

Knowing God's Will

... Hearing the Guidance of your "Advocate Within"



A look both scholarly & practical into what the Bible has to say about rediscovering & re-enlivening God's Will for your life.

via Scaughdt
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*“The will of God is not something you add to your life. It’s a course you choose. You will either reflect the peaceful qualities of the Son of God (via aligning yourself with his most ethical edicts) – and thereby come to know real Joy, **or** you will cave to the greed & fear-based principles which govern the rest of the world – and thereby come to know great suffering.”*

~ inspired by Elisabeth Elliot

“For each one of us, there is only one thing necessary: to fulfill our own destiny according to God's will, to become what God wants us to be.”

~ Thomas Merton



“There are no 'if's' in God's world, and no places that are safer than others. For the center of His will is our only true safety. So let us pray that we might always know that will!”

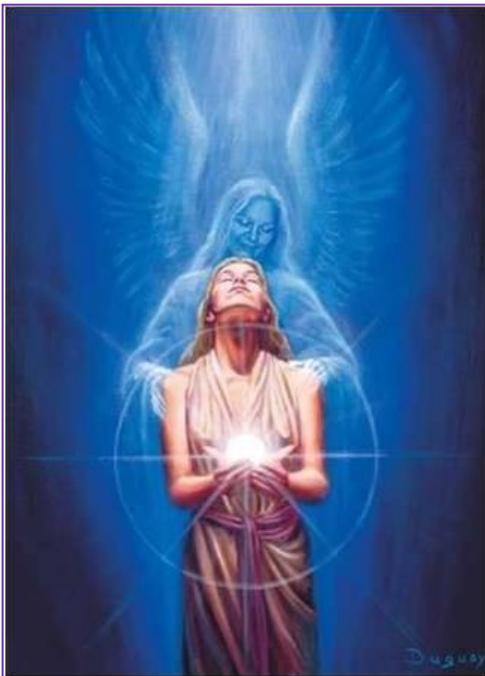
~ Corrie ten Boom

Knowing God's Will – an Introduction

The desire to decipher God's Will seems to dominate the thoughts of a growing number of “awakening believers” – those folks who are no longer satisfied with merely soaking in life's “simple pleasures” &/or obtaining mere “spiritual comfort.” While some of them have professed Jesus as their personal Savior and believe in the righteousness of their faith -- and while others have chosen to soak their lives in the hope-full redemption promised by “good deeds”, they all still find themselves suffering from regular bouts of sadness, boredom, worry and frustration. In addition, they continue to slip regularly into “non-Christian” behaviors: accumulating unnecessary material wealth, championing violence against their enemies, gossiping about their neighbors, criticizing all sinners for their failings &/or condemning non-Christians for their “false beliefs.”

“See what Love the Father has Given us, that **we should be called Children of God, for that is what we are.**” ~ 1 John 3:1

And yet many yearn to live a more power-full “Christian” life while simply not knowing how to do so. At the same time, they have refused to relinquish a fundamental hope – a belief that this life is more than a mere “proving ground” for the Hereafter; that the Universe (a.k.a. God) has a “deeper purpose” for our existence; and that **following God's Will** is important Here & Now. In the depths of their Souls, they believe that God has “plans” for all of us – that we each have unique gifts that we are to actualize for the betterment of others. Our job, then, is to rediscover those gifts and bring them to fruition ...



“The Lord God Guides us; therefore we cannot be disgraced ... **He who vindicates us is within** ...” ~ Isaiah 50:7

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me.”
~ Isaiah 61:1

“Your Kingdom has come, **your will be Done** on Earth as it [already] *is* in Heaven.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 6:10 -- see also Luke 17:20-21 for the relevant location of “Heaven”)

“He was born blind **so that God's works might be revealed** in him.”
~ Jesus Christ (John 9:3)

“You will know that I am in my Father, and that you are in me, and that ***I am in You.***” ~ Jesus Christ (John 14:20)

“And yet where sin is increased, **Grace abounds all the more ...**” ~ Romans 5:20

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes *with sighs too deep for words.*” ~ Romans 8:26

“**The Gifts of the Calling of God are irrevocable.**” ~ Romans 11:29

“If there is a physical body, then **there is also a Spiritual body.**” ~ 1 Corinthians 15:44

“And ***all of us***, with unveiled faces, perceiving the Glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, ***are being transformed into the same image*** -- from one degree of Glory to another; for this comes from the Lord.” ~ 2 Corinthians 3:18

“For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God; a house not made with hands ... For in our tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling. And yet when we remove this tent, we will not be found naked.” ~ 2 Corinthians 5:1-3

“So if anyone is **in Christ**, there is a new creation. See, everything old has passed away. See, ***everything has become new!***” ~ 2 Corinthians 5:17

“If we Live by the Spirit, let us also **be Guided by the Spirit.**” ~ Galatians 5:25

“**Draw near to God, and God will draw near to you.**” ~ James 4:8

And yet even though it is quite obvious that we are all called to find and follow God’s will, little has been offered us by our religious leaders in the form of ***practical*** methods for aligning our lives with the Bible’s “Way” (or with any other religious creed, for that matter). We have not been given clear guideposts to know what God’s Will is for our lives, and we have been given no tangible methods for accessing the perfect knowledge of our internal Advocate (what some know as the “conscience” or the “the Holy Spirit” -- see **John 14:16-26 & John 15:26**). Indeed, even the Christian church -- supposedly the keeper of this Wisdom, has been teaching us doctrines and principles that cannot be reconciled with Jesus’ Way of absolute Love & Forgiveness, much less our own God-Given understanding of morality and basic fairness ...

“*For the sake of your traditions, you make void the Commandments of God.* You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied rightly about you when he said: ***‘This people honors me with their lips, but their Hearts are far from me’***” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 15:6-8)

*“Who are you, a human being, to argue with God? ... And indeed, [God] says: Those who are not my people I will call my people, and those who are not beloved I will call beloved ... **They shall all be called Children of God.**” ~ Paul in Romans 9:20-26*

*“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To all who are thirsty, I give the gift of water from the Spring of Life. Those who conquer will inherit these things ... Let everyone who is thirsty come. **Let anyone who wishes take the Water of Life as a gift.**”*

~ Revelation 21:6 + 22:17

In Truth, it is the church that teaches us that “non-believers” are damned to Hell for eternity and that God is a God of vengeance, and yet Jesus encouraged us to “Love your enemies ... Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful ... Do not condemn and you will not be condemned.” (Luke 6:35-37)

In Truth, it is the church that teaches us that Salvation comes after mentally professing a faith in Jesus as one's “personal Lord & Savior”, and yet Jesus himself noted that “No one is Good but God alone” (Mark 10:18) and that “If you wish to enter into Life, uphold the Commandments.” (Matthew 19:17)

In Truth, it is the church that teaches us that some wars are “holy” and that others are “justified”, and yet Jesus noted clearly that “Blessed are the Peacemakers.” (Matthew 5:9)

In Truth, it is the church that teaches us that Divine Justice is a punishment-based “eye for an eye”, and yet Jesus informed us that “The Father judges no one” (John 5:22) and that “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.” (Matthew 12:7)

In Truth, it is the church that often still quotes some of the more violent passages of the Hebrew Bible (a.k.a the Old Testament) to justify non-loving behaviors, and yet the New Testament makes it quite clear that “In speaking of a New Covenant, [Jesus] has made the first one obsolete.” (Hebrews 8:13 -- see also 2 Corinthians 3:15-16).



Needless to say, this is all somewhat more than a bit confusing to more than few folks (many of them Christians) ... And so, seeing as how the church seems to be contradicting some of the more important sayings of Jesus Christ, I decided to back in 2004 to begin extensively studying the Bible myself. How happy I quickly became when I read that the Bible itself teaches us that human beings are **not** to listen to, much less blindly follow, any man-made teachings (including traditional church dogma) that contradict the all-loving Way lived by Jesus Christ!

