



## Wiper Blades Working?

There is nothing worse than driving down the road and it starts to rain, and you turn on your windshield wipers only to find out they are not properly working. Sometimes all you see is a smeared windshield and your vision is very limited. Other times the wiper only cleans some of the windshields and you have to cock your head at a certain angle to see through the clear area. Then there are times when the wipers make so much noise every time, they go from side to side that it's almost unbearable to allow remaining on.

The windshield of life is a lot like that. We must see clearly what lies ahead so we don't run into unexpected danger. The danger of making wrong or bad choices in our lives has serious consequences. God does not want us to experience these consequences so He offers us something called His Will. Knowing God's Will for our lives helps us understand our purpose and value in life. His Will is not some mystical thing that can't be understood and can't be found. He wants us to be able to see clearly, so in a way His Will is like our windshield wiper. Making sure the wipers are properly fitted and "up to date" are critical for us to see clearly. When we don't take God's Will for us seriously then we'll find life becomes hard to see clearly and what direction we should go. Just like in the case of a faulty windshield wiper, we will often look through only certain areas of our life's windshield to see what we want to see, and sometimes life just gets so difficult that we turn off God's wipers altogether because we can't stand the noise.

Our teenagers who know Christ as their personal Savior and Lord are constantly asking the question, "What is God's Will for my life?" Many parents find it a difficult challenge to help their teen understand what His Will is for their life, especially if they don't feel they have a clear understanding of themselves. In this section, we will be looking at three areas of windshield wiper maintenance.

- Are they making a noise or a sound, there is a difference?
- How do you change the wipers?
- Can you see now?

### What kind of noise are they making?

When your windshield wipers make a funny noise (or not so funny sometimes), it's because they are warning you that your blades are wearing out and soon you will not be seeing clearly. The sound is a good thing and is trying to protect you. God's Will in many ways is a lot like your windshield. He sometimes allows for noise to come into our lives so we can take heed and realize that a possible danger is coming on the horizon that we don't see.

The first sound God wants us to hear has to do with understanding His Will about when we break lines of communication in our relationship with Him, When you don't have a clear conscience and your relationship with God is not going so well, chances are you are not that interested in doing His Will. Think about when you want your teen to do something that you know is good for them and you ask, they do it. However, you just had a major argument with them, and your lines of communication are broken. Do you honestly think your teen at that moment is interested in doing what you want them to do? Understanding and doing God's Will all depends on whether you hear "noise" or whether you hear a "sound". The sound is a warning of potential danger while a noise can be just a nuisance. When our teens are more interested in doing the will of the world rather than the Will of God then God's wipers will sound like noise to them. The definition of noise states; "A sound that is especially unpleasant, loud, and disturbing." Many teens see God's Will that way. Many teenagers feel God wants to bother them or disturb them from having a good time and enjoying life.

To many teens, living for God and doing His Will is like living in a spiritual straitjacket. They feel they are restricted by having to follow a bunch of rules. They think God Will is nothing more than a bunch of rules. Teens often associate His Will with parental rules. They would prefer to just turn off the noisy wipers and take their chances with the possible consequences. At the moment they are making poor choices the risk to live free from "God's rules" does not impact them enough with the possible harm the consequences will bring.

The mature teenage believer, however, hears a different sound. They don't hear noise per se; instead, they hear a warning sound that encourages them to make sure everything is right before they go too far down the road without being able to see clearly. They know potential danger lurks down the road and they want to make sure they have a clear vision of what they must do to get where they want to get in life.

**What kind of noise could your teenager be listening too?**

### **What is the noise?**

Noise can come from lots of different places. Satan would love nothing more than to confuse us from knowing the truth about God's Will. He knows if he creates enough of a disturbing sound then we will want to turn it off and not see the potential harm ahead of us. So, what are some noises Satan tries to deceive us about God's Will.

