with Christ (Rom. 8:30; Eph. 2:6).
2. This doctrine is only applicable to believers because unbelievers are identified with Adam, thus in sin (Rom. 3:24-25 cf. Rom. 5:12-21 cf. Eph. 2:1-2). Therefore, through the atonement of Jesus Christ, reconciliation, propitiation, redemption, adoption, and regeneration (and other positional benefits as well) are *bestowed* to the elect (Eph. 1:4), upon belief in Jesus Christ as personal Savior (Rom. 5:17; John 3:16). This change of identification from Adam to Christ occurs by means of the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 12:13) whereby He joins those who have accepted Jesus as personal Savior to the body of which Jesus Christ is the living Head so that all that is true of the Head is also true of each member in His Body.

---

<sup>1</sup> Lewis S. Chafer, *Grace: The Glorious Theme* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1922, 1950), 303.

3. ***To whom have we been united? And how was this made possible?*** We have been joined to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ, whereby at the moment of salvation we were baptized into one body by the One Holy Spirit, who baptized every member of the elect, upon salvation, into Christ's death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and glorification. This is clear in view of other passages such as Galatians 3:27: "*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*" [The baptism is not a reference to water baptism in this context but baptism by the Holy Spirit].
4. ***When did this take place?*** The timing of this union is two-fold in that it is the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit which joins the believer via *conversion* to the historical event that took place approximately 2,000 years ago with the death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, upon conversion, the reality of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ that took place historically is applied to the believer upon conversion.<sup>3</sup> This is evident in Romans 6:3-5, Colossians 2:11-14, and by association, 1 Cor. 12:13. In fact, like Dr. Charles C. Ryrie states in his comments on Romans 6:3: "Baptism with the Holy Spirit joins the believer to Christ, separating him from the old life and associating him with the new. He is no longer 'in Adam' but is 'in Christ.'"<sup>4</sup> Or as Dr. Lewis S. Chafer states, "A 'the saved one is in Christ, and the character and power of the daily live that will be experienced when the victorious energy of the indwelling Christ is imparted.'"<sup>5</sup> Chafer further explains:

Every child of God is vitally united to Christ. He is placed in Christ by the baptism with the Spirit, which ministry of the Spirit is not only a part of salvation and therefore already accomplished for all who are saved, but it is distinctly said to be a ministry that is wrought for *all* who believe on Christ [1 Cor. 12:13]....There was a time when the individual was not in Christ, which is the present estate of all who are unsaved. There follows a time when the individual, being saved, is in Christ. This great change consists in the fact that he has been placed in that vital organic union with Christ by the baptism with the Spirit. By the Spirit he has been baptized into the very body of Christ, and this ministry of the Spirit, likewise, unites all who are saved into a unity of their own; for they are 'made to drink into one Spirit.'

---

<sup>2</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *Designed to Be Like Him* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966), 111.

<sup>3</sup> As Douglas Moo states:

Since, then, the text does not allow us to focus on the cross or our own experience as the 'time' of our being buried with Christ, we are forced to the conclusion that we are dealing with a category that transcends it. Our dying, being buried, and being resurrected with Christ are experiences that transfer us from the old age to the new. But the transition from old age to new, while applied to individuals at their conversion, has been accomplished through the redemptive work of Christ on Good Friday and Easter. Paul's *syn* refers to a 'redemptive-historical' 'withness' [his term, not a misspelling] whose locus is *both* the cross and resurrection *and* Christ-where the 'shift' in ages took place historically-and the conversion of every believer-when this 'shift' in ages becomes applicable to the individual [*The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 365].

<sup>4</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible: Expanded Edition* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986, 1995), 1798.

<sup>5</sup> Chafer, *Grace*, 305.

There is no other work of God for the individual which seems to accomplish so much as the baptism with the Spirit; for by it the living union with Christ is established forever, and by virtue of that union the believer has entered the sphere of all heavenly *positions* and all eternal *possessions* which in grace are provided for him in Christ. To the Christians, Christ has become, in the divine reckoning, the sphere of his being, and this reckoning contemplates all that the Christian is and that he *does*.<sup>6</sup>

One of the most important words regarding this identification is found in Romans 6:5: “For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will also be united in the likeness of his resurrection.” The word “united” is from the Greek word, “**sumphutos**.” Only used here in the New Testament, the word means “*grown together*”, thus implying that Jesus Christ and believer is “*fused together*.” The incredible result is that the believer’s union with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection is the basis for our future resurrection