“Whoever disobeys even one of the least of these Commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but **whoever does them and teaches them** will be called great in the Kingdom” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:19)

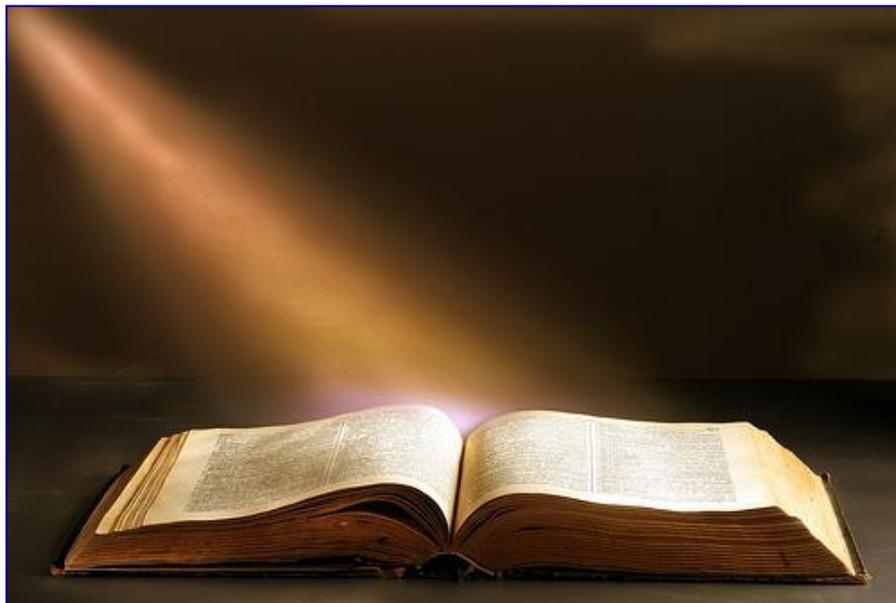
“Beware false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **You will Know them by their Fruits**”
~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:15-16)

“**Something greater than the Temple is here** ... For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 12:7-8)

“**Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.** Let [your religious leaders] alone; they are blind guides for the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into the pit.”
~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 15:13-14)

“Do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for **they do not practice what they teach.**” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 23:2-3)

“But you are not to be called Rabbi, for you have but one teacher, and **you are all students.** And call no one your father on earth, for you have only one Father - the One in Heaven.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 23:8-9)



“Woe to you [leaders of the church], for you love to have the seat of honor in the synagogues and to be greeted with respect in the marketplace. Woe to you, for you are like unmarked graves, with others walking over them without realizing it.” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 11:43-44)

“And God, who knows the human Heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit ... and in cleansing their Hearts by Faith he has made no distinction between them and us. Why, then, are you putting God to the test **by placing on the neck of others a yoke** that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear?” ~ Acts 15:8-10

“The God who made the world and everything in it ... does not live in shrines made by human hands, **nor is He served by human hands**, as though He needed anything” ~ Acts 17:24-25

“As God is for us, who is against us? ... It is God who sets us Free. **Who then is to condemn?**” ~ Romans 8:31-33

“So **let no one boast about human leaders**. For **all things** are yours” ~ 1 Corinthians 3:21-23

“Even Satan disguises himself as an Angel of Light. So it is not strange if his ministers also disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness. **Their ends will match their deeds.**” ~ 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

“But **the Word of God is not chained.**” ~ 2 Timothy 2:9

“For the time is coming when they will not put up with sound doctrine, but ... will **accumulate teachers** for themselves **who suit their own desires**. They will turn away from The Truth and wander away into myths”
~ 2 Timothy 4:3-4

“Everyone who does not abide in **the teaching** of Christ, but goes beyond it, does not have God ... And yet **whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.**” ~ 2 John 1:9



And as I continued to re-read the New Testament -- hoping to find the answers that my family, my friends, the church and my community had all failed to provide, a bigger picture of a “Bigger God” began to take shape. For the more I read the Scriptures, the more evident this all-Loving Force became -- a God who does not want us to be subservient to Him at all, but rather desires for us to go boldly forth and **Walk the Way** of selfless Caring for others using our own unique & self-inspired methods.

“And whoever does not **take up the cross** and *follow me* is not worthy of me.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 10:38 - see also Matthew 16:24, Mark 8:34 and Luke 9:23)

“**Take my yoke upon you** and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in Heart, and you will find rest for your Souls.”
~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:29)

“But as for what was sown on good soil, these are the ones who hear the Word and understand It, **who then indeed bear fruit**”
~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 13:23 - see also Mark 4:20 and Luke 8:15)

“Whatever you bind on Earth will be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on Earth will be loosed in Heaven.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:18)

“And because of the increase in lawlessness, the Love of many will grow cold. But **the one who endures** [in Love] to the end will be Saved.”
~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 24:12-13)

“The measure you Give will be the measure you Receive, **and still more will be Given you.**” ~ Jesus Christ (Mark 4:24)

“A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you Give will be the measure you get back.” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 6:38)

“I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words **and Acts on them.**” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 6:47)



“Bless rather are those who hear the Word of God **and adhere to It.**” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 11:28)

“My food is to **do** the Will of Him who sent Me and to **complete His Work.**” ~ Jesus Christ (John 4:34)

“If you **continue in** [i.e. actualize] **my Word**, you are truly my disciples; [only then] will you Know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you Free.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 8:31-32)

“We must **Do the Works of Him** who sent me while it is day, for the night is coming when we cannot **work.**” ~ Jesus Christ (John 9:4)

“For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 10:17-18)



“The Works **that I do** in my Father’s name testify to Me ...” ~ Jesus Christ (John 10:25)

“If you understand these things, **blessed are you while you Do them** ... The one who believes in me will also **Do the Works that I Do** ...” ~ Jesus Christ (John 13:17+14:12)

“**Present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your Spiritual worship.” ~ Romans 12:1

“**Be Doers of the Word**, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves ...” ~ James 1:22

“It is God’s Will that **by Doing Right** you shall silence the ignorance of the foolish.” ~ 1 Peter 2:15

“Make every effort to **support your Faith with Goodness**, and ... self-discipline, and ... endurance, and ... mutual affection, and ... Love. For if these things are yours, they will keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ ... Be all the more eager to confirm your Calling, for if you do this, you will never stumble. *In this way* entry into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord will be richly provided for you.” ~ 2 Peter 1:5-11