**1). God's Will is rarely circumstantial.** This doesn't mean that God can't work through circumstances, but those circumstances are usually grounded in a Biblical principle. Too many people try to put conditions on God's Will through circumstances. For example:

The person who prays for an answer to God's Will through their verse of daily devotion. This person asks God that wherever they open the scripture to let God's Will be revealed to them. That didn't work out too well for the young man when he closed his eyes and dropped his finger on a page in scripture that said, "Judas went and hanged himself". Surely that was a mistake, so he closed his eyes and put his finger on another part of the page, and it read, "Go and do thou likewise". Now being really upset and just knowing this couldn't be God's Will for him he closed his eyes one more time and dropped his finger on the written Word to read, **"Whatever you do, do it quickly."**

How about the woman who prayed whether it was God's Will for her to travel to the Holy Land? Reading the pamphlet, she saw the tour would be flying over on a Jumbo 747 but she still didn't know if God wanted her to do this. So, she asked for God "to give her a sign". After tossing and turning all night and not sleeping a wink she rolled over to see the clock read-7:47 a.m. This surely was a sign from God that she should go, after all the clock said 7:47 am, what are the odds for that happening the very night she prayed for a sign? Signs can be deceiving. In this case, she went on the trip believing it was God's Will only to get extremely sick the first day she arrived. Not only did she spend the whole week in bed not being able to see the Holy land, but she spent thousands of dollars on the trip and felt it was wasted. She questioned why God would allow such a thing when He confirmed to her that it was His Will for her to travel. Did He want her to waste lots of money?

Perhaps what happened to the pastor in a small church without a seminary degree can enlighten us. This pastor was a deacon before he led this small church. He wanted to have a master's degree so he could move up in the world of larger churches. He thought about buying a Master of Divinity degree from an online degree mill but wasn't sure if it was God's Will or not. He prayed about it and found what he felt was sure to be God's Will found right there in scripture. The King James Version of I Timothy 3:13 read: "For they that have used the office of a deacon purchase to themselves a good degree..."

The point of these humorous comments is Satan can make noise about God's will and confuse believers into thinking most of His will can be found in circumstances. In fact, it's just the opposite, most of His Will IS NOT found in circumstances. Scripture says in II Corinthians 11:14 **"And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light."** Satan has his "master's" in faking us out to what is truth and what is not. He is the master of confusion and the best way to confuse a believer is to convince them that God's will is found in circumstantial evidence. He knows when the circumstance falls through, we will start to question why God would allow such a thing. Often when we are confused about God's Will then instead of hearing a "sound" of warning which leads to encouragement, we hear a "noise" that is very disturbing. The more noise we hear the more we want to turn it off. If we keep turning off the noise every time we hear it then chances are we won't see clearly the road ahead. This happens to teens a lot since they are built around emotion. Circumstances can and will affect their emotion which will drive their decision making. If Satan can get a teen to be disappointed in their circumstances and having them believe it had something to do with God's Will, then he will help them start developing a lack of trust in what God wants best for them.

**2) God's Will is rarely emotionally based.** What do I mean? Emotions, especially in a teen are fragile and can be influenced by every wind of doctrine. Ephesians 4:14- *"Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming"*. God's Will for our lives is to make sure we don't get misled by the wrong kind of teaching. Certain teaching might make us feel good emotionally, but it doesn't mean it's right. Even in the church, there is false teaching that can deceive a believer. We must counter all teaching from the pulpit, the television, conferences, and even youth camps with what God's Word says and not what man says. I could share hundreds of examples but here are two. One is based on sin and how we should feel about it and one is based on relationships together as believers.

