

A Key Word & God's Will

Soon after my salvation in Christ, I prayed fervently to know God's will for my life. I'll never forget two very special ways He answered that prayer. One was through a Scripture. I'd been praying and praying, and one day, when I checked the mail, I received an envelope from a ministry I'd joined. When I opened the letter, inside was a key. A real, literal key, like you'd use to open a door. On the key was imprinted a verse, and that very verse answered my question! It reveals God's will not only for me, but for all of us.

...God's will revealed!

Do you want to know His will for you? Here it is, spelled out in black and white, clear for all the world to hear:

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

When I first read this, I was thrilled. I was blown away by God. He'd made His Presence manifest to me, and I felt His love. I'd literally asked what His will was, and He answered. Straight forward, and on a key.

But then I found myself somewhat disappointed. I'd been asking about His will for me more specifically—as in, my calling, a specific work or ministry, a job, a vocation. I wanted to know how I was to spend my days for Him. Further, the more I read His will for me in these verses, the more I saw how difficult it was to achieve. How do you rejoice *always*? Pray *without ceasing*? In *everything* give thanks? *Really*? Talk about a checklist!

Although they weren't what I asked for, these verses were exactly what I needed. Our Father is all about His glory and our character—our heart, our attitudes, being made holy, being made fit for heaven. Yes, God cares about our vocation, but He showed me that He first wants us to grasp the higher calling He has for us. It's a paradigm shift: we ask for something specific, He responds with something grander, and then as we grasp that holy calling, He reveals the answer to our specific, smaller question. And that's what He did for me.

As I shifted focus away from “What is the job You want me to get?” and instead towards “How do I rejoice always, pray ceaselessly, and thank You in everything?” His voice eventually broke through with the answer to my original question. He had one word for my vocation: SPEAK.

Once again, I was thrilled. God had spoken! And yet again, the thrill was followed moments later by discouragement. “Wait. Um, God, speak about what?” I asked.

I had no idea what the Lord had planned for me. It was the farthest from my mind. As I look back today, I can say I'd never had been able to design what He did. Nor do any of it apart from Jesus, His Presence, His grace, and His awesome Holy Spirit dwelling in me.

“Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord of hosts. Zechariah 4:6b

Since that sweet time of my early days in Christ, He's consistently called me to speak in some way, fashion or form. He also takes me through critical seasons of silence—either His silence or mine—during which He continues to teach me more about humility, selflessness, and discipline. It seems that He releases me to speak something only if I've either learned it first myself, or been taught it by another. I'm eternally grateful to the incredible people over the years who have poured into, counseled, advised, and instructed me in the way I should go. Their efforts have indeed multiplied.

Through His leading over the years, The Lord has equipped me to:

- Counsel girls facing crisis pregnancies
- Start a Speakers Bureau and speak over 1,200 times at high schools, colleges, churches, and civic groups, reaching over a quarter million people with the truth about abortion and the importance of purity and family
- Write books and monthly blogs
- Teach Bible studies, disciple women, and speak at Christian women's events
- Lead Sunday School, Scripture memory, VBS and Awana groups
- Homeschool our son and assist in tutoring other students through our co-op

The key to it all? Surrender to God and His will, not ours. Let Him work it through us, not the other way around. Be joyful always, pray continually, and give thanks to Him in everything. This is His will for us in Christ Jesus our Lord. Everything else follows that. To Him be all the glory!

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