“Whoever says ‘I abide in him’ must **live as he lived.**” ~ 1 John 2:6

“**Everyone who Does Right has been born of Him.**” ~ 1 John 2:29

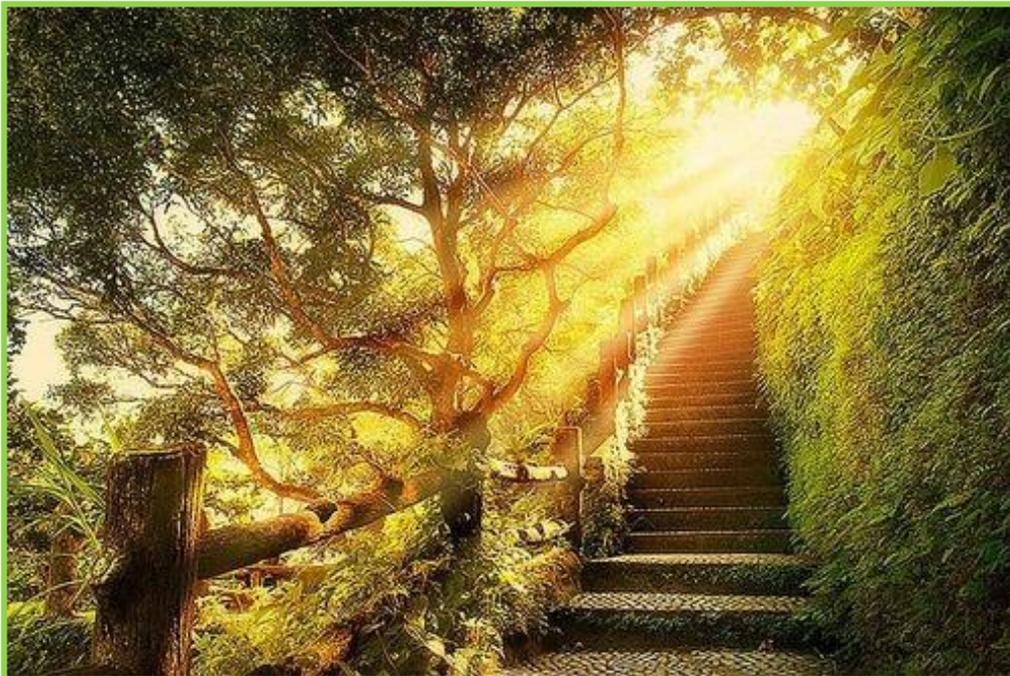
Appropriately, this treatise is founded on my many years of radically practicing “The Way of Christ” – a method of living clearly described by Jesus in the Gospels of the Bible. So often, we read or hear a Truth and make excuses for it. We read that we should “Love our enemies”, and yet assume that means “everyone but terrorists.” We hear that we should not worry and let “today’s troubles be enough for today”, and yet rationalize that it’s still OK to plan for the future, fill our savings accounts, &/or sign legal contracts with others; hoping to guarantee a “security” that God apparently cannot. I, too, used to read Sacred Wisdoms in this manner. I, too, read the words of Jesus and rationalized that they could not be *literally* applied to my life. And so in the beginning phases of my Grand Experiment I only tested them “safely” – only practiced them “reasonably”; never going all out, and never truly pushing their apparent limits.

Of course, applying his Divine Truths half-heartedly only reaped me half-hearted benefits. I still struggled with feelings of sadness, frustration and meaninglessness when I did so. It did not comfort me the think I was going to Heaven after I died – as that hope seemed hollow & selfish. Deep within, I simply *KNEW* that there was so much more to this Life and its Living ... and I kept searching for it diligently, though more via written words and impassioned tones than courageous actions.



So one day, after reading the New Testament for perhaps the twelfth time (having heeded the Bible's call to focus more on the New than the Old -- see [Hebrews 7:18-19](#), [Hebrews 7:22](#), [Hebrews 8:6-7](#), [Hebrews 8:13](#), and [Hebrews 10:9](#)), I decided to completely give up my old way of "living" and **radically** follow Jesus' advice found therein -- every single verse of it. I first identified all of Jesus' admonitions related to "The Way" and what living that Way in its purest sense entails (see [Matthew 4:4](#), [4:7](#), [4:10](#), [5:3-11](#), [5:16](#), [5:19](#), [5:39](#), [5:42](#), [5:44](#), [5:48](#), [6:3](#), [6:9-13](#), [6:14](#), [6:19-20](#), [6:25](#), [6:34](#), [7:1-2](#), [7:12](#), [8:20](#), [10:7-9](#), [10:12](#), [12:49-50](#), [18:4](#), [18:21-22](#), [19:21](#), [19:29](#), [22:30](#), [22:36-40](#), [23:12](#), [26:39](#) and [Mark 1:13](#), [1:22](#), [1:35](#), [10:15](#), [10:21](#), [10:29](#), [11:25](#), [12:29-31](#), [12:43-44](#), [13:10](#), [14:36](#) and [Luke 6:27-31](#), [6:37](#), [8:1](#), [9:5](#), [11:41](#), [12:11-12](#), [12:15](#), [12:22](#), [12:33](#), [14:8-10](#), [14:33](#), [17:20-21](#), [18:17](#), [18:29-30](#), [21:4](#), [22:42](#), [23:34](#) and [John 3:3-8](#), [7:24](#), [8:15](#), [8:50](#), [10:25](#), [10:37-38](#), [12:47](#), [13:1](#), [13:34](#), [14:15](#), [14:23](#), [15:4](#), [15:12](#), [20:23](#)) and then I simply assumed that he had meant **exactly** what was written in the texts... and then I simply set out to **literally** act accordingly.

Of course, "on paper", living this way was considered to be "dangerous", and "irresponsible" -- even "rebellious." And it took no small measure of courage to actually take that first great Leap of Faith. And yet I made that leap and have been radically living The Way ever since. And throughout the years I have done so, I have never been happier; never felt more content; and never proven to be more Power-fully Effective in my life ... It was (and still is) a Beauty-full Way of Living; one filled with Peace and Love and a deeply intimate relationship with the Divine (or "God" -- or however you might define that Celestial Source to be).



Along with this deep-seated sense of inner peace, my life “in Christ” has allowed me to re-discover some amazing truths about the Word of God that are not readily available to the average church-going Christian. The most important one of these truths is that ***God is actively communicating with us all*** in every moment of our lives. Just as important – I realized that we can all quite readily access that information – that we can all literally **Hear** what God has to say; and as such, **we can all clearly know God's Will!** And, perhaps most importantly of all, no one need copy my “radical lifestyle” in order to hear that Divine Guidance.

*"God" is talking
to you... Are
you listening?*



So, for both those Christians who are already certain of their post-mortem Salvation, as well as those others who feel a bit “lost” and yet have not abandoned hope for living a Meaning-full life, this article offers an awakening to a “fresh Faith” - a Way of Living powerfully & ***literally*** “in Christ.” The grace of God’s Will is His greatest gift, and this epistle shines a clear light upon that grace -- a beacon that all Christians (indeed, that all the members of any religion) can use to illuminate their respective lives; a practical method to Truth-filled living; a “hearing aid” which all human beings can use to know God’s Will for their lives.

“Nothing is covered that will not be uncovered, and **nothing is secret that will not become known.**” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 10:26)

“From his fullness we have ***all received, grace upon grace.***” ~ John 1:16

“Anyone who resolves to do the Will of God will ***know*** whether the teaching is from God ... Those who speak on their own seek their own glory; but **the one who seeks the Glory of Him who sent me is true.**”
~ Jesus (John 7:17-18)

“The Word is near you; on your lips and ***in your Heart*** ... Be transformed in the renewing of your minds, so that you may **discern what is the Will of God.**” ~ Romans 10:8+12:2

“For we are God’s servants ... You are God’s field; God’s building ... ***Each builder must choose*** with care how to build on [the foundation of God’s Grace] ... Do you not know that you are God’s Temple, and that ***God’s Spirit dwells within you?***” ~ 1 Corinthians 3:9-10+16

“Let each of you lead the life that the Lord has assigned, to which God Called you.” ~ 1 Corinthians 7:17

“With the eyes of your Heart enlightened, you may come to **know the hope to which God has Called you.**” ~ Ephesians 1:18

“Lead a life worthy of the Calling to which you have been Called ... making every effort to maintain the Unity of the Spirit **in the body of Peace.**” ~ Ephesians 4:1

“**Do the Will of God. Render service with enthusiasm,** as to the Lord and not to mere men and women.” ~ Ephesians 6:6-7

“Therefore my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, **work out your own Salvation with awe & reverence;** for it is God at work in you, enabling you both to intend and to work for his Will.” ~ Philippians 2:12-13

“Indeed, **the Word of God is living and active** ... It is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the Heart.” ~ Hebrews 4:12