Too many "feel good" sermons in the church have the preacher spending one minute reading the Scripture and the next 30 minutes on the psychological teaching of man. I hear many a preacher say that God doesn't want us to feel bad about our sin. Instead, He wants us to always be set free from this negative thinking. They spend all this time talking about our positive self-esteem. Be very careful with this type of thinking. It sounds so good and so right but has an element of falsehood. High self-esteem doesn't mean you are redeemed. God indeed wants us to be set free from our sin and the negative effects it has on our lives but nowhere in scripture does it teach that He doesn't want us to feel bad or mourn over our sin. Yes, God wants us to be set free from sin. Romans 8:1 says, "For now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." All of Chapter 6 and most of Chapter 7 of Romans addresses the issue of being set free from our past life of sin. Paul concludes in Romans Chapter 8 verse 37 that "we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." I have been set free from the bondage of sin and I don't have to live a defeated life anymore. I have Christ and through Him, I can be victorious over sin.

However, in that same passage of scripture Paul writes that my sin is what caused death not only to me but to Christ. Romans 5:19 says, *"For just as through the disobedience of the one man (Adam), the many were made sinners (us), so also through the obedience of the one man (Christ), the many will be made righteous."* Romans 6:23 says, *"For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Finally, Paul almost screams out in writing the conclusion of his struggle with sin in Romans 7:24, *"What a wretched man I am! Who will save me from this body of death?"* Does it sound like God wants us to take sin lightly to you? It cost God everything He had in Jesus, ultimately His sinless life. Jesus didn't die just of natural causes. No, He was beaten to a pulp and died horribly on a cross for me and you. Why? *"Because God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16) He died to indeed set us free from a defeated life of sin, but He also wants us to remember what it cost Him. You see; if Satan can get your teen thinking that sin really isn't that bad and it didn't cost Christ much then they will make wrong choices about God's Will and they can eventually become confused and disillusioned about life.

Just because you “feel” this is God’s Will doesn’t mean it is God’s Will. Let me give you another example that happened to me early in my ministry while on staff at First Baptist Church in Lubbock working with students from Texas Tech University. I had a young woman come to me and asked if I would marry her and her boyfriend since they were madly in love. I talked to her about her personal relationship with God and was convinced she did have a personal walk with Christ. I then asked if her boyfriend knew the Lord and her response was no, he’s a strong non-believer but doesn’t mind if I believe what I believe. I went on to counsel her on what the scripture teaches about being “unequally yoked” (II Cor. 6:14 and I Cor. 7:39) and how difficult it would be to glorify God through this union and fulfill the purpose of marriage without both having a personal relationship with God. Some question whether II Cor. 6:14 refers to a relationship between husband and wife or just a believer and non-believer. My response is, “should there be a difference?” I believe the idea of being unequally yoked has the implication of a union between two people and it is even more confirmed in I Cor. 7:39 when Paul is writing about a believing woman being able to remarry after her husband has died and he says, "But he must belong to the Lord." Is it a sin to marry a non-believer if you are a believer? I believe if God reveals His stated Will for you in His Word (not just by someone’s opinion), and we deliberately chose to disobey His clearly stated Will then it is sin. It will be up to you and God on how you interpret Biblical truth and whether you have peace or conviction from His Spirit.

She said with as much conviction as she could muster, "I know that and believe that, but I'm convinced after praying about this that I feel God is telling me to marry this man so I can lead him to Jesus." She let her emotions get in the way of what the scriptures teach about being unequally yoked along with numerous other scriptures that talk about being pulled away from the faith by non-believers. She, in my opinion, was willing to accept less than God's best by choosing her feelings over God's facts. How could this young man who didn't know Christ fulfill God's command that the *“Husband love your wife as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing, with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.”* Ephesians 5: 27. If I married this couple then I would be part of a plan to make sure this young lady didn't get God's best for her. I could not in good conscience marry this couple because I didn't believe God's Word supported her contention of marrying for saving. That is not the Biblical reason why someone should get married. I asked if she would be willing to wait a while until I or someone else could develop a relationship with this young man and share the good news of Christ so he could become a believer. After all, I knew God's desire for this man was to come to know Christ for II Peter 3:9 says, *“That God wishes for none to perish but for all to come to know Him.”* **She made it clear that she believed strongly in how she "felt" and would find some preacher who would marry them. She did find someone who would marry them.** A couple of years later I found out this young girl got pregnant and her husband left her because he didn't want kids and she didn't want an abortion. Many tough times were ahead of her because she chose to listen to the "noise" of emotion rather than the truth of God's Word.

So, let's say we don't hear a “noise” coming from our wipers, but we hear instead a “sound” that is warning us to make a change. What are some of the warning signs that a change is needed? Here are just a few of the warning sounds that tell us a change should be considered.

- ✓ We are never content in our circumstances
- ✓ We worry a lot
- ✓ We become frustrated easily
- ✓ We show anger more than we used to
- ✓ We are making a lot of bad decisions that are costing us emotionally, physically, and spiritually.
- ✓ We keep digging a deeper hole financially
- ✓ We feel lost and without direction
- ✓ We put more emphasis on material things than spiritual things
- ✓ We start doubting our salvation
- ✓ God seems distant and far away

## How To Change The Wiper Blades So We Can See Clearly

It starts with a willingness to **start thinking differently**. We must be willing to change our paradigm. In other words, we must be willing to get out of our normal pattern of how we think about things and be willing to develop a true "faith-based" ideal of thinking. Romans 12: 2 says "*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world. But be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is his good, pleasing, and perfect will.*" **Let's look at what this verse is saying to you and your teen.** As stated earlier, your teen, and in some cases Christian parents, think God's Will for them is like a set of rules that puts a spiritual straitjacket on them. They believe His will smothers them and makes them feel like they can't turn to the left or the right. They feel that they can't breathe and are restricted in such a way that there is no freedom.

Notice how many times I mentioned the word "feel". The reason our teens feel God's Will is so limiting is that they are basing it on the paradigm (pattern) of the world's thinking. The pattern of the world teaches that God wants to limit you from fun and how you should feel. The world teaches that satisfaction in life only comes when you grab the gusto and take it for yourself. You can't see a commercial on television without showing happiness only comes from drinking with all your friends the same beer. The world says sex sales, and do you know why sex sales? Sex outside of marriage has been pushed for so long in movies, television, and music, that to our teens it is abnormal to NOT accept that everyone is doing it. After all, according to the pattern of the world, sex is where love is found rather than love is where sex is found. I can't tell you the number of times I've heard people on television say, "they just fell out of love and no longer want to be married". You don't fall in and out of love, that's a lie of the world. God's definition of love doesn't give you the option to back out. He is love and God will never cease to love you because you are good enough or not good enough.

So, do you want to hear a **GOD FACT and not a world feeling?**

**GOD'S WILL FOR US IS GOOD, PLEASING, AND PERFECT.** If I could paraphrase the ending of Romans 12:2 it would go like this. God's Will for you and I "fits us" just right for helping us mature so we live the way we were intended to live. Let me repeat this because it's worth repeating. As a parent, we must remind our teens often that God's Will is not what the world tries to make it out to be. Instead, it will be really good for them, it will be very pleasing to them because of the type of relationship they have with God, and finally, it will help them mature to be more like Christ.

If you ever want to have a good conversation with your teen ask them this question; "If Jesus could go to school with you today do you think most of the students would think he's cool, dynamic and knows what it takes to make it in this world, or do you think they'd say he's old fashioned, behind the times, and doesn't get it? If they say the majority of the kids say he's behind the times and just doesn't get it then they've bought into what the world says about God's Will. If they say he's cool and dynamic, then they are starting to understand that God wants something good for them in His Will.

### **So how do we THINK differently to know God's good, pleasing, and perfect will? (Four Things)**

**First, we must accept the fact that God is sovereign, and nothing will stop His plan.** There is nothing we can do that will stop that plan for our life. His plan for our life is to eventually conform us into the image of Christ. Romans 8:29 says, "*For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters*". One way or another He wants all your life experiences to start the transformation of bringing you closer to Christ. Even if a believer falls away in their walk with God, He will find a way to fulfill His plan for them. We can either accept His plan for our life or we can reject His plan. He will give us the choice of accepting less than His good, pleasing, and perfect will.