Lastly, it is very important to note that the phrase, “*in Christ*,” and its equivalents, “*In Christ Jesus*,” “*In Him*,” “*In the Beloved*,” “*In Christ Jesus*,” “*Through Him*,” and “*With Him*,” appear in the New Testament no less than 130 times. Consider the interesting fact that there is no hint of a possible position of this magnitude, this union with 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity, in the Mosaic Law, prophecy, kingdom teachings, prophecy, historical typology, or other teachings of the Old Testament. Nonetheless, this union with Jesus Christ, Undiminished Deity and Perfect Humanity is historical fact in Pauline Scriptures, foreordained by God in eternity past (Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:2-23).<sup>7</sup>

The following are central facts of our identification with Jesus by means of the Holy Spirit through the unique ministry of Spirit Baptism.<sup>8</sup>

#### **BAPTIZED INTO THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST:**

**A. Galatians 2:20 :** “*I am crucified with Christ.*” This means that when Jesus Christ died, I was so identified and united with Him that I died also. I was crucified with Christ.

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 307.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 303.

<sup>8</sup> Douglas Moo concludes his discourse on the meaning of Baptism by stating:

Baptism, then, is not the place, or time, at which we are buried with Christ, but the instrument (*dia*) through which we are buried with him. It might, then, be an obvious conclusion that the ‘time’ of our burial with Christ was the time of his own burial: that, when Christ died, was buried, and resurrected, we were ‘in him’ and so participated in these events ‘with’ him. Support for this conception can be found in the aorist passive verbs used throughout this passage, the reference to Christ’s own form of death, crucifixion, as that in which we participate (v. 6), and the simple logic that runs ‘if we died with Christ’ and he died ‘once’ (v. 10), on Calvary, then our dying ‘with’ him must also have taken place on Calvary.’ Moreover, it is very natural to apply to our relationship with Christ the same kind of ‘inclusive’ relationship that Paul has just indicated to be the case with Adam (5:12-21) [*The Epistle to the Romans*, 364].

**B. Romans 6:3:** *“Or do you not know that all of us [believers] who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?”* Therefore, believers are buried with him by baptism into death. Just as Christ was raised up from the death by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

**C. Romans 6:8:** “Now if [since] we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.”<sup>9</sup>

**D. Colossians 1:21-22:** *“And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, (22) yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach-“*

**E. Colossians 3:5:** *“Mortify [put to death] therefore your members.”* Why? Because you *“have put off the old man, with his deeds; and have put on the new man”* (vs. 9). The putting off is death and the putting on is resurrection.

As Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost states:

“This then is the first great fact: We were identified with Christ in His death, so that when Christ died, we died. Now this is not something we can prove, this is not something that, experientially, we can put to a test and demonstrate. This is a fact of divine revelation that we are called upon to believe. We were not consciously present. We have no sensory perception of our death with Christ, but it was nonetheless a real death. We were baptized by the Spirit into Christ Jesus, and by that act we were baptized into Christ Jesus, as we also were baptized into His death. Thus the first great work of Christ in which we were identified was His death.”<sup>10</sup>

Therefore:

1. When an individual, a member of the elect, (who is in Adam) receives the free gift of Salvation by placing his or her trust in Jesus Christ for salvation, he or she is incorporated into, united to Jesus Christ, which includes being united to his death.
2. Being united to Jesus’ Christ’s death means that Jesus’ death becomes our death.
3. Holy Spirit’s ministry of baptism makes this a spiritual reality.

#### **BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST’S BURIAL:**

**A. Romans 6:4:** *“We are buried with him by baptism into Death.”*

**B. Colossians 2:12:** *“Having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the death.”*

<sup>9</sup> If" is translated as "since" because it is a first class condition in Greek whereby the word “if” represents a condition that is genuinely true to reality. Thus, believers *have* died with Christ.

<sup>10</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *Designed to Be Like Him* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966), 112.