“And **the Word of God abides within you.**” ~ 1 John 2:14

“And **the Spirit is the one who testifies,** for the Spirit is the Truth.” ~ 1 John 5:6

Even though living exactly as Jesus lived is obviously a very power-full Way to knowing a sense of perfect contentment, it is not *necessary* to do so to experience the Grace of which he speaks. Indeed, it is not even necessary to “be a good Christian” to live The Way he encourages. The truths Jesus preached are general guidelines for all humans, designed to allow *everyone* to more effectively design their own paths to



Salvation (“Not everyone can accept this teaching, but only those to whom it is given ... Let anyone accept it *who can.*” ~ Jesus in Matthew 19:11-12 & “I do not judge anyone who hears my words and does not keep them.” ~ Jesus in John 12:47). Indeed, to obtain the inner peace of the Kingdom of Heaven, it is only necessary for us to **incorporate** the truths underlying Jesus’ Way into our current lives (“Everyone who **does** what is Right is righteous, just as God is righteous.” ~ 1 John 3:7 & “Love is from God; **everyone who Loves** is born of God and knows God.” ~ 1 John 4:7).

To make this clearer, every sentence that follows is supported by verses of Scripture (well over **400** of them!), showing clearly that what I have experienced (and am now professing) is not merely “my idea”, but rather is simply a more representative way to both honor the Word of God found in the Bible and to abide by (i.e. “worship”) the Way of Jesus Christ ...

Step One: Choosing to Hear God’s Will for your Self

Considering the quagmire of conflicting opinions in the Christian community with regards to what The Way actually entails, and what Jesus really meant (“Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing.” ~ Matthew 13:34 & “The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but will show you plainly of the Father.” ~ Jesus in John 16:25), and what it means to “be a good Christian”, we are fortunate that the Bible clearly tells us that **we must each decide for ourselves** what the Will of God is for our lives ...

“**Search, and you will find**; knock, and the door will be opened” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:7)

“Every scribe trained for the Kingdom of Heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his Treasure **what is new and what is old.**”
~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 13:52)

“And why do you not **judge for yourself what is Right?**” ~ Jesus (Luke 12:57)

“These Jews were more receptive ... for they welcomed the message very eagerly and **examined the Scriptures every day to see whether these things were true.**” ~ Acts 17:11

“The Faith that you have, **have as your own conviction** before God.” ~ Romans 14:22

“I speak as to sensible people; **judge for yourselves** what I say.” ~ 1 Corinthians 10:15

“For why should our liberty be subject to another’s conscience?” ~ 1 Corinthians 10:29

“**Examine yourselves**, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup.” ~ 1 Corinthians 11:28

“**Examine yourselves to see whether you are Living in the Faith.** Test yourselves.” ~ 2 Corinthians 13:5

“**All must test their own Work**” ~ Galatians 6:4-5

“If any of you is lacking in Wisdom, **ask God**, who Gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and understanding will be given to you.” ~ James 1:5

“Do not believe every Spirit, but **test their teachings to know if they are of God.**” ~ 1 John 4:1

Step Two: Generally Listening to your Advocate Within

First of all, it is quite clear, from reading the Bible over and over again -- as well as from radically putting its Truths into practice for a number of years, that ***the Advocate of John 14 is real***; an actual “Moral Compass” that resides within each and every human being. Whether we call it the “conscience”, the “Advocate”, the “Holy Spirit”, or the “Spirit of Truth” is irrelevant. This “larger voice” is within us all; constantly guiding us to repent for our past mistakes, constantly encouraging us to act compassionately to others in the present moment -- and thereby constantly spurring us to attain the “Salvation “of perfect Contentment in both the Here and the Hereafter. And it is not only my personal experience that confirms this Truth. The Bible itself repeatedly emphasizes it as well ...

“And I will ask my Father, and he will Give you ***another Advocate to be with you forever***. This is ***the Spirit of Truth*** ... You know It, because ***It abides with you and It will be within you*** ... This Advocate, the Holy Spirit, ... will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said ... When It comes to you, ... this Spirit of Truth, which comes from the Father, ***will testify on my behalf***.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 14:16-17+26 & 15:26)



“When [those] who do not possess the Law do instinctively what the Law requires ... they show that ***what the Law requires is written on their Hearts***” ~ Romans 2:14-15

“Become ***obedient from the Heart*** to the teaching to which you were entrusted.” ~ Romans 6:17

“For I delight in ***the Law of God in my inmost Self***” ~ Romans 7:22

“These mysteries God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for ***the Spirit searches everything - even the depths of God***.” ~ 1 Corinthians 2:10

“Those who are Spiritual ***discern all things***, and they themselves are subject to no one else’s scrutiny.” ~ 1 Corinthians 2:15

“Now concerning Love for others ... ***you yourselves have been taught by God*** to Love one another” ~ 1 Thessalonians 4:9

“The anointing that you received from Him ***abides in you*** [see John 14:16-26 above], and ***you do not need anyone to teach you***.” ~ 1 John 2:27

Step Three: Testing Choices using their “Fruits”

So, it is clear that we *do* always essentially **KNOW** what our “Life-Purpose” is. Even if only on an intuitive level, we are each being told which general course of action we are to take to satisfy God’s Will – namely, selflessly Caring for others. And yet how are we to determine what this internal voice is *specifically* telling us to do in any given moment?

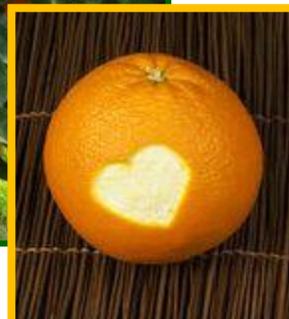
Fortunately, Jesus himself gave us the most accurate method for determining God’s Will in our lives: looking to the consequences (i.e. the “fruits”) of our choices. In essence, actions that bring us peace and enable Love to flourish (both for ourselves and, more importantly for others) are in harmony with God’s Will. And those that do not, are not ...

“Every Good Tree bears Good Fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A Good Tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear Good Fruit ... **for the tree is known by its fruit.**” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:17-18+12:33)

“The Good person out of the Good Treasure produces Good, and the evil person out of the evil treasure produces evil ... **Wisdom is vindicated by all her children.**” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 6:45+7:35)

“If I am not **doing the Works** of my Father, then do not believe me. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, **believe the Works**, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 10:37)

“If a plan or undertaking is of human origin, it will fail; but if it is of God, no one can overthrow it” ~ Acts 5:38-39



Making GOOD Decisions: God's Will & the 9 "Fruits of the Spirit"

Our moral **Advocate Within** (a.k.a. the conscience – or the Soul – or the True Self) always encourages us to act in ways that are in alignment with the internal guidance constantly provided by the **Holy Spirit**. Any choice that we make in our lives resonates either harmoniously or discordantly with this underlying ethical awareness (a.k.a. “God’s Will”). Of course, the aforementioned, more general ways of *knowing* God’s Will can be a bit difficult to discern. Fortunately, Jesus gives us the following, more specific standard through which we can definitively **know** if we are acting in harmony with the Will of his heavenly Father: namely, whether or not our actions go on to produce the “Fruits of the Spirit.”

“The Kingdom of God is Given to those who produce the Fruits of the Spirit.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 21:43)

Paul blesses us further by specifically listing the 9 aspects of this Holy Fruit:

“The Fruit of the Spirit is Love: Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-discipline.”
~ Galatians 5:22-23

Thus, for Christians who believe that the Bible directly reflects God’s Word, every choice that is power-fully in alignment with God’s Will must be **Peace**-full, **Patient**, **Generous**, **Kind**, **Loving**, **Self-Disciplined**, **Gentle**, **Joyful**, and **Faith**-full. Indeed, every single Right Action must embody & reflect these nine characteristics – thereby always bringing us and those around us an intimate experience of some form of bliss &/or contentment. In essence, these are the deeds that properly reflect God’s Will for our lives ...



