

A man went to his doctor complaining he was in pain all over his body. The doc asked, “Where specifically do you hurt?” The man replied, “All over.” So the doctor told him to touch his shoulder. He did and cried out in pain. He told him to touch his forehead – he did and was brought to tears. The doc told him to touch his knee, and the man nearly collapsed under the pain. So after a thorough examination, the doctor concluded, “The reason you’re in pain everywhere you touch is b/c you have a dislocated finger!”

You may laugh/scoff at the absurdity of this story, but sadly, too many of us basically are doing the same thing. **Many of us feel like everything in our lives is wrong – that things are out of sorts; yet the truth is just one thing isn't right.** But this ONE thing affects everything. What is it? We're trying to live life independent of our Divine purpose/calling. We're trying to live life independent of God.

Unfortunately, words like – *purpose, meaning, design,* and *calling*... seem elusive to most of us b/c we're just trying to make it thru another day following our own agenda. And yet these words are critical to answering some of life's most important questions – **Why am I here? What's my value? Does God have a plan for me?**

This AM I want to interrupt our series in **1 Peter** to embark on a journey to help us grasp and begin experiencing and expressing God's will/calling in our lives.

*I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what **God's will is**—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Rm. 12:1-2*

NOTE – God has a will. A good, pleasing, and perfect will. And it is a will He wants us to know and experience.

Today I want to start a brief series entitled – *kaleo* – which means – *to this you were called*. I believe God has called us to be a people in relationship, on mission w/ Him. God has a calling on our lives for us to know Him, to honor Him, to serve Him and to share Him – *it is to this we are called*.

A person's Divine call is their customized life direction and purpose as ordained by God. It's the way they're to bring God the greatest glory and achieve the maximum expansion of His kingdom. A person's Divine calling is intended always to bring about God's glory and fulfill His kingdom agenda. Therefore, to follow one's calling is to live in a way that God's kingdom is put on display for all to see. *T. Evans*

Sadly, too many people are living w/out a sense of purpose or direction. They're settling for an existence totally defined by the limits of their *occupational advances*, *personal achievements*, and *life acquirements*. And when we settle for such a life, we miss God's reason for redeeming us and positioning us here on earth – **we miss our kingdom calling.**

I believe to discover the God's call we need to have a clear understanding of His will – and how it works.

I The WILL of God

Few elements in the Christian life are misunderstood like – **finding the will of God.** Let's begin by establishing a vital reality – **GOD'S WILL ISN'T LOST!** His will is right where it's always been – in His Word. It isn't something lost we have to find like a treasure. He's not playing a game of spiritual hide-n-go seek – He wants us to know His will.

It is God's will to reveal His will to anyone who is willing to do His will.

Truth – If you're seeking/following God's revealed will in His Word, then His personal **calling** for you will find you.

Explain – God's will occurs on (3) levels simultaneously. His Personal Will resides in His Prescriptive Will which resides in His Providential Will.

A The PROVIDENTIAL Will of God

The **Providential Will** of God includes those things God has created and set into motion that are beyond man's insight, understanding, and prevue. His Providential Will is everything under His sovereign rule and influence.

This includes everything God has ordered, made, and continues to make according to His sovereign choice that certain things have happened, are going to happen, and nothing is going to stop them. No person has influence over these events and no committee was formed to offer their insights/opinions. It includes His sovereignty over all.

B PRESCRIPTIVE Will of God

The **Prescriptive Will** of God is His general will as outlined in Scripture. It's where God reveals to us what's right/wrong – what's good/evil – what's of God/not of God. It's where God reveals His progressive plan so we might know Him and His plan of redemption.

God has given us His Word to reveal His general will for all people – the Bible is God's will for everyone. So when the Bible says, "Thou shall not kill, or steal, or lie – it doesn't apply to some but not to others – it applies to every person in every culture in every age – **truth applying to everyone.**

And we have no influence over God's Prescriptive Will, but we do have a choice of whether we're going to respond to it and abide by it. *We can't change it but we can ignore it.*

I can tell you 99% of God's will for your life has already been revealed in His Prescriptive Word. If He never spoke another word ever again, we'd have enough to go on to live a God-honoring life. The problem is we're more focused on the 1% we call God's personal will than we are on seeking the 99% revealed in His Word.