As Dr. Pentecost observes:

“Burial removes the deceased one from the sphere in which he was born. We were born once into this world, over which Satan is prince. But by burial we are removed from this sphere. Just as burial is the consequence of death, and Christ’s body was put into the grave because He had died, so we who have died with Christ have been buried with Christ. We were not conscious of our burial, we had no sense of the tomb closing over us; yet this burial is nonetheless real, a fact to be believed, a truth on which we can reckon.”<sup>11</sup>

Therefore:

1. If we are united to Jesus Christ by means of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, then his burial becomes our burial. In other words, burial with Christ is a description of the believer’s participation in Christ’s own burial, a participated that is mediated by the baptizing ministry of the Holy Spirit. So, it is not that the Christian is in his own grave, but by means of the Holy Spirit, he or she is set alongside Jesus Christ in his.<sup>12</sup>

### **BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST’S RESURRECTION:**

- A. **Romans 6:5:** *“like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death [and the passage states that we assuredly have], we shall be also in that likeness of his resurrection.”*
- B. **Ephesians 1:19-20:** Paul prays that the believers to whom he wrote might know *“what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward us believe.”* What is the measure of the power? It is the power *“which he [God] wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.”*
- C. **Ephesians 2:1:** Paul affirms that we too have been raised by God’s power. How can it be said that we have been raised? Because we were identified with Christ in His resurrection. *“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins...”*

---

<sup>11</sup> Pentecost, *Designed to Be Like Him*, 112.

- D. **Ephesians 2:5-6:** “*Even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive<sup>13</sup> together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and<sup>6</sup> raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus...*”
- E. **Philippians 3:10:** In this passage the apostle Paul expresses the desire of his heart that he might “*know him, and the power of his resurrection.*”
- F. **Colossians 2:12:** “*buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*”
- G. **Colossians 3:1:** “*If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.*”<sup>14</sup>

Therefore:

1. Power brought Jesus Christ to resurrection
2. Power was experienced by the Apostle, a child of God.
3. Power can be experienced by any child of God because believers have been resurrected with Jesus Christ.

#### **BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST’S ASCENSION AND GLORIFICATION:**

- A. **Ephesians 2:6:** God “*has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ.*”
- B. **Romans 8:29-30:** The apostle reminds us that those who have been predestined and called by God that “*whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified; them he also glorified.*”<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> The phrase, “*made us alive*” is from the Greek word συζωοποιέω ( *syzōpoieō*) and it means to “raise to life with , make alive with.” It is used here and in Colossians 2:13.

<sup>14</sup> The word used for “raised” in Ephesians 2:6, Colossians 2:12, and here in 3:1 is συνεγείρω [ *sunegeiro*] It is used only three times in N.T. This verb may have one of two nuances: **1** to raise together, to cause to raise together. **2** to raise up together from mortal death to a new and blessed life dedicated to God. Interestingly, in the LXX, this same Greek verb is used in Isa. 14:9: “*Hell from beneath is excited about you, to meet you at your coming; It stirs up the dead from you, All the chief ones of the earth; It has raised up from their thrones All the kings of the nations.*”

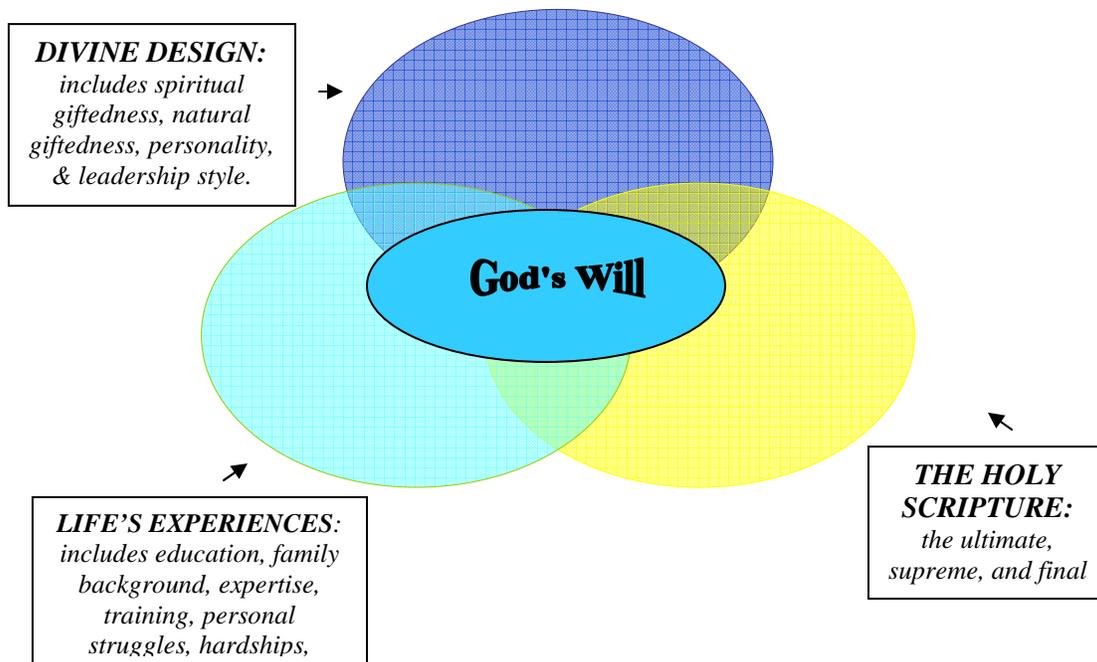
<sup>15</sup> The term, “glorified” is from δοξάζω ( *doxazō*) *doxazō* to render or esteem glorious. Interestingly, though glorification is in the future, it is stated here in the past tense. Therefore, everyone, who as foreknown by God in eternity past has such a certain future that the apostle claims their glorification as already accomplished.