Now I have taken it upon myself over the last several years to radically apply these nine Truths to my own life. And it came as no small surprise when I did so that, at least whenever I had the courage to **fully** do so, they *always* functioned for enhanced Peace in my life; they always furthered Love in all of my relationships; they always emPowered my daily choices; and they always strengthened my connection with the essence many call “God.”

And so I dedicated the rest of my life to spreading this “**Good News**” to all who have both the “ears” (i.e. the humility) to hear this message as well as the “legs” (i.e. the Courage) to apply its Loving Way to their lives ...



And yet before you can produce the “Fruits of the Spirit” in your own life, their deeper meanings must be comprehended. Of course, in order to understand them, those meanings must be experienced, and in order for them to be experienced, they must be actively applied to your everyday living ... And in order for you to apply them appropriately, they must first be *redefined* ...

*As such, every one of these nine characteristics is expounded upon hereafter, and every one of their explanations is supported by numerous references to *Biblical Scripture*.

*In each case, the characteristic in question is stated simply and described. Then, in the section labeled “**clarifications**”, some of the common misconceptions related to the particular characteristic are explained.

*Thereafter, in the section labeled “**synopsis**”, the characteristic’s qualities are concisely summarized.

*Then, in the section labeled “**determining factor**”, a key question(s) is isolated with regards to applying the characteristic in any of your everyday decision &/or encounters.

*And finally, each characteristic’s explanation is substantiated by a collection of verses from the Bible.

So without further ado, here are the **Nine “Fruits” of God’s Will**:

*The 1st Characteristic: God's Will is always **Peace-full***

① God's Will is always **Peace-full** (reflected in Column #1 in the example-charts on pages 70-72) and stems from the inner peace that is felt in our personal relationship with the Father. God's Will is not something "difficult" or "impossible" to follow. Rather, even though our ego-minds and political leaders would have us believe otherwise, doing the Will of the Holy Spirit is our *natural* State of Being. The "True Path" is always one of simplicity ("Take my yoke upon you and learn from me ... and you will find rest for your Souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." ~ Jesus in Matthew 11:29-30). Thus, more often than not, God's Will wishes for us to engage life on an intimate, personal level - and this often results in actions that we undertake alone in solitude and can fulfill without the assistance of others ("Whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father in secret ..." ~ Jesus in Matthew 6:6) ...

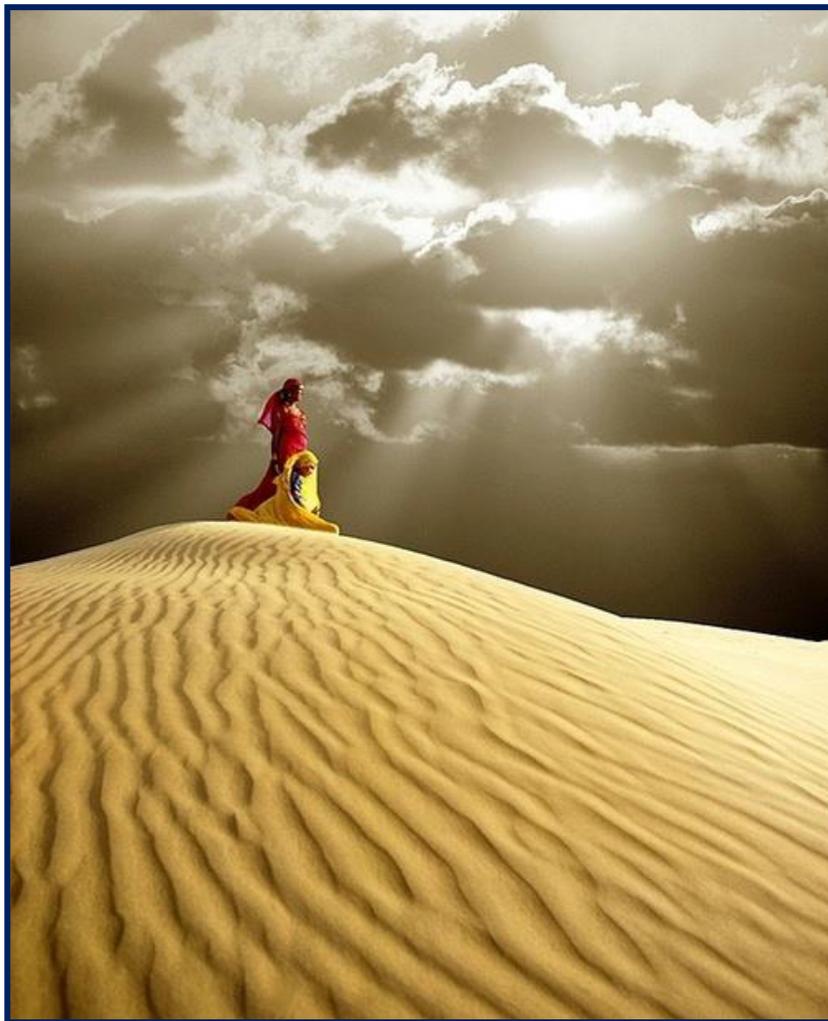


Peace-full choices, by their nature, encourage us to be at Peace; with a calm mind and in calm surroundings ("It is to Peace that God has Called us." ~ 1 Corinthians 7:15) ... This inner Peace is grounded in the acceptance of what already **IS** ("We know that all things work together for Good for those who Love God; who are Called according to His Purpose." ~ Romans 8:28) ... Thus, Peace-full choices are those that attempt to do something with what already exists, as opposed to striving to change the status quo into "something better."

As such, Peace-full decisions are those work with what **IS**, as opposed to striving to create what “should be” (“And why do you worry? ... Consider the lilies of the field, how they Grow; they neither toil nor spin, and yet even Solomon is all his glory was not clothed like one of these ... Strive first for the Kingdom of God ... and all [your material concerns] will be provided as well.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 6:28-29+33) ... This acceptance is strengthened when we choose to humbly repent our own mistakes and courageously forgive others who have done us harm (“Bear Fruits worthy of repentance” ~ Luke 3:8 & “Forgive us our trespasses, as we Forgive those who trespass against us.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 6:12) ...



Clarifications: Peace-full is not to be confused with “isolationist.” Even though a particular deed can be more power-full when effectuated in solitude, this does not mean that you must emotionally isolate yourself while performing any such action (“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 18:20). Know as well that socially interactive options are not “wrong”, of course. It is totally acceptable and often Right Acton to collaborate with, work amongst, &/or engage the assistance of others. It is simply the case that the solitary option is the one you undertake without assistance or support from others, regardless of whether you are working among them or alone. It is the most power-full option; the one requiring the most faith and thus, the one most in harmony with God’s Will for your life (“And Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted ... Then, filled with the Power of the Spirit, he returned to Galilee” ~ Luke 4:1-2+14 -- see also **Matthew** 7:21, 8:18, 8:20, 9:1, 10:14, 10:22, 12:15, 13:1, 14:13, 14:23, 15:21, 15:29, 16:21, 16:24, 17:1, 19:1-2, 19:29, 20:17-18, 24:3, 24:40, 26:36-39 and **Luke** 4:42, 5:3, 6:12, 9:23, 9:36, 9:58, 12:51, 13:24, 14:26, 16:15, 18:29-30, 19:28, 21:37, 22:42, 23:34) ...