I'm saying we have to understand that no matter what happens to us throughout our life that God does indeed have a plan for us that is within His Will. Once we accept that fact we can move on to the next fact.

**Second, God's Will doesn't change for you just because something negative happens.** Accepting God's Will for your life means you won't rebel and turn away from God when things don't quite go the way you want them to go for your life, especially bad things. Too often when circumstances challenge us and negative things happen to us we don't feel like God is in it. We feel He's checked out and no longer interested in helping us. Please remember to try and not let your feelings get in the way of the facts. We must be reminded that God's Word says, "*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*" (Rom 8: 28). His Word doesn't state that all things are good for us but that He works all things FOR the good. He can take the negative and turn it around for something good. Now that also doesn't mean if we make poor choices that we don't have to pay the consequences for those poor choices, but it does mean that even in those consequences He can help us find some good and grow in His will from it. When we accept that fact and believe in our hearts that God is for us and not against us then we can move on to the two remaining aspects of thinking differently.

**Third, we must start thinking about God's Word in two ways. His Word has precepts and principles.** *Precepts* in the Bible are instructions or commands from God that are very clear. We don't have to question much about how God thinks about such things. For example, God's Word in Ephesians 6:4 says, "*Fathers don't exasperate or 'frustrate' your children, instead bring them up in the admonition of the Lord.*" It is clear from this *precept* that God tells dads not to deliberately frustrate their children by being inconsistent in their walk with God. Dads frustrate their kids when they talk one way about God and live another. Instead, they are to be consistent and raise their children with God's standards. Another example might be where it is said in Mark 12:30 to "love the Lord with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength." It's pretty clear what type of relationship God is saying we need to have with Him and how we are to love Him. We don't have to question what kind of energy we put into that relationship. If we only act like we love God on Sundays and then live just the opposite on Monday through Saturday, then we are ignoring His *precept*.

When we get serious about following His *precepts* then we will think differently, and our thought process will more than likely conflict with what the world says. Just the opposite can happen as well when we start thinking the way the world thinks then more than likely we will come in conflict with how God thinks. How do I know that? I know that because God has some *precepts* about that type of thinking. Here are just a few:

- *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also Matt. 6:19-21. **The world says just the opposite. The world says to indeed store up treasure for yourself by getting as many homes, cars, jewelry, fame, popularity, power, etc... as you can so you can prove your worth to the world.***
- *God's Word says, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. But in humility consider others more important than yourself. Don't look out for your own personal interest only but also look out for the interest of others." Phil 2:3-4. **The world says just the opposite. The world says to grab what you can get to move up the ladder, even if it can hurt someone else. The world says how can you put others before yourself and become successful? You must think of what's best for you before others at all times.***
- *God's Word says, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ."  
**Col. 2: 8. You can't go on any college campus today where the philosophy that "God is dead" is implied or specifically taught. Many professors will put Christian young people on the spot trying to make them defend their faith against the professors' philosophy of "anti-god". I am seeing more and more that the freedom of speech on college campuses doesn't support the freedom to express***

**one's belief in Christ.**

- God's Word says, *"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."* James 1:2-3. **The world says, "How can a good God let anyone go through any kind of suffering. If God exists, then He must be a cruel God to make anyone suffer.** The world doesn't understand that through trials we often will grow more and get more strength through it and it draws us closer to God rather than pushing us away from Him.

I think you get the point. There are hundreds of passages that I could share showing how the world and God's Word clash. Precepts from God's Word gives us clear understanding and allows us to see through the eyes of God what is His desire for us.

