

(Basics) 69. Proving God's Perfect Will(2)

by Zac Poonen

To live a useful life and find God's perfect will, we must ask ourselves questions such as 'Is it for the glory of God?' and 'Is it spiritually profitable and edifying?'

Duration: 12:56

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6:12, 1 Corinthians 10:23, 1 Corinthians 10:31, 2 Corinthians 9:8, Colossians 3:17, 2 Timothy 2:15

Topics: "Gods Will", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a spiritually profitable and edifying life. He references 1 Corinthians 6:12 and 10:23, where Paul states that while all things may be lawful, not all things are profitable or edifying. The speaker encourages believers to invest their time on earth in ways that will bring maximum returns for God's kingdom. He poses several questions for believers to consider when making decisions, such as whether an action can be done to the glory of God, in fellowship with Jesus, or if Jesus would join in the activity. The sermon emphasizes the need to seek God's perfect will for our lives in order to live a useful and impactful life.

Transcript

We want to continue today in considering how we can find the perfect will of God for our lives. This is so important because if we find God's perfect will, we can live the most useful life any human being can ever live on the face of the earth. In our last study, we were considering the importance of knowing God's perfect will.

Because if we know God's perfect will, we can spend our earthly days to maximum profit. When people have money that they have saved, they need advice on how best to invest it to get maximum returns and maximum profit. People are so careful to get the maximum safe, secure returns for their money, but they are not so careful with investing their life in the most profitable way possible.

This is the foolishness of man. We think money is more important than our life. Is it really so? Far from it.

And if you want to invest your money to get maximum returns for it, how much more if God gives you 70 or 80 years on this earth, that you should invest those 80 years to get the maximum returns possible? And the maximum returns can never be counted in terms of money. It can only be counted in terms of usefulness for God's kingdom because that alone is going to be eternal. So we need to know what is the best way to live on this earth, and that God has made a plan for each of our lives.

But you'll never know it unless you seek Him for it. And so we were considering in our last study the things that we need to consider if we are to know God's perfect will. And we saw two of them already.

One is we need to ask ourselves this question, this thing which I'm considering, this step which I'm considering taking, is it contrary to any of the teachings of Jesus and the apostles or the spirit of the New Testament as far as I know? Secondly, is it something I can do with a clear conscience? Let me say a word about a clear conscience. It's possible sometimes for us to kill our conscience. When our conscience forbids us from doing something, we tell our conscience to keep quiet and we go ahead and do it.

And you do that, keep doing that for a few, on a few occasions, and gradually your conscience will no longer trouble you because you've killed it. A third question that we need to ask ourselves is, is this something I can do for the glory of God? In 1 Corinthians 10, verse 31, we're told, whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. God has created us for His glory and our salvation lies in seeking to do everything for His glory.

God has designed this in such a way because that is the very best for us. Because otherwise, we would seek our own glory and destroy ourselves. And that's what's happened in the world.

Men seek their own glory and their own in so many ways, and they fight and clash with each other and destroy themselves. It happens in the Christian church as well, unfortunately. Supposing you are trying to find out a particular action, whether it's something that God wants you to do or not.

Maybe watching a particular TV program or going to a particular place. Here is a good question to ask yourself. It says here, whatever you do, do all for the glory of God.

Lord, can I do that for Your glory? Can I watch that for Your glory? Can I go there for Your glory? And if you find you cannot, drop it. Even if it looks very innocent. If you cannot honestly say that you can do that to the glory of God, don't do it.

A fourth question you need to ask yourself is, is it something I can do in fellowship with Jesus? Is it something that Jesus and I can sit together and do? Is it right for a believer to smoke a cigarette? Well, can you offer a cigarette to Jesus as well and ask Him to smoke along with you? If so, go ahead. Is it right for a believer to be drinking alcohol, particularly in excess? Well, ask yourself, would Jesus join you in such a bout of drinking? And if He won't join you, then you better not go in for that yourself. Is there a particular movie you feel that Jesus would go along with you to watch? Then go ahead and watch it, a particular program on TV.

If you feel it's good that Jesus would watch with you, go ahead and watch it. Otherwise, avoid it. Can I do it in fellowship with Jesus? The Bible says in Colossians chapter 3 and verse 17, Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

Everything I do, I need to do in fellowship with Jesus Christ. A fifth question that we could ask ourselves is this. Can I ask God to bless me as I do this particular thing? Maybe you're in doubt whether something is good or right or wrong.

You're not sure. Maybe it's a borderline matter. Here is a fifth question you could ask yourself.

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9.8, God is able to make all grace abound to you, that you, always having all sufficiency in everything, may have an abundance for every good deed. God gives grace and His

blessing for every good deed. So ask yourself and your conscience will tell you.

Is this something which you can ask God to put His blessing upon as you move ahead? If not, hold back. A sixth question. Will my doing this blunt my spiritual edge in any way? In 2 Timothy 2.15, we read Paul advising Timothy saying, Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed handling accurately the word of truth.

He's saying be very, very careful to always present yourself to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed. So, this particular course of action that you're considering right now, is it something that will, it may be good, it may be right in so many ways, but will it blunt your spiritual edge? That means you won't be so spiritually sharp if you keep on doing things for this type of thing. You see, there are many legitimate things in the world like music, sport, entertainment and certain good TV programs.

There's nothing wrong in engaging in these activities. But when these things are taken to an excess, man becomes a slave to those activities and he loses his spiritual sharpness. He's no longer sharp.

And there we see how many, many believers, their effectiveness for God is nullified by Satan. Be diligent to present yourself to God always as a workman who does not need to be ashamed handling the word of truth diligently. A seventh question.

Is this spiritually profitable? Will it be spiritually profitable in edifying, to the best of my knowledge? In 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 12 Paul says, All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. He repeats somewhat similar words in chapter 10, verse 23, where he says, All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable.

All things are lawful, but not all things edify. So the question is not whether it's lawful or not. Many Christians are always operating on the level of is it lawful or is it not lawful? Will God permit it? I'm not talking about God's permissive will for your life.

I'm talking about God's perfect will for your life. God permits many things which are not His perfect will. So if you want to live in God's permissive will, just ask yourself, is it right or wrong? Don't do anything unrighteous, don't do anything unlawful, and you'll be in God's permissive will.

But if you want God's perfect will for your life, you need to ask one more question. Is this spiritually profitable and edifying? Is this something that will help me? Is it a profitable thing spiritually? Is it something that will build me up, help me to be a better disciple of Jesus? And if you ask questions like this, you'll find that you know in your spirit. Now, when I say spiritually profitable and edifying, don't misunderstand.

I'm not saying that only Bible reading and prayer and going to meetings is spiritually profitable and edifying. We are creatures made with a body, and this body has certain needs. There may be times when you need to relax.

There may be times when sleeping may be the most glorifying thing to do for God. There may be times when sleeping is the most spiritually profitable and edifying thing to do. Or it may be some type of relaxation or entertainment, or going on a picnic with your children is the most spiritually profitable and edifying thing to do.

So don't think that it's only fasting and prayer and reading the Bible and these are the only spiritually profitable and edifying things. We need relaxation, we need a certain amount of rest. We need food to eat.

There's nothing wrong with any of these things. We're not ascetics. Jesus slept, Jesus ate good food.

So, don't go to a fanatical extreme when you ask this question. But here are good questions that you can ask yourself. And as you answer them, is it something I can do for the glory of God? Is it something I can do in fellowship with Jesus? Can I ask God to bless me as I do it? Am I doing it blunt by spiritual edge? Will it be spiritually profitable and edifying? You will know what God's will is.

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