

Topic:

Twelve Guidelines for
Finding & Following
the Will of God

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Twelve Guidelines for Finding and Following the Will of God

1. **Be humble:** Psalm 25:9- "God guides the humble in what is right and teaches them His way." *See also: Isaiah 66:1-2; I Peter 5:5,6; Romans 12:3.*

Note: The two means for cultivating humility on a daily basis are prayer and study of God's Word. When we pray and look to God's word, we are acknowledging our need for God's strength and wisdom.

2. **Be grateful:** I Thessalonians 5:18: "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Note: Many step out of God's will because of *discontentment*. Cf. Hebrews 13:5. *See also: Philippians 2:14-15.*

3. **Be obedient** to God's revealed will: II Timothy 3:16,17: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Note: First do what you know to be God's will. Always ask if there is any Scripture that applies to your decision. *See also: Deuteronomy 8:3; Psalm 19:7; 119:98; Colossians 3: 16.*

4. **Be connected** to a local church: Hebrews 13:7,17: "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account." *See also Ephesians 4:11,12.*

Note: God uses godly mentors to help guide us. Be open to godly counsel. *See Proverbs 12:15;19:20.*

5. **Be spiritually minded:** Romans 8:5-8: "Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God."

Note: Focus on spiritual and eternal goals and minimize the material and temporal commitments that do not serve those goals. *See: I John 2:15-17, Colossians 3:1,4; II Corinthians 4:16-18.* Be kingdom minded (Matthew 6:33). Deny the flesh—this is what it means to be led by the Spirit. *See: Romans 8:13-14; 13:14; Galatians 5:19-22.*

6. **Be wholehearted:** Colossians 3:23: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men."

See also: Ecclesiastes 9:10; Romans 12:11; I Corinthians 15:5-8; Ephesians 6:7,8.

7. **Be committed to excellence:** Philippians 1:9-10a: "And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best."

Note: Ask, "What is the best I can do for God?" I Corinthians 10:31, II Corinthians 5:9-10.

8. **Be willing to step out in faith:** Hebrews 11:6-10,13: "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God....All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth." *See also: II Corinthians 5:6-10.*

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Note: Sometimes God calls us to follow Him without a full understanding of his provisions and purposes. However, we should not confuse faith with presumption. Those who, for example, go into debt and claim it as a step of faith are being presumptuous toward God.

9. **Be patient:** Hebrews 10:36: "You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised." *See also: James 5:7-8.*

Note: Abraham and Sarah are examples of those who were unwilling to wait for God's timing. Instead of trusting God for the impossible (a child in old age), they took matters into their own hands by having a Son through Hagar, Sarah's handmaid (Genesis 16). The consequences of this act continue today in the conflict in the Middle East between the Jews and the Arabs --the seeds of Isaac (Sarah's son) and Ishmael (Hagar's son).

10. **Be open to the unexpected:** Isaiah 55: 8-9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Note: This truth is powerfully illustrated in the lives of many in scripture (e.g. Abraham and Sarah, Joseph, Elijah, Paul)

11. **Be willing to suffer:** I Peter 4: 19 "So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good." *See also: II Corinthians 12:7-10; Hebrews 12:4-11.*

Note: God's will involved suffering for Jesus as it will for His followers. *Luke 22:39-46; Hebrews 5:7; John 15: 18-20; II Timothy 3: 12; I Peter 2:21.*

12. **Be bold for Christ:** Galatians 1:10: "Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ."

John 12:42,43: "Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved praise from men more than praise from God."

Mark 8:38. If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."