

# Living in the Will of God

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of living in complete dependence on God's will, as exemplified by Jesus' life and actions.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5-6, Ecclesiastes 3:1, Isaiah 28:16, Matthew 5:3, Matthew 7:21, John 4:34-35, John 5:19, John 17:4, Romans 11:36, Galatians 4:4

**Topics:** "Dependence On God", "Living in God's Will"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of living in the will of God, illustrating how Jesus exemplified this through His complete dependence on the Father. He highlights that true poverty of spirit involves recognizing our insufficiency and submitting to God's timing and direction, as Jesus did throughout His life. Poonen points out that Jesus did not act on human initiative or need alone but waited for the Father's command, demonstrating that obedience to God's will is paramount. The sermon encourages believers to seek God's guidance in every aspect of life, prioritizing divine direction over human reasoning. Ultimately, Poonen reminds us that fulfilling God's will leads to eternal significance in the kingdom of heaven.

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## Transcript

"From Him are all things" (Rom. 11:36) Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven belonged to the poor in spirit (Mt. 5:3). He also said that only those who do the will of the Father would enter that kingdom (Mt. 7:21). The kingdom of heaven is eternal, and only that which has been done in the will of God will be found there. The poor in spirit are those who are conscious of their human insufficiency and who therefore submit to the will of God completely. In this sense, Jesus was perpetually poor in spirit. He lived as God intended man to live - in perpetual dependence on God, refusing to exercise the powers of His mind apart from God. Consider His words: "The Son can do nothing of (out from) Himself.....I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak as the Father taught Me.....I have not come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.....I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself Who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say and what to speak..... The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His work" (Jn. 5:19,30; 8:28,42; 12:49; 14:10). Jesus never acted merely because He saw a need . He saw the need, was concerned about it, but acted only when His Father told Him to.

He waited at least four thousand years in Heaven, while the world lay desperately in need of a Saviour, and then came to earth when His Father sent Him (Jn. 8:42). "When the right time came, the time God

decided on, He sent His Son" (Gal. 4:4-Living). God has appointed a right time for everything (Eccl. 3:1). God alone knows that time, and so we won't go wrong if we seek the Father's will in everything, as Jesus did. And when Jesus came to earth, He did not just go around doing whatever He felt was good. Even though His mind was perfectly pure, yet He never acted on any bright idea that came to mind. No. He made His mind a servant of the Holy Spirit. Although He knew the Scriptures thoroughly by the age of twelve, yet He spent the next eighteen years as a carpenter, staying with His mother, making tables and chairs, etc., He had the very message that dying men around Him needed, and yet He would not go out into the preaching ministry. Why? Because the Father's time had not yet come. Jesus was not afraid to wait. "He who believes will not be in a hurry" (Isa. 28:16). And when His Father's time came, He went out of His carpenter's shop and began to preach. Often thereafter, He would say concerning some course of action, "My hour has not yet come" (Jn. 2:4; 7:6). Everything in Jesus' life was regulated by the timing and the will of the Father.

The need of men, by itself, never constituted the call to action for Jesus, for that would have been acting out from Himself - out of His soul. The need of men was to be taken into account, but it was the will of God that was to be done. Jesus made that very clear in John 4:34,35. The need (v.35): "Look around you! Vast fields of human souls are ripening all around us, and are ready now for reaping....." The principle of action (v.34): "My nourishment comes from doing the will of God Who sent Me, and from finishing His work." (Living) Jesus did not do the many good things that His friends suggested, because He knew that if He listened to men and did the apparently good, He would miss the best that His Father had for Him.

Once, when men begged Him to stay in a particular place, He said He could not, because He had heard His Father's voice calling Him to go elsewhere. Humanly speaking there were very good reasons for staying where He was, because of the unusual responsiveness of the people to His message. But God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts and God's ways are not as man's ways (Isa. 55:8). Early that morning, Jesus had gone out alone and prayed, and He had heard His Father's voice (Mk. 1:35-39), before He heard Peter and the others with their suggestions. Jesus did not rely on human reasoning. He obeyed the Word which said, "Do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths" (Prov. 3:5,6). He leaned upon His Father for guidance in every matter. In a prophetic reference to the Lord Jesus in Isaiah 50:4, we read, "Morning by morning, He (the Father) wakens Me and opens My understanding to His will." That was Jesus' habit. He listened to His Father's voice from early morning and throughout the day, and did exactly what His Father told Him to do. He did not have discussions with men, to decide on what to do, but had prayer-meetings with His Father. Soulsh Christians plan through discussions with men. Spiritual Christians wait to hear from God. Jesus lived by His Father (Jn. 6:57). To Jesus, God's Word was more important than food (Mt. 4:4). He had to receive it many times a day, straight from the Father. Having received it, He obeyed it. Obedience too was more important than His daily food (Jn. 4:34). Jesus, lived in dependence on the Father. His attitude throughout the day was, "Speak, Father, I am listening."

Consider His chasing the money-changers out of the temple. There must have been many occasions when Jesus was in the temple with the money-changers there, when He did not chase them out. He did so, only when led to do so by His Father. The soulsh Christian would rather chase out the money-changers perpetually or never at all. He who is led by God however, knows when, where and how to act. There were many good things that Jesus could have been done, that He never did, because they were outside the scope of His Father's will for Him. He was always busy doing the very best things. And those were enough. He had not come to earth to do good things, but to do the will of His Father. "Did you not

know that I had to be in the things of My Father," He asked Joseph and Mary, at the age of twelve (Lk. 2:49-Literal). Those were the only things that He was interested in accomplishing. When He came to the end of 33-1/2 years on earth, He could say, with real satisfaction, "Father, I have done everything YOU told Me to do" (Jn. 17:4).

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