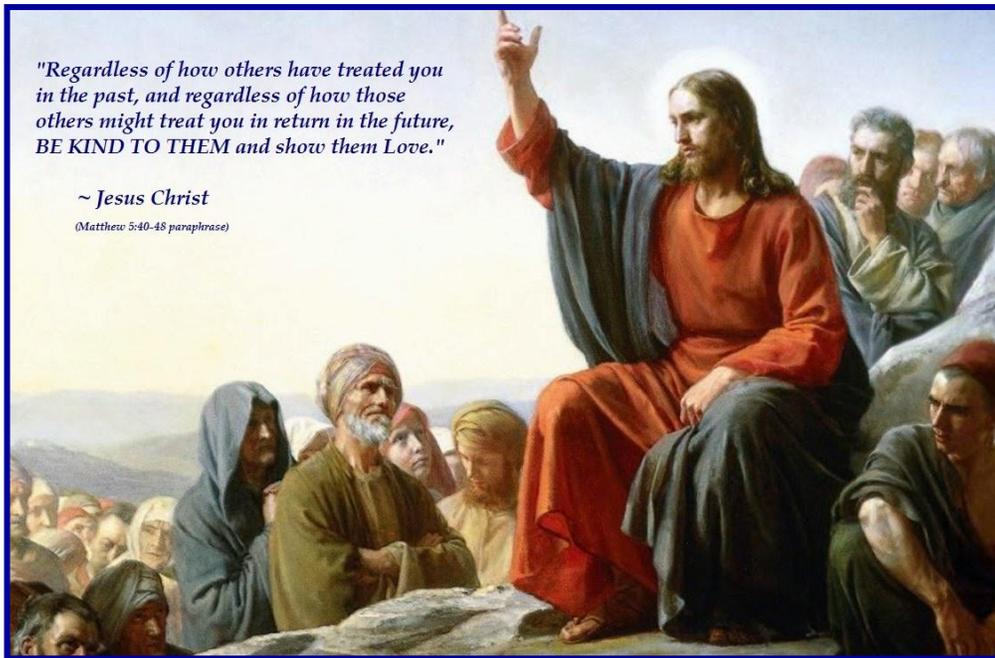


That others do not follow your way does not make them “wrong” or even “sinners” – that is not for us to judge (“God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean.” ~ Acts 10:28). Rather, your desire as Christians must be to help others to assist their True Selves along *their* paths back to God. Remember to be humble and gentle with everyone, for this is The Way (“The Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome, but rather Kind to everyone; and apt teacher, patient; guiding [even] opponents with gentleness.” ~ 2 Timothy 2:24-25) ...



Some will say that this definition seems “distant” or “passive” -- that we cannot help others when acting individually. Yet we must re-member that it is not possible to ever “help” another to “get better” (“If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 10:14 & “When they heard this, they were filled with rage ... But Jesus passed through the midst of them and went on his Way.” ~ Luke 4:28-30) ... Indeed, we can only offer true assistance to others while being true to God’s Will, and we can only be truly compassionate with others when we are not determined to change them or judge their chosen Ways in any way (“First say ‘Peace to this house’, and if anyone is there who shares in Peace, your Peace will rest upon that person, but if not, your Peace will return to you.” ~ Jesus in Luke 10:5-6) ...

Additionally, even though Peace-full actions must be forgiving, their forgiveness in no way condones or encourages the “evil” that has been forgiven. Forgiveness brings us Peace by accepting whatever has happened and letting God do the judging thereof (“Beloved never avenge yourselves ... for it is written: Vengeance is mine saith the Lord.” ~ Romans 12:19 & “Is it not those who are inside that you are to judge? God will judge those outside.” ~ 1 Corinthians 5:12 & “He will repay according to each one’s deeds ... For God shows no partiality.” ~ Romans 2:6+11) ...

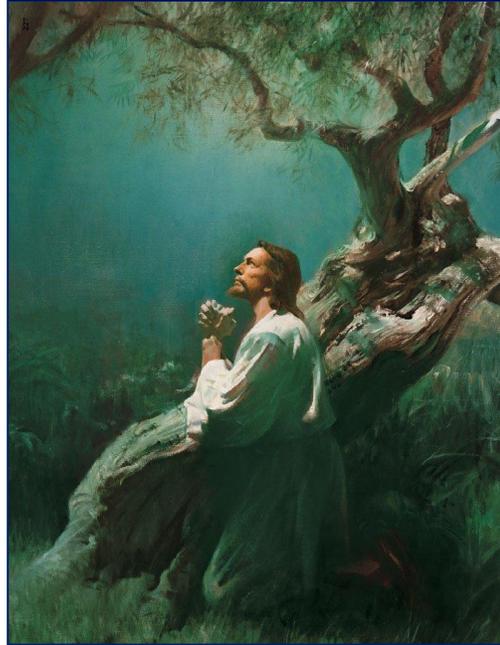


Your job is not to judge.
Your job is not to figure out if someone deserves something. Your job is to lift the fallen, to restore the broken, and to heal the hurting.

~ Jesus Christ
(Matthew 7:1-5 & John 13:34-35)

Forgiveness brings us Peace by giving Love to those who need it the most (“Put away from you all bitterness and wrath, ... together with all malice. Be Kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God has Forgiven you.” ~ Ephesians 4:31-32) ... Forgiveness does not keep us from being just or defending the weak. Rather, it allows us to do Good against the wrong that others perpetrate without condemning the wrongdoer in the process. It allows us to be compassionate towards the pain that caused these “perpetrators” to behave poorly in the first place – and thereby heal the same (“If you Forgive the sins of any, they are Forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” ~ Jesus in John 20:23) ...

Likewise, it is important to remember that an action that is direct -- and therefore “simple” -- is not necessarily “easy.” Indeed, it is often the greatest challenge &/or the most complicated alternative that will provide the doer thereof with the most Peace – as long as that task is actualized in a *personal* manner (“No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.” ~ 1 Corinthians 10:13) ... The Bible is filled with admonitions for us to persevere through hardship, disappointment, and disillusionment (“Be patient in suffering; persevere in prayer.” ~ Romans 12:12), and as such, our truly Peace-full actions are not those that necessarily bring us the most ease or pleasure after they have been completed. Rather, they are the choices most in harmony with God’s Will (i.e. loving, selfless service), and thus they are the choices that bring us the most Peace *while* we are performing them (even after bringing us great consternation, angst & worry before we undertake them) ...



Finally, merely because an action inspires inner Peace, it in no way makes that choice a “boring” one. In fact, there are many options in each moment that can be simultaneously “right” and also exciting (“I have said these things to you that my Joy might be in you, and that your Joy might become complete” ~ Jesus in John 15:11) ... Joyful actions bring as much inner Peace as calm ones. It is not *what* we are doing that satisfies God’s Will, but rather *why* we have chosen to engage a particular action that determines its importance and its “holiness” – indeed, its effectiveness as well (“Be Wise in what is Good and guileless in what is evil.” ~ Romans 16:19) ...

There often seems to be a playfulness to wise people, as if either their equanimity has as its source this playfulness or the playfulness flows from the equanimity; and they can persuade other people who are in a state of agitation to calm down and manage a smile.

(Edward Hoagland)

SYNOPSIS: Peace-full Actions are personal and bring a sense of inner calm **while they are being** performed ... They are individually performed, ultimately soothing to the Self, and always accepting of others.

DETERMINING FACTOR: During decision-making, ask your Self -- “Does this particular option cause strife or does it inspire Peace? Does it require external assistance to be effective or can it be actualized directly by myself?”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

“There was a great wind ... but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and *after the fire the sound of sheer silence*. When Elijah heard [that silence], he went out and stood at the entrance to the cave. **Then** there came a Voice to him ...”

