

LESSON NINE

**Seventh Encounter
“The Mountain of
Self-Will”**

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Foundational Scripture

In the meantime, the disciples pressed him, “Rabbi, eat. Aren’t you going to eat?” He told them, “I have food to eat you know nothing about.” The disciples were puzzled. “Who could have brought him food?” Jesus said, “The food that keeps me going is that I do the will of the One who sent me, finishing the work he started.”

John 4:31-34 (MSG)

The Will of God and Prayer

Timeless Insights

“The heart of prayer is not to alter God’s will but to find it.”

—Sam Shoemaker

- **Defining God’s Will**
- **Discerning God’s Will**

Timeless Insights

“The purpose of all prayer is to find God’s will and to make that will our prayer.”

—Catherine Marshall

I. Defining God's Will

Four Realities

Reality One:

God desires all nonbelievers to be set _____ from _____.

Key Word: _____

Scripture:

The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

2 Peter 3:9 (NLT)

But thank God you've started listening to a new master, one whose commands set you free to live openly in his freedom!

Romans 6:17-18 (MSG)

Reality Two:

God desires all believers to _____ in _____.

Key Word: _____

Scripture:

Be assured that from the first day we heard of you, we haven't stopped praying for you, asking God to give you wise minds and spirits attuned to his will, and so acquire a thorough understanding of the ways in which God works. We pray that you'll live well for the Master, making him proud of you as you work hard in his orchard. As you learn more and more how God works, you will learn how to do your work.

Colossians 1:9-10 (MSG)

Reality Three:

God desires all believers to live separated _____.

Key Word: _____

Scripture:

Because we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God.

2 Corinthians 7:1 (NLT)

May you be infused with strength and purity, filled with confidence in the presence of God our Father when our Master Jesus arrives with all his followers.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 (MSG)

Reality Four:

God desires for all believers to live in _____.

Key Word: _____

Scripture:

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

John 17:20-23 (NIV)

II. Discerning God's Will

Six Steps

Scripture:

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

James 4:7-8 (NIV)

George Mueller's Six Steps to Discerning God's Will.

(From *No Easy Road*, p. 105)

Step One:

I seek at the beginning to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter.

Summary: Surrender _____

Step Two:

Having done this, I do not leave the result to feeling or simple impression. If I do so, I make myself liable to great delusions.

Summary: Reject _____

Step Three:

I seek the will of the Spirit through, or in connection with, the Word of God.

Summary: Search _____

Step Four:

Next I take into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate God's will in connection with

His Word and Spirit.

Summary: Evaluate _____

Step Five:

I ask God in prayer to reveal His will to me aright.

Summary: Ask _____

Step Six:

Thus, through prayer to God, the study of the Word, and reflection, I come to a deliberate judgment according to the best of my ability and knowledge.

Summary: Respond _____

Timeless Insights

“Many of us have discovered that true prayer begins where we can begin to say with Jesus, ‘Not my will, but Thine be done.’ That should not mean mere resignation to fate, it should mean cooperation with the will of God.”

—Sam Shoemaker

The Key to Answered Prayer

Scripture:

And we receive from Him whatever we ask for, because we [watchfully] obey His orders—observe His suggestions and injunctions, follow His plan for us—and [habitually] practice what is pleasing to Him.

1 John 3:22 (AMP)

Timeless Insights

“When you pray you get in on God’s will before it happens.”

—Delores Jarvis

AFTERTHOUGHTS... PONDER AND PRAY

Ponder Points:

Discuss (or ponder) what you think George Mueller meant by seeking to get his heart into a state that it has no will of its own as he sought God's will in a matter. What are some of the ways we can overcome allowing our emotions to interfere with our discerning God's will?

Personal Afterthoughts:

Prayer Points:

Pray specifically regarding an issue for which you desire to know God's will. Ask God to help you do as George Mueller suggests, to get your mind into "such a state that it has no will of its own" in the matter. Write down any impressions or Scriptures you receive as you pray.