

FOCUSING ON GOD'S WILL

1. God is Sovereign- "He declares the end from the beginning" "He accomplishes all His good pleasure" "His purpose will be established" (Isaiah 46.10) "He determines the appointed times of peoples and nations." "He determines the boundaries of their inhabitations." (Acts 17.26)

2. God has a Purpose for You- Psalm 139 God formed you (vs. 13). Your days were recorded before you were born (vs. 16). He knows where you are (vs. 7-12). He is intimately acquainted with all your ways (vs. 1-6). He thinks about you a lot (vs. 17,18). He knows you better than you know yourself (vs. 23,24).

In Galatians 1.15, Paul declares that God had set him apart for a purpose before he was born. Paul calls this purpose "his course" declaring in 2 Timothy 4.7, "I have finished my course."

3. Resisting God's Will does not Thwart God's Will- In Acts 26. 9-18, Paul explains that for a time he had resisted the way and had fought against God's prodding. This brought about frustration, anger & misery in Paul's life yet never derailed God's will. Paul was called to be an agent in the spreading of God's Word and so God used Paul's aggressive resistance to spread His Word from Jerusalem to the Gentiles (Acts 11. 19-26). Yet when Paul surrenders to God's will, he is used as a vessel of blessing and now becomes a recipient of grace, peace, purpose hope and love spreading God's Word from Jerusalem to the Gentiles.

(1 Thessalonians 2.8). (Note: In Paul's case, he had to experience blindness- Blindness to the world and to Paul's way caused by a Light that couldn't be ignored. Now seeing everything in a new light, Paul turns from those things he once valued and counts them as rubbish (Philippians 3.4-10).)

Old Testament Example: Lot/ Abraham (Genesis 13, Galatians 6.8)

4. God Gives Clear Directions for Blessings- A Few examples of God's general direction to all (Ephesians 4/5) Build up the body of Christ in love (4.16) Stop pursuing your selfish sensual desires (4.19) Don't be a taker, be a giver (4.28) Say only those things which will help others become Christ-like (4.29) Be kind and forgiving (4.32) Walk in love just as Christ (5.2) Look for ways to please God (5.10) Let His Spirit control you (5.18) Encourage one another in Christ (5.19) Give thanks to God for everything (5.20), etc.

5. God Establishes Boundaries for Greater Clarity-

Ephesians 5.22 - 6.9 - Husbands, wives, children, workers, employers Titus 2, Colossians 3.18-25, 1 Peter 3, 1 Corinthians 7, etc. *The greater our obedience and submission to the boundaries given to us, the more in focus the details of His will become.*

6. God Directs the Patient & the Faithful - (as outlined in Psalm 37)

-Wait on the Lord ("Remain" 1 Corinthians 7.8,11,17-24)

-Cultivate faithfulness (Ex. Ruth)

-He will bring forth your righteousness as the light (You'll be noticed) (God found David 1 Sam. 16.6-13)

-He will exalt you to inherit the land.

7. God Moves Thru...

A) Longings & Desires - 1) Implanted before we were born (Ephesians 1.4,5; Galatians 1.15)

2) Evident before anointing or conversion (Note: Moses as "Liberator" Exodus 2.11; David as "Protector" 1 Samuel 17.34,35; Paul as "Zealot" Galatians 1.14, Philippians 3.6)

B) Trials & Testing- 1) "Called to Suffer" Job; Acts 11; 1 Peter 2 2) "Crucial Decisions" or Turning Points- Abram Genesis 22; Joseph; Daniel; Deuteronomy 8.16

God uses past experiences, abilities & talents to prepare, train & test, not necessarily to direct or define one's path or purpose.

8. God Appoints for Service by Giving...

Measured Faith - Romans 12

Spiritual Gifts - 1 Corinthians 12 -14; 1 Peter 4