~ 1 Kings 19:11-13

“**I desire Mercy, not sacrifice.**” ~ God (Matthew 9:13)

“If a brother sins against me, how often should I forgive -- as many as seven times? Jesus said to him: [Forgive him] not seven merely times, but seventy times seven times.” ~ Matthew 18:21-22

“[God] is Kind to both the ungrateful and the sinful. **Be merciful**, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge and you will not be judged; do not condemn and you will not be condemned. **Forgive** and you will be Forgiven ...” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 6:36-37)



“So he set off and went to his Father. And yet while he was still far off, his Father saw him and was filled with Compassion; and ran out and put his arms around his son and kissed him [*before the son had a chance to repent!*]”

~ Jesus Christ (Luke 15:20)



“**Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.**” ~ Jesus (Luke 23:34)

“Peace I leave with you; **my Peace I give to you.**” ~ Jesus Christ (John 14:27)

“I have said this all to you, so that, by following my Way, you might **find Peace.**” ~ Jesus Christ (John 16:13)

“While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed ... and then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice: Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”

~ Acts 7:59-60

“**For God is a God not of disorder but of Peace.**” ~ 1 Corinthians 14:33

“**Live in Peace,** and the God of Love and Peace will live with You.” ~ 2 Corinthians 13:11

“**And the Peace of God will guard your hearts & minds ...**” ~ Philippians 4:7

“Comfort your Hearts and strengthen them in every Good Work and word.” ~ 2 Thessalonians 2:17

“For judgment will be without Mercy to anyone who has shown no Mercy; **Mercy triumphs over judgment.**” ~ James 2:12-13

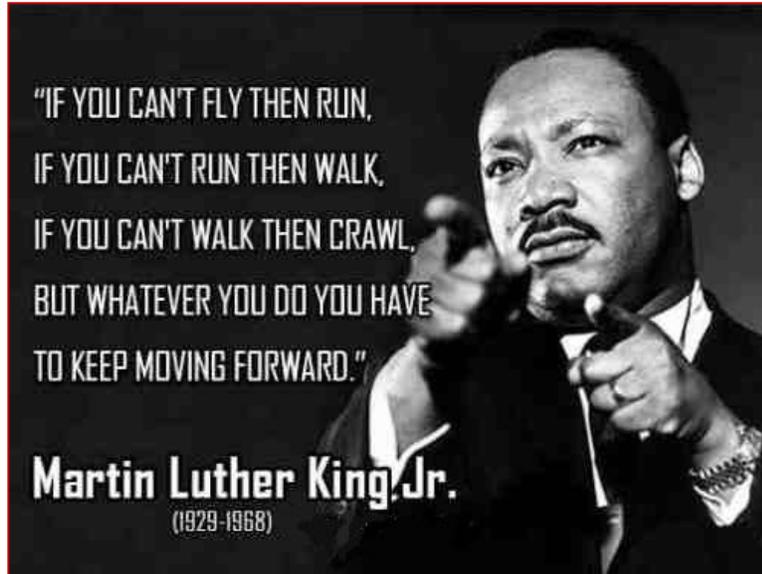
“A Harvest of Righteousness is sown in Peace **for those who make Peace.**” ~ James 3:18

*The 2nd Characteristic: God's Will is always **Patient***

① God's Will is always **Patient** (reflected in column #2 in the example-charts on pages 70-72), making your actions Purpose-fully conscious as opposed to merely emotionally reactionary ("Be Alert; I have already told you everything ... And what I say to you I say to everyone: **Keep Awake.**" ~ Jesus in Mark 13:23+37) ... The Way encourages us to pro-actively participate in life by making choices and then *consciously* performing them. Our ego-based personality, on the other hand, tempts us to retreat and hide from all such bold, intimate decisions ("The ones on rock are those who ... have no root; believing only mentally and falling away [from the Word] in times of testing ... But as for those in the Good Soil, these are the ones who, when they Hear the Word, they hold it fast in an honest and Good Heart, **and then bear Fruit with patient endurance.**" ~ Jesus in Luke 8:13+15) ... This latter "small self" encourages us to believe either that we have no choice at all or that we should wait to choose. Harmonious options, on the other hand, are always active – never passive ("But those who look into the Perfect Law - the Law of Liberty - and persevere, being not mere hearers who forget but **doers who act**, they will be **blessed in their Doing.**" ~ James 1:25). As such, truly divine Patience is always applicative – never analytical ...



Clarifications: First of all, while divine Patience is clearly active, it is not to be confused with choices that are “impulsive” or “rushed.” It is not the traditional “patience” that encourages us to wait for a “better time” to act or prepare for a “more important alternative” in the future. True Patience, rather, encourages us to do in each moment what is already on hand to do (“Be Ready for every Good Work” ~ Titus 3:1) ...



Of course, “doing what there is to do” does not mean *reacting* to what happens to us -- reacting is not choosing. Patient actions are not only thought and felt – they are consciously **decided**, in that they are thought-through before they are actualized and are focused upon during their actualization (“Everyone then who hears these words **and** acts on them will be like a wise man who built his House on stone.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 7:24) ... The ego reacts with self-centered sinning while the Soul always pauses long enough to **choose to Do Good** despite those lusts and fears (“Consider yourselves dead to sin and Alive to God.” ~ Romans 6:10-11) ...



Finally, the activeness of divine Patience has nothing to do with being merely “productive” or “industrious” or “busy”; with these labels implying that our efforts must be judged “acceptable” by others to be valid (“It is the same with the rich; in the midst of a busy life, they will wither away.” ~ James 1:11) ... In actuality, quite the opposite is true, as our actions are Right (i.e. in Harmony with God’s Will) or “wrong” (i.e. discordant with that Will) irrespective of their externally judged effects (“You are servants of whomever you serve; either of sin, which leads to death, or of Giving, which leads to Righteousness.” ~ Romans 6:16 & “Whatever does not proceed from Faith is sin.” ~ Romans 14:23) ... In fact, it is integral to our lives that we act lovingly -- *especially* when judged incorrectly by others (“When reviled, we Bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we speak kindly.” ~ 1 Corinthians 4:12-13) ...



SYNOPSIS: Patient actions are pro-active (i.e. Purpose-fully chosen) ... They are consciously enacted, grounded in the present moment, and relaxed in their fulfillment.

DETERMINING FACTOR: During decision-making, ask your Self -- “Is this particular option tempting me to remain passive or does it encourage me to act? Is it being made attentively & consciously or is it emotionally reactive?”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

“Do you not say ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you and see how *the fields are even now already ripe* for harvesting.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 4:35)

“It is not for you to know the times or the periods that the Father has set by His own Authority.” ~ Acts 1:7 [i.e. Just Do It!]



