

Is God a Cosmic Killjoy?

Chapter 1

As I travel around, one of the questions I am asked most often is, “How can a Christian know the will of God for his life?” Most of us acknowledge that God has a plan for the life of every believer, but often there seems to be some trouble in finding just which way this plan goes at a particular juncture. There are plenty of books, pamphlets, and sermons hitting at the problem, and yet the answers sometimes seem to elude even the most persistent searcher. My prayer is that this little book will help fill in some of the gaps in a fresh and very practical way.

One may look for definite guidelines in this area but merely wind up with a variety of ideas. Some apparently

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think that God's will is lost. At least they say they are searching for it! To them, God must appear to be a sort of divine Easter bunny who has stashed His will, like eggs, somewhere out of sight and sent us running through life trying to find it. And He is up there saying, "You're getting warmer!"

Others offer the suggestion that God's will is to be found via a traumatic experience. Running down the street, you fall on a banana peel and land on a map of India. Immediately you say to the Lord, "Thank You for that clear leading. I understand! India it is!" Or there is always the voice out of heaven or the vision in your dreams calling you to Chile.

Then there are those who are actually afraid of the will of God. I will never forget the athlete who came up to me at Hume Lake Camp and said, "I'm not sure I want to give my life to Jesus Christ because I am afraid of what He will make me do." He had the idea that God wants to take robust athletes, break both their legs, and make them play the flute. This implies that God is a kind of "cosmic killjoy," stomping on everyone's fun and raining on parades. People with this view actually fear the will of God as a severe way of life which will demand the sacrifice of their most treasured ability or possession.

Then there is the brass ring mentality. Remember the

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old merry-go-rounds with the brass rings? There are Christians who see God's will like that: It's nice if you get the brass ring, but if you don't, just settle for the iron one. In other words, don't really run to win—just be in the race.

I have read in some sources that the will of God is the “fortuitous conjunction of circumstances and impulses.”

And so the theories go on.

In the middle of this muddle we still ask, “What is the will of God? Are there any concrete principles which may be simply stated and actually put into practice?” I believe there are! That is the point of this whole book. Can you know what job to seek, what school to attend, what girl or guy to love, what decision to make in any given situation?

Yes. You no longer have to worry. The struggle is almost over, the search almost done.

Let's begin with a simple assumption. Since God has a will for us, He must want us to know it. If so, then we could expect Him to communicate it to us in the most obvious way. How would that be? Through the Bible, His revelation. Therefore, I believe that what one needs to know about the will of God is clearly revealed in the pages of the Word of God. God's will is, in fact, very explicit in Scripture.

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As we look at some biblical principles in the following pages, be prepared for an unexpected and surprising conclusion that could change your life.