We now come to the more complex concept of **God's principles that are within His Will**. His principles that are taught in His Word are not quite as clear and that's where many of us get off the path. For example: When we are praying about a career move and whether we should pack up the family and move to another town. Nowhere in scripture can we find a clear statement of whether we should move to North Dakota and make lots of money, but lose many conveniences of staying put in Houston, and if we stayed in Houston we would continue to struggle financially. We wish we could just open the Bible and find God telling us clearly what His Will is for us. Or perhaps the teen who is thinking could this boy or girl be their life mate? "Is this the right guy or girl for me", they pray to God. What's your Will for me God in marrying this boy or girl?" Nowhere in scripture does it say Sally is to marry John. The Bible has principles to help guide us through the gray areas of life where the do's and don'ts aren't so clear.

To show how precepts and principles work suppose you are driving down the road and the speed limit says 55 miles per hour. That is a precept. Now suppose you are driving down that same road and a little later you see a sign that says "drive carefully", that's a principle. To make it a little even more complicated that principle could mean one thing when you are driving down the road at 3 a.m. on a deserted road verse 3 p.m. in a school zone.

Just remember that the main purpose of God's Word is to help reveal His Will to us. When we don't know much about God's Word there's a good chance knowing His Will is going to be frustrating. On the other hand, the more we know of His Word the more we will see things that happen in our life can be applied as a direction from God. For example:

Philippians 2:12-13 says, ***"Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."***

There are three specifics this verse highlights. First, look at the end of the verse to determine the main thrust of the verse. It says God promises to work in you to accomplish His Will for you and His good purpose. Now for that to happen there must be a couple of other things happening. Second, there must be a level of obedience. The passage says, ***"as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence but now much more in my absence"***. To fully have a better grasp of God's principles working in our life we must live a life of obedience to God's Word as well as being willing to walk by faith when certain doors open or close. The third thing is to ***"continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling."*** What does that mean? It doesn't mean that we work for our salvation being scared and hoping things work out. ***"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works so that no one can boast. Eph. 2:8-9.*** We can't work our way to heaven but we can know if we are going to heaven. We know those who are in Christ Jesus do not have to fear the end result. ***"And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. The one who has the Son has this eternal life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have this eternal life. I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may KNOW that you have eternal life" | John 5:11-13.***



So, what does "work out our salvation with fear and trembling mean?" It means to have fear and trembling (healthy respect of who God is), there must be a "sensitive spirit" to Him and His ways and look within and around. Let's look at how having a sensitive spirit toward God's ways worked for the Apostle Paul. In Acts 16:6-10 it says, <sup>6</sup> "Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. <sup>7</sup> When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. <sup>8</sup> So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. <sup>9</sup> During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." <sup>10</sup> After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them."

Notice how Paul tried to preach the gospel in what is now what we would call Turkey in the "province of Asia." One door after another closed until God revealed to Paul that he was needed to go to Troas to have the doors opened for the Gospel. Now I can imagine Paul at one point early in this process saying something like. "Lord, I thought you wanted me to preach the Gospel everywhere? Is Mysia the place I should be? If not, where Lord should I go?" Noticed Paul traveled through the region of Phrygia and Galatia then went to the border of Mysia, then Bithynia, and finally to Troas. That's a lot of closed doors but it didn't stop him from still trying to do God's Will by preaching the Gospel. He kept pursuing God's purpose for his life until a door opened. So, the precept was "preaching the Gospel everywhere" because God teaches that He wishes "none to perish but all to come to know Him"-II Peter 3:9. But the principle is "to keep preaching God's Word because you know it's His Will while he waits for God to open a door. Remember, closed doors are just as much God's leading as open doors. We must never try to force a door open that God has purposely closed.

Let's quickly review because I know it can get a little confusing understanding of God's Will. If we want to understand God's Will, we must accept that He is **sovereign** and has a plan for our life. Having something negative happening in your life doesn't mean God has stopped working His plan for your life. We must accept that God has **precepts** that are clearly stated and **principles** that help us look within and around to see if God is opening or closing doors. Then once those things have been accepted and we need more confirmation for our life then a **fourth** thing must take place.

**Listen to the counsel of qualified people. The fourth thing to remember about God's Will is that it often can be confirmed by the counseling of wise people.** Solomon wrote some wise words in Proverbs 20:5- *"The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out."* Proverbs 27: 17 says, *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."* Throughout scripture, we see evidence of God using people to help "sharpen" others by offering counsel. Col. 3:16 says, *"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."* Romans 15:14 Paul said, *"I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another."* When you need direction from God about His Will, first search the scripture, pay attention to what's going on around you, and finally pass some thoughts around those who you feel are Godly people who can give you wise counsel from what you have experienced so far.

That's tough for a teen. The last thing they usually want to do is to listen to an "older" person give them advice but it's crucial they get this type of counsel. It doesn't always have to be a parental type of person giving them the counsel. Perhaps they have a friend who is a couple of years older who shows great Godly wisdom they can turn to. Many teens have an aunt or uncle who is "cool" and acceptable that they would listen to. Brother and sisters-in-law can play a vital role in their lives as mentors who can give them great biblical wisdom. My point is that the parent must find ways to help your teen be placed in relationships where they can ask to "bounce some ideas off" when it comes to understanding life choices.

## So how do I know once I make my choice that I'm within God's Will? Can I see clearly now?

When you are within God's will two things will always be present.

1. **Peace**-*"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body, and be thankful. Col. 3:15.* Notice how peace is to exist in our hearts. Peace is to "rule" in our hearts. The original Greek means to "act as an umpire". Think about that for a moment. When you are within God's Will, peace will act as an umpire and let you know if you are moving in the right direction or not. He'll either call the action "safe" or "out" by the peace you experience in your heart (or I sometimes call the "spiritual gut"). We then experience what Romans 15:14 stated above in that we will be "fully convinced" that we are doing what God wants us to do.
2. **Satisfaction**-If you are within God's Will you will experience real satisfaction and love doing it. Your conscience will be clear, and you won't feel guilty doing it. This is why for example someone who is truly gifted and could make a ton of money doing something else but instead decides to teach. They are satisfied teaching and love doing it and couldn't see themselves doing anything else.

Author J. Grant Howard does a great job summarizing knowing God's determined Will.

He said the following:

**"Can I know the determined will of God for my life? Yes-after it has occurred! You now know that God's determined will for your life was that you be born of certain parents, in a certain location, under certain conditions, and that you be male or female. You now know that God determined for you to have certain features, certain experiences, certain teachers, certain interests, certain friends, a certain kind of education, and certain brothers and sisters, or perhaps to be an only child. In other words, everything that has happened in your life to this moment has been part of God's determined will for your life. It has happened because He has determined it to be so.**

**What about the future? Can I know any part of God's determined will for my life in the future? Your spiritual position and eternal destiny are the only two things you can know with certainty. If you are in Christ now, you can know for certain that you will remain in Christ at every moment in the future (John 5:24; 10:27-29; Romans 5:1; II Corinthians 5:17). If you are not a Christian, you in sin right now and you can know for certain that you will remain in that spiritually dead position in the future unless you receive Christ as your Savior (Ephesians 2:1-3)...**

**The remainder of your future is hidden from you until it happens. Your career, marriage partner, home location, grades in school, friends, sicknesses, accidents, honors, travel, income, retirement, etc., are all part of God's determined Will but are not revealed to you ahead of time...**

**What should be the Christian's attitude toward the determined Will of God? He should recognize it as a reality-clearly taught in the Word of God. Rest in it as good, because that's what God says about it-He causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him (Romans 8:28). Beyond that, don't worry about it and don't try to figure it out, because His ways are unfathomable. (Romans 11: 33)."**

So, don't sweat the stuff you can't control. Understand what God's Word teaches from His precepts and apply the principles from His Word to help you look for open and closed doors. When wrong choices are made thinking it was the right thing to do then get back to God's Word and learn from your mistakes. God will often allow us to grow more from our mistakes than our successes. This too is part of His overall will for us. Remember, His overall will for us is to conform us to the image of Christ.