Truth – God has called us to live by His Word – and should we abide in Him – He will abide in us to direct our steps in every minute of every day in every aspect of our lives.

C PERSONAL Will of God

This is the 1% not revealed in His Word. But it is where we live and the burning question w/in our soul – what's God's Will for me? What does he want me to do in this situation?

Should I marry this person? Should I take this job? How should I respond to my kids, my spouse, or my boss? Should I make this move or not? Should I buy this house or not?

Until a person is willing to follow God's prescriptive will they will never discover His personal will.

Why would God show you His personal will for you if you're unwilling to follow His prescriptive will?

What kind of parent blesses their child when they are intentional living in defiance to the parent's will?

Challenge – God's will for my life is ALWAYS about God more than it is about me. This is the struggle. And when I surrender my will for His will I discover His Perfect Calling – but when I place my will above His will – He allows me to live outside of His Perfect Will in His Permissive Will.

God's **Permissive Will** is what God allows each person to choose of their own volitional that's in defiance of His sovereign will – *it is the way that seems right to a man...*

God has given every person a limited free-will to operate either dependently/independently of Him. W/in the scope of life, we can seek God or we can operate under the illusion that we're the captain of their own destiny.

His Perfect Will is His plan for us where our pursuit of His will aligns w/ His Prescriptive/Providential Will – and in turn, God reveals or gives direction to us in the daily decisions of life – **Proverbs 3:5-6**. This is where we trust Him, don't rely on our own ingenuity and abilities, align our lives under His prescription – and he directs our steps. He shows us the 1% we desire to know – **our kingdom calling**.

II The CALL of God

There's adventure to be had living God's kingdom calling. There's a real sense of fulfillment/satisfaction. But we can only experience these sensations when we know/pursue our calling – when we live out our God-given purpose by fulfilling our destiny as defined by His agenda – leveraging our gifts and abilities to maximize our fullest potential.

Your calling is the *customized* life purpose God has ordained and equipped you to accomplish to bring Him the greatest glory and achieve the maximum expansion of His kingdom.

As God's people, our kingdom calling is to reflect His person and represent His kingdom thru our specific purpose in life. We're called to do so this in such a remarkable fashion that other people will want to know more about His kingdom we represent. That's our destiny and purpose.

A Our Calling begins in RELATIONSHIP w/ God

The most important calling is the call to salvation and into a relationship w/ God. To hear and understand His calling, we need to be in a relationship w/ Him. And once we respond to His call of grace, we will receive our kingdom calling and missional purpose. **We must be part of God's kingdom before we get access to His kingdom agenda for our lives.**

If you want to experience His purpose for your life, then you have to first experience God. So don't go looking for His will – look for Him. For it is only in the close, abiding intimacy w/ the Father that we can discover and experience the life God has purposed for us.

B Our Calling is CUSTOMIZED by God

Your calling is hand-designed by God. When God reveals His plan for you, it will be uniquely designed according to your personal attributes, abilities, and circumstances – and then you will become His *workmanship* created for good works.

We're going to talk about this more specifically in 2 weeks.

C Our Calling Requires SURRENDER

Here in **Romans 12**, Paul explains to discover our calling requires we offer our bodies as a living sacrifice. He explains it a little differently to the Galatians.

I've been crucified w/ Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. Galatians 2:20

Paul was explaining that to discover your Divine calling requires your absolute surrender.

3 Phases of Surrender

I was looking thru some old file and found this study on the Phases of Surrender. We're all in one of these phases.

1 I Want What I Want – I Want It NOW

Even though God promised – Abraham wanted a son in his timing so he took matters into his own hands and had a relationship w/ Hagar and the result was Ishmael.

2 I Want What God Wants – BUT

I think of the rich, young ruler in **Mark 10**. He wanted to follow Jesus, but he wanted to do it on his own terms.

3 I Want What God Wants – PERIOD

I am willing to trust God w/ everything, align my life to His will and Word and follow Him as He directs my steps.