

GROW Lesson 2: Discerning the Will of God



Q: Read the quote on page 11 of the workbook. Do you remember what your purpose and calling are from our previous discussion? Do you agree with this statement? Has it been true for your experience? Our purpose in this life is not a mystery; God has revealed His will to us in His Word. Hopefully you have a good grasp on God's will for your life and you have been taking steps to carry out that purpose. If you have made any progress with your life purpose statement, take a moment to praise God and share with them about what God has been doing in your life.

Q: What parts of God's creation speak to you most about who He is? (General Revelation) Read **Psalm 19:1-6**. The fingerprints of God are all over His creation! Unfortunately, our busy lives often distract us from taking the time to notice and focus on the handiwork of God and we have lost the sense of awe that comes from spending time outdoors. The expanse of the heavens witnessed on a clear night, the detail of a leaf under a microscope in a science class, the curiosity of a child observing the ecosystem in a pond... God is absolutely amazing! It's so easy to take this all for granted.

Q: When you read the Bible, how would you describe the manner in which God speaks to you? God can speak to our spirit as we read, sometimes as we meditate or journal our thoughts, or perhaps when we share the Word of God with one another. It's not an audible voice, but sometimes God can speak very clearly about what He wants us to do; other times He just affirms the Truth about His will to us so that we can live out His plan for our lives.

Q: How have you heard God speaking to you directly? Do you have a hard time hearing from God directly? Why do some people have a difficult time knowing what God wants to say to them? Consider **John 8:47**. God rarely has spoken in an audible voice, but He does want to have a relationship with us and He does speak to people in many different ways. Some people hear from God all of the time and others question whether they've ever heard from Him at all. Analytical and rational thinkers may discount or could be skeptical of what God might be trying to say. They don't want to read into something that is abstract or requires some mental interpretation. Hearing from God is not usually concrete; it requires us to tap into the spiritual realm and listen with our heart. (*Also see Hebrews 1:1-2; John 10:27, 16:13*) Note: It has been said, "If you want to hear God speak to you, read His Word. If you want to hear God speak to you in an audible voice, then read His Word out loud!"

Q: Of the three types of revelation mentioned, in what ways do you feel God speaking to you most clearly? God may speak to us through any of these means, but one may resonate with us more than the others. Each has its benefits, too. General Revelation is always available as a reminder to us. Special Revelation is God-inspired, trustworthy and peace-giving. Particular Revelation reminds us that God loves us personally. Each can have its drawbacks, too. General revelation points to a God, but doesn't tell us Who God is or what He wants from us. The Bible, Special Revelation, can tell us what God wants for mankind but sometimes its not always easy to apply to our lives. Particular Revelation can be dangerous unless we know for certain that we are being led by the Spirit and not our own desires. The common thread between the three is the Holy Spirit ministering to our spirit.

Q: What is the key to connecting to the heart of God? Being intentional and disciplined are important for maintaining a close connection to God. Being intentional about practicing spiritual disciplines of Bible Study, prayer, and meditation is hard to do in this busy, fast-paced world that we live in. **Revelation 3:20** indicates that Jesus is waiting for us to invite Him into our lives for fellowship. Surrounding ourselves with people who will push us towards God instead of those who pull us away will also help us to stay passionate about what is important to God. It's an every day effort to keep God at the center of our lives. As we live in obedience to the will of God, we will be able to better hear from Him and understand His will for us.

Q: Is there anything in your life that you find difficult to resist or that you are unwilling to give up? This is a very personal question, so please respect those who might not be ready to talk about it. For those who are willing to share, be sure to thank them for their vulnerability and affirm the value of sharing with one another. It reminds us that we are not as alone as we might think in our struggles. It might be a secret sin, it might be anxiety, or perhaps fear that keeps us from following God. Bitterness and unforgiveness can plague people. Addictions, of course, and some habits that we've had for years can hinder our spiritual growth, too. Be sensitive to what is shared and remind your group to keep personal information confidential. *(See 2 Corinthians 12:9-9; James 5:16)*

Q: How far would you go to follow God? Where would you draw a line in the sand? Read **Matthew 6:19-20**. Following God can be scary. We know He is worthy. We believe that He is able to protect us from harm, but He doesn't promise to. We are creatures of what is comfortable and familiar. God is looking for people who are willing to die to themselves and live for Him, whatever the cost (*2 Chronicles 16:9*). God will reward people according to their faithfulness and now is the time for us to store up treasure in heaven.

Q: How have your passions changed over time? Do you recognize why or how this changed? Passions for kids, for the unborn, for the elderly, for the homeless, for doing some of your hobbies... Our passion is driven by the needs that we bear witness to and some of the needs around us may be brought to the light as we advance in our years. We may have a personal experience that affects our worldview. We may lose our ability to serve in our former passion area due to health or age. Maybe your passions have never changed. What is essential in recognizing our passion is the reason why it is important and how we can glorify God as we minister to the needs around us. *(See 1 Peter 4:10)*

Progress update on the Class Assignment: Get connected to a ministry at church.

Review Memory Verse:

1 Peter 4:10-11 - *"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."*

PRAYER REQUESTS: