

**Ephesians 5: 17** The Godly Path: God's Will

**Ephesians 5:17** is an imperative embedded within a larger discussion about Christian living. As believers, we must “**walk in love**” (v. 2) and “**walk as children of light**” (v. 9). In doing so, we can understand what the will of the Lord is for our lives. Notice that the verse begins with the word “**Therefore**”, linking it to the previous verse where we are reminded that “**the days are evil.**” “**Because the days are evil,**” says Paul, “**it is most important to understand what the will of the Lord is.**”

**Ephesians 5: 17:** “**Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.**”

- **Grammatical Usage:** “**foolish**” or in the Greek, “aphrones” meaning, “unknowing; unbelieving”; “**understand**” or “syniete” meaning, “insight; comprehend”.
- **Literal Interpretation:** Don't live carelessly, unthinkingly. Diligently seek insight to comprehend what the Lord wants from you and for you.
- **Contextual/Comparison:** God keeps His Word: God continually uses His Word. Many Christians lack discernment, disqualifying them from real usefulness in the service of God. This includes:
  1. Little or no discernment as to the true nature of the Christian life – that it is a new life (**2 Corinthians 5:17**); it is imparted by a new birth (**John 3:3,5,7**) and experienced on receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior (**John 1:11-13**)
  2. No discernment as to the provision that God has made in Christ for victorious Christian living and the more abundant life (**John 10:10**); of fruitfulness in service (**John 15:5**); of deliverance from bondage to sin and self (**Romans 8:2**); or of a life of triumphant holiness (**2 Corinthians 2:14**)
  3. No discernment as to the true nature and purpose of the Church – that it is not primarily an outward organization but an invisible, living organism consisting of every true believer; the medium through which God is accomplishing His saving purposes (**Matthew 28:19**; **Acts 2:47**)
  4. No discernment as to God's future program for the world, the Church or His chosen people.

What is God's will, His wish and His desire for men and women?

1. It is God's will that all men should be SAVED.  
He desires the salvation of everyone (**2 Peter 3:9**) In His great mercy God has provided salvation for everybody, everywhere; but sadly not everybody,

everywhere, will accept God's provision! The Word of God never leads us to believe that all will be saved, but it does teach that all may be saved

2. It is God's will that those whom He saves should be SANCTIFIED (**1 Thessalonians 4:1-4; 1 Peter 4:1-5**). God's will for His children is that they should be holy (**Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2 Peter 3:11**). If you are His child (**John 1:12-13**), God's will is that you should be holy, that is whole (**John 5:6**, KJV); purified (**1 John 1:7, 9**); and filled, constantly sensitive to the Holy Spirit (**Ephesians 5:18**).
3. It is God's will that those whom He saves and sanctifies should SERVE Him. We are saved to serve! What is Christian service (?): **Romans 12:1**. The fundamental meaning of service for God is presenting ourselves wholly to Him, placing ourselves absolutely at His disposal for Him to work in and through us. The sphere and nature of our service may be varied, but the meaning of it is always – **Romans 12:1**.
4. It is God's will that those whom He saves and sanctifies and who serve Him should also SUFFER for Him. Many of God's children are not instructed in this truth. Jesus was very clear in **Matthew 16:24**: “**If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.**” Often mischaracterized, **1 Peter 4:19** instructs we can suffer and be right in the will of God: “**Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.**”
5. It is God's will that those whom He saves and sanctifies, who serve Him and suffer for Him, should always UNDERSTAND AND KNOW HIS WIL (**Psalms 25:9; 32:8; 73:24; Proverbs 3:5-6; John 16:13; James 1:6**).

How does He reveal His will to us? There are three methods which He employs:

1. By His WORD, in response to our study – **2 Timothy 2:15**. The more we study God's Word the more we become acquainted with the things that are pleasing to Him and which He desires for His children (**Acts 9:6; John 2:5**)
2. By His PROVIDENCES, in response to our surrender – **Romans 12:1-2**. When we are seeking God's guidance on a certain matter, we must take into account all the circumstances and expect Him so to arrange these that we may understand His will (**Psalms 37:5**).
3. By His HOLY SPIRIT, in response to our earnest prayer – **Romans 8:26-27**. We can be sure of God's will when the clear teaching of the Word, the providences and the voice of the Holy Spirit harmonize (**1 John 5:14-15**).

➤ **Conclusion:** Am I willing to ask for and surrender to God's will for me?