Therefore: Apostle Paul declares of his present position before the Father as one who has been identified with Jesus Christ in His ascension and His glorification

“From the illustrative Scriptures it will be observed that the unity between Christ and the believer is two-fold: The believer is in Christ, and Christ is in the believer. The believer is in Christ as to positions, possessions, safe-keeping, and association; and Christ is in the believer giving life, character, and dynamic for conduct.”<sup>16</sup>

### LADIES AND GENTLEMENT: YOUR IDENTITY IS SETTLED!

Now that your identity is settled, the question is no longer are you capable of doing God’s will. Nor is the question centered on your life. The question now becomes, “What is God’s will for our lives?” The “I”, “myself”, and “me” is now removed. In fact, because of your identity in Christ, you need to now see how God designed you in order that Christ might use your uniqueness to glorify God. Moreover, you need to also consider where God has planted you, your life’s experiences. I say this because He is sovereign. Lastly, you need to intimately know God’s instructions. I believe where the three harmonize: your divine design, and Scripture, this is where your life will be maximized for God’s glory.



<sup>16</sup> Chafer, *Grace*, 305.

Typically, any opportunity that is set before us may be distinguishable by considering whether it is an invitation by God, temptation, or test. The unwavering maxim, goal, and purpose in every decision to be made is, **“What will give God the most glory?” or “What will please God the most?”** **“Or what will demonstrate my love to God the most?”** The harmonization or intersection of your divine design, life’s experiences, and authority of God Word may assist you to that end. The following points are points of reflective considerations to assist you in further discernment in what decisions should be made that will give God the most glory:

1. Learn what God likes and dislikes (consider God’s character/perspective).
2. Know God’s Word (don’t just be familiar with it; *know* it biblically & systematically).
3. Confess sins; make sure you are rightly related to the Holy Spirit (1 John 1:9).
4. Pray earnestly.
5. Wait on God (trust the circumstance to God’s timing; don’t force it)
6. Stand firm against pressure (both external (e.g., friends) & internal (e.g., impatience)).
7. Lay down your desires and take up His.
8. Realize that the closer you are to God in terms of intimacy, the more obedient you will be to do God’s will.

#### IV. CONCLUSION:

##### **In Conclusion I want you to consider whether you are doing God’s will?**

- A. Pastor Bruce Bumgardner once asked Dr. Elliot Johnson, senior professor of Bible Exposition at Dallas Theological Seminary, how one discovers God’s will. Dr. Elliot Johnson’s answer was, “Walk consistently in fellowship with God and immerse yourself in the Word” and the will of God would be become clear to you.” (It was good advice for me.).

1. Are you walking consistently in fellowship with God?
2. Are you immersing yourself in the Word?

- B. Are you following his call for your life? Consider the following insight by Ravi Zacharias:

“A calling is simply God’s shaping of your burden and his beckoning you to your service to him the place and pursuit of his choosing. Find your home in your service to Christ is key to noticing the threads that God has designed just for you. When you find it, you inevitably feel that hand-in-glove sensation. Finding it gives you the security of knowing that you are utilizing your gifts and your will to God’s ends first, not yours. When you align your will with God’s will, his calling on you has found its home. A true call of God puts a tug on your soul that you cannot escape, no matter how unattractive the cost of following it may feel. And what is the starting point for this process? The Bible leaves no doubt: do what you know to be God’s will, then watch as He will lead you into what you do not yet know. You are God’s temple; so act like it. God reinforces his call as you respond to his nod.” ~ Ravi Zacharias, *The Grand Weaver* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 186.