

God's Will And The Renewing Of Your Mind

"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." **Romans 12:1-2 (NASB)**

I. Introduction

A true test of our beliefs is the way we behave. Paul is practical. He deals in relationships and is saying, *"Hey listen, the same person behind the pulpit must be the same person in public; the same person sitting in church must be the same person in public. So, what will your legacy be?"*

Key thought: *We must always strive for _____!"*

II. Four Principles To Discovering God's Perfect Will For Our Lives

So how do we discover God's will for our lives and apply it to our relationships? Remember, God's will is not a formula, and it's not a feeling.

1. _____ (sacrifice)

*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to **offer your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and pleasing to God—this is spiritual service of worship."* **Romans 12:1-2**

Key thought: sacrifice means unconditional dedication to God! This is your act of spiritual worship—committing your time, praise, money, life, talents, and energy.

2. _____ (not ISOLATION, but living a life separate from the world)

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world." The Phillips translation says, *"Do not conform any longer **to the pattern of this world...**"* **Romans 12:2**

Key thought: No Christian should ever get mixed up in worldly affairs, ambitions, beefs, values and pursuits!

*"Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, just as I do; and as Christ's soldier, **do not let yourself become tied up in worldly affairs, for then you cannot satisfy the one who has enlisted you in his army.** Follow the Lord's rules for doing His work, just as an athlete either follows the rules or is disqualified and wins no prize."* **II Timothy 2:1-5**

*"Therefore **'Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord.** Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty."* **II Corinthians 6:17-18 (NKJV)**

*(Jesus said), "they (true Christ-followers) **are not of the world**, just as I am not of the world."*
John 17:16 (NKJV)

3. _____ (pursuing in a way that's uniquely 'you')
"Let me tell you brothers, that the gospel which was preached by me is not of human origin. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me...and called me...to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus." **Galatians 1:11-17 (NKJV)**

Key thought: Avoid imitation; it has no connection. One of the things that I've discovered over the years is that God doesn't always tell you every aspect of how to do His will on a daily basis---He wants us to be creative and to engage with Him in His plans! Sometimes—such as to whether or not to engage in a relationship or whether or not to marry---He may ask you, "Well, what do **want** to do?"

If you want to know God's will, don't get your cues from the world. Many Christians accept automatically whatever standard the world is setting, even though God says it's wrong. Don't imitate the world or resort to becoming "quasi-Amish"---but rather, learn how to live in a world without letting it influence you! And then, innovate by being a wise fisher of men---in a way that fits you and your personality in a unique and wonderful way!

4. _____ (allowing God to change your thought life)
"...but be transformed by **the renewing of your mind.**" **Romans 12:2**

Key thought: The word *transform* is *metamorphosis*. Jesus was metamorphosed when He was supernaturally changed. Scripture teaches that the way we think determines the way we feel; and the way we feel ultimately determines the way we act.

"For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he." **Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV)**

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right."

II Timothy 3:16 (NLT)

"...and be renewed in the spirit of your mind..." **Ephesians 4:23 (NKJV)**

"God's will is always His---good, pleasing and perfect will." Literally what this means is God's plan for your life is tailor-made, and uniquely designed just for you; a custom fit; and it's an original!

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

- ❑ What are some things you imitate without knowing the reason?
- ❑ How do you keep the world from transforming you?
- ❑ In what ways are you now realizing that the world has affected/infected you already?
- ❑ What happened when you made a commitment not knowing what was to happen?
- ❑ Exactly how have you been transformed after committing your life to Christ?

Answer Key:

Key thought: *We must always strive for _____ Authenticity_____!"*

1. Dedication
2. Insulation
3. Innovation
4. Transformation