

Excerpt from God At Work- Page 89-90

God's Will

There are more books on God's will than pages in this book. Years ago I was given a little booklet written by Russ Johnston, "How to Know the Will of God". I have kept it for decades because it is short, simple, and effective. It was written in 1976 by Russ Johnston, a former Regional Director with The Navigators in Colorado Springs, CO. He notes that in polls, the two questions most often asked of God's will are vocation and location. What will I do, and where will I do it?

As Christians, we want to be in God's will. The truth is, God is good. Our distrust of His goodness is the number one reason that keeps many of us from living the lives we were intended to live. The second reason is our insistence on being "comfortable". Truly stepping out into faith, to seek the will of God, will be honored by God. However, He is not interested in sharing just for the sake of knowing. Instead, He wants people of action who are willing to step into the arena and get to work. Jesus teaches us this principle in a couple of different ways, first by using parables and second by having us participate in the process.

Jesus often spoke in parables, and He tells us why in Matthew 13:10-15:

The disciples came to him (Jesus) and asked, "Why do you speak in parables?" He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "you will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise, they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn, and I would heal them."

God wants you engaged. He wants you to choose Him, and then He wants you to choose Him over and over again. He is not a puppet master, nor does He want to surround Himself with "yes" men. He wants disciples that *want* to be in relationship with Him and because of His love, grace, and mercy for us, we in turn give love, grace, and mercy to others so He might be glorified.

Notice these scriptures in Matthew 7:7-11 - Jesus says, *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will you Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"*

God is the creator of communication. If He wants to tell you something, He will! Jesus says, *"For everyone who asks receives."* Everyone! The response may not be "yes" or exactly what you were hoping for, but He will respond.

Russ Johnston breaks it down into three easy steps, a great approach to get started.

1. **Commit yourself to doing God's will.** Simple, but not easy. The truth is you might end up on a plane heading to a rural village. Or, you might be in the exact same office you

are in right now. (Good news for some, dread for others). Whatever it is, as you mature in Christ, you find that you would rather be on the streets with God than in a mansion without God. Period. The choice is yours.

2. **Believe that God is working in you.** Because we know ourselves, we are very aware of our fallibility, how easily we are distracted, and that we make mistakes. So it's hard to really digest that the Holy Spirit lives inside of us, giving us wisdom and direction. We know we are not too bright some of the time. We're human. However, God is much bigger than our humanness and He can use us as long as we are willing. The key here is to abide. John 15:5 Jesus says, *"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."* Stay connected to the vine; it is your life source. If you stay connected, your responses will be more of Him and less of you.
 - a. Mathew 12:34- *"For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks."*
 - b. Ecc 8:5- *"Whoever obeys his command will come to no harm, and the wise heart will know the proper time and procedure."*
 - c. Ecc 3:1- *"There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven."*
 - d. Psalm 119:11- *"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."*

3. **Launch Out.** Give it a try. Step out in faith. Pick a goal. Pray about it. Use your brain. Is it a wise choice? Do you have peace about it? What are the consequences if you are wrong?

God knows our aversion to risk. He tends to start small and work his way to bigger risks. We all love the story of David and Goliath. Goliath was not David's first "giant". God had helped him with attacks against a lion and a bear. Do not sit on the sidelines waiting for a flashing neon sign to tell you if you should donate \$20 to the beggar on the street. Step into the arena and get to work! If you need a course correction, God will shut it down.