

A person with a backpack is walking away on a dirt path through a field of tall grass. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a golden glow and long shadows. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

How to Consistently Receive God's Will for Your Life

**God's Will is Independent
and Neutral to Ours**

Acts 17:11

Now these were more noble minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.

Backstory of Joshua 5

- Joshua is new Moses: spies sent out, waters parted, men circumcised, Passover celebrated
- He is across from Jericho, alone, trying his best to be strong and courageous, figuring out how to fulfill God's will in taking the city

GREAT
SEA

GALILEE

JORDAN RIVER

GILEAD

AMMON

GILGAL

JERICHO



Joshua 1:6, 1:7, 1:9

Be strong and courageous

Be strong and VERY courageous

**Be strong and courageous! Do not
tremble or be dismayed**

Joshua 1:18

(the officers of the people are speaking) Anyone who rebels against your (Joshua's) command and does not obey your words in all that you command him, shall be put to death; only be strong and courageous.

Ancient Jericho

Towns became bigger as their populations increased. This made their architecture and urban planning more complex and they required more space to expand. The possibility of storing food surpluses meant that part of the population quit agricultural activities to devote their time to other things. Artisans, priests, traders... The wealth of flourishing cities attracted greed of the nomadic tribes and forced their inhabitants to build protective walls around their cities. This was the case of Jericho, in the West Bank, Palestine. With a history of more than 11,000 years, this was the first fortified city known ever and, up to the present day, it is considered the first city in history.

Jericho, the first one

Natufian hunter groups settled in this spot in 12,000 BC before it became the city of Jericho. Towards 9,000 BC, the settlement had more than 70 houses with around a thousand inhabitants and something unprecedented: a 3.5m high and almost 2m thick wall and a stone tower that reached a height of 8.5 m.

9000 BC

The round houses made with adobe, similar to igloos, were substituted by rectangular ones. Sanctuaries and ovens appeared.

Glory and collapse

The apparition of the Canaanites implied changes in house planning. This people absorbed the original culture and took Jericho to its most glorious times. According to archeological records, the city was destroyed by 1500 BC to be re-founded in the 9th century BC.

Houses

They had stone foundations, clay brick structure, 50 cm width walls and the roofs were covered with a mixture of reeds and clay.

Courtyards

The buildings usually had a 7 metre square courtyard used to cook and preventing smoke from entering inside the house.

Double fortification

Similar to medieval fortifications, these were 3 m wide and more than 4 m high by 1500 BC. They were reconstructed at least 15 times.

Resources

There is evidence of cultivated plants and possible sheep breeding since 7300 BC. There was a water canal system.

The Jordan River

Jericho was favored by the river and trade. Its walls became thicker and were surrounded by a moat.

Two storeys

Two-storey houses had a working area in the first floor and the rooms on the second floor.



Joshua 5:13

Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand,

Joshua 5:13-14

And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us or for our adversaries?”

He said, “No; rather I indeed come now as captain of the host of the Lord.”

Joshua 5:14

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him “What has my lord to say to his servant?”

Joshua 5:15

The captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy."
And Joshua did so.

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Principle #1

Asking the right questions will lead to an understanding of God's will, while asking the wrong ones will lead to more confusion and distraction from His will.

Joshua 5:13-14

And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us or for our adversaries?”

He said, “No; rather I indeed come now as captain of the host of the Lord.”

**Who is this “captain of the
host of the Lord” or
“commander of the
Lord’s army”?**

Principle #2

Giving God limited options will automatically limit your ability to know and understand God's will.

God is not on your side, He's not on my side. He's only on His side

Joshua 5:13-14

And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us or for our adversaries?”

He said, “No; rather I indeed come now as captain of the host of the Lord.”

Daniel 4:35

**All the people of the earth are counted as nothing, and He does as He pleases...no one can hold back His hand or say to Him:
“What have you done?”**

Psalm 115:3

Our God is in heaven and
does as He pleases.

Isaiah 43:13

Even from eternity I am He, and
none can deliver out of My hand.
When I act, who can reverse it?

Principle #3

We must learn how to hold the mystery of God's will just as we hold the mystery of the Trinity or the nature of Christ.

We have free will and every decision is determined by God.

Joshua 5:13-14

And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us or for our adversaries?”

He said, “No; rather I indeed come now as captain of the host of the Lord.”

Is God one or three?

Yes.

Is Jesus God or man?

Yes.

**Is God sovereign or
do we have free will?**

Yes.

Proverbs 16:1

The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.

Proverbs 16:9

The mind of a man plans his way,
but the Lord directs his steps.

Proverbs 16:33

The lot is cast into the lap, but every decision is from the Lord.

We may throw the dice, but the Lord determines how they fall.

Principle #4

We must base our understanding of God's will on the FULL counsel of God's revealed word and not just on selected scriptures or allegiance to one theological interpretation or another.

**Does God establish every
authority in government
or do we choose them?**

Yes.

Romans 13:1

There is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

Hosea 8:4

**They have set up kings,
but not by Me;
they have appointed princes,
but I did not know it.**

**Does your vote matter
or is God going to do what
He is going to do anyway?**

Yes.

**Why even vote, act, or pray
if God is going to do what
He's going to do anyway?**

Because it matters to God.

**Because of human logic,
we desire answers that are
easier to grasp, but this
can lead us to making “all
or nothing” statements.**

**Did Joseph's brothers
mean for Joseph to suffer
in Egypt or did God?**

Let's be like the Bereans.

Genesis 50:20

(Joseph speaking)

As for you, you meant it for evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.

**We do have a choice:
will we be on God's side
or not?**

Joshua 24:16

Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Principle #5

**Our decisions and motives matter:
not because they change our
circumstances, but because our
choices can change our hearts to
be in complete alignment with His.**

This should always be our goal.

James 4:13

Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.”

James 4:14

Yet you do not know what
your life will be like tomorrow.

You are just a vapor that
appears for a little while
and then vanishes away.

James 4:15

Instead, you ought to say,
“If the Lord wills, we will live
and also do this or that.”

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Principle #6

Our response to God's revealed will should not be based on whether we agree or like it.

Our response should be the same as Joshua's:

“What does my Lord want to say to His servant?”

Joshua 5:14

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him “What has my lord to say to his servant?”

Matthew 26:39

And He (Jesus) went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; Yet not as I will, but as You will.”

Principle #7

**Understanding God's will
requires humility, humility,
and more humility.**

**It's not about us,
it's all about Him.**

Joshua 5:14

And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him “What has my lord to say to his servant?”

Joshua 5:15

The captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy."
And Joshua did so.

Romans 12:1

**Therefore, I urge you, brethren,
by the mercies of God,
to present your bodies a living
and holy sacrifice, acceptable
to God, which is your spiritual
service of worship.**

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight.

Isaiah 55:8-9

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways, My ways,” declares the Lord.

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

Isaiah 55:10

As the rain and snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,

Isaiah 55:11

So is My word that goes out of My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, but it will accomplish what I desire, and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Psalm 37:5

Commit your way to the Lord,
Trust also in Him,
and He will do it.

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