“I do not shrink from doing *anything* Help-full ...” ~ Acts 20:20

“Or do you despise the riches of His Kindness and His *forbearance* and His *Patience*? Do you not realize that [such things] are meant to lead you to return to His Way?” ~ Romans 2:4

“*Now more than ever*, make use of your present condition.” ~ 1 Corinthians 7:21-22

“I stay ... because a door for effective Work has opened to Me ...” ~ 1 Corinthians 16:9

“If we are being afflicted, it is for ... consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for ... peace, which you experience when you *patiently endure* the same sufferings that we are also suffering.” ~ 2 Corinthians 1:6

“*Whenever we have an opportunity*, let us *Work for the Good of all*.” ~ Galatians 6:10

“Observe my teaching, my conduct, my Purpose, my Faith, my *patience*, my Love, my *steadfastness* ...” ~ 2 Timothy 3:10

“Proclaim the Message; be *persistent* regardless of whether the time is favorable or unfavorable ... Encourage others *with the utmost patience*.” ~ 2 Timothy 4:2

“Be temperate ... prudent and sound in Faith, with Love and endurance.” ~ Titus 2:2

*“[Be] imitators of those who, **through Faith and Patience**, inherit the promises.” ~ Hebrews 6:12*

*“You know that the testing of your **Faith produces endurance**; and **let endurance have its full effect**, so that you may be mature and complete ...”
~ James 1:3-4*

*“**Be patient**, therefore ... [as] the farmer who waits for the precious crop from the earth; **tending it** until it receives both the early and the late rains.”
~ James 5:7*

*“You must also be patient. **Strengthen your Hearts**, for the Lord is at hand.” ~ James 5:8*



*“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some think of slowness, but rather is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance ... Therefore, ... strive to **be found by Him at peace ... and regard the patience of our Lord as Salvation.**” ~ 2 Peter 3:9+14-15*

*The 3rd Characteristic: God's Will is always **Generous***

① God's Will is always **Generous** (reflected in column #3 in the example-charts on pages 70-72). The "True Path" is selfless and serving of others, while "sinful" action, on the other hand, is self-focused and strives to best serves one's own interests. Right Action gives while "wrong action" takes away. God's Will desires for us to create by furthering Love, rather than destroy by enhancing fear. Indeed, when it gets right down to it, Divine Generosity is the cheerful giving (#1 below) of more than is expected (#2 below), in ways other than desired (#3 below), with no motivation for personal benefit (#4 below), for those judged "least deserving" (#5 below) ("When you have Done all that you should Do, say 'We are servants and have Done only what ought to have been Done'" ~ Jesus in Luke 17:10) ...

(#1) "Each of you must Give as you have made up your mind to Give, not reluctantly or under any compulsion, for **God loves a cheerful Giver.**" ~ 2 Corinthians 9:7

(#2) "Woe to you ... for you tithe mint, dill and cumin, and yet have neglected *the weightier matters of the Law: Justice and Mercy and Faith.*" ~ Jesus in Matthew 23:23

(#3) "If you have bitter envy *or selfish ambitions* in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the Truth. Such wisdom does not come from Above, but is earthly and unspiritual ..." ~ James 3:14-15

(#4) "**One sows and another reaps.**" ~ Jesus in John 4:37

(#5) "Love your enemies and **Give expecting nothing in return.** Your reward will be great, and you will be Children of the Most High ..." ~ Jesus in Luke 6:35-36



Clarifications: Initially, real Generosity is not to be confused with “charity” or mere “tithing.” True divine Giving is *intimate*; something that the mere donation of money cannot ever engender (“So give for alms those things that are within you; and see, everything will be made clean for you.” ~ Jesus in Luke 11:41) ... As such, it is wise to refrain from merely “giving” of things and instead give of our time (“From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded.” ~ Jesus in Luke 12:48), our service (“Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the Law of Christ.” ~ Galatians 6:2), and our Selves (“Each [person] has a particular Gift from God, one having one kind and another, a different kind.” ~ 1 Corinthians 7:7 & “We have Gifts that differ according to the Grace given us [at birth].” ~ Romans 12:8) ...



The most power-full way to do anything meaning-fully is to do it anonymously and to do it “for free” (“So whenever you Give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do so that they may be praised by others ... But when you Give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is Doing.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 6:2-3) ... Simply stated, God’s Will (i.e. your Life-Purpose) is found wherever your most power-full giving meets your environment’s most pressing needs ...

Likewise, divine Generosity does not always mean “help” or even “assistance.” Yes, true giving must be done with the sincere *belief* that the receiving party’s personal way will be enhanced by the giving act (“Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks. Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 18:7), and yet whether or not Peace actually ensues is essentially irrelevant. Though the outcome means nothing, the intention of the giver must be pure – and means everything. As an example, you can “help” another commit suicide, and yet this is clearly not a *service* to them (“When you come together, [Know that every person] has a hymn or a Lesson or a revelation or an interpretation. Let all things be Done for building up.” ~ 1 Corinthians 14:26). Similarly, it is arrogant to “know” what is best for another – just as it is ultimately counterproductive to attempt to “rescue” them (“Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, for you are setting your mind not on Divine things but on human things.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 16:23). Instead, we are simply to be generous towards others without any hopes or expectations whatsoever (“I do not condemn anyone who hears my word and yet does not keep them; for I came not to condemn the world, but to offer it Salvation.” ~ Jesus in John 12:47)...



Finally, true Giving need not be an action that is “large” or “powerful” or “great” or even “effective.” When your intentions are selfless, the “smallest” of actions have the most Power-full results (“This poor widow has put in more than all of them, for they have contributed from their abundance, while she out of her poverty has Given all she had.” ~ Jesus in Luke 21:3-4) ... Living in a society that encourages us to fear one another and in bodies that are constantly worrying whether a stranger is “friend or foe”, it is indeed power-full Right Action to simply be generous of your Self – to simply give courageously of your Love (“There is no fear in Love, but rather perfect Love casts out fear ...” ~ 1 John 4:18) ...

It is helpful to remember (and then thereafter to re-Member) that we are all brothers and sisters of one another; that all man-made nationalities and categories and creeds and titles (including “enemy” and “friend”) are *not* of God (“There is one body and one Spirit ... one God and one Father of all; Who is above all and through all and within all.” ~ Ephesians 4:4-6) – and then it is important for us all to go forth and act accordingly ...



SYNOPSIS: Generous Actions are Kind to others ... They are selflessly giving, intimate in completion & self-sacrificial in intention.

DETERMINING FACTOR: During decision-making, ask your Self -- “Is this particular option a self-centered or a selfless one? Am I engaging this Choice to obtain a benefit therefrom for myself or rather to Serve another?”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

“Store up Treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust consume, and where thieves cannot break in to steal. For where your Treasure is, there your Heart will be also.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 6:20-21)

“Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and *servant of all*.” ~ Jesus Christ (Mark 9:35)

“Whoever wishes to be great among you *must be a servant*, and whoever wishes to be first among you must *become as a slave for all*. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to Serve, and *to Give his entire life* as a ransom for many.” ~ Jesus Christ (Mark 10:43-45)

“Do not work for the food that perishes, but rather for the food that endures for eternal Life ...” ~ Jesus Christ (John 6:27)

“Those who love their own life will lose that Life, and those who sacrifice their own life in this world will have Life for Eternity.”
~ Jesus Christ (John 12:25)

“***Do not give as the world gives.***” ~ Jesus Christ (paraphrased in John 14:27)

“***It is more blessed to Give than to receive.***” ~ Jesus Christ (quoted in Acts 20:35)

“***Extend hospitality to all strangers.***” ~ Romans 12:13

“Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor with their own hands, so as to have something to ***share with the needy.***” ~ Ephesians 4:28

“Whatever your task, put yourselves into it ***as if doing it for the Lord*** and not your masters.” ~ Colossians 3:23

“They are to Do Good, to ***be rich in Good Works***; generous and ready to share ... so that they may take hold of the Life that really is Life.” ~ 1 Timothy 6:18-19

“They profess to Know God, but they deny Him by their actions ... They are unfit ***for any Good Work.***” ~ Titus 1:16

“Ground that drinks up the rain falling on it and that then produces a crop ***useful to those for whom it was cultivated,*** receives a blessing from the Lord.” ~ Hebrews 6:7

“***Every generous Act of Giving,*** with every perfect Gift, ***is from Above,*** coming down from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” ~ James 1:17



“Religion that is pure, and undefiled before God the Father, is this: to Care for orphans and widows ... and to ***keep oneself unstained by the world.***”

~ James 1:27

“Do not Love the world or the things of the world. *The Love of the Father is not in those who Love the world;* for all that is in the world - the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches - comes not from the Father but from the world.”

~ 1 John 2:15-16

*The 4th Characteristic: God's Will is always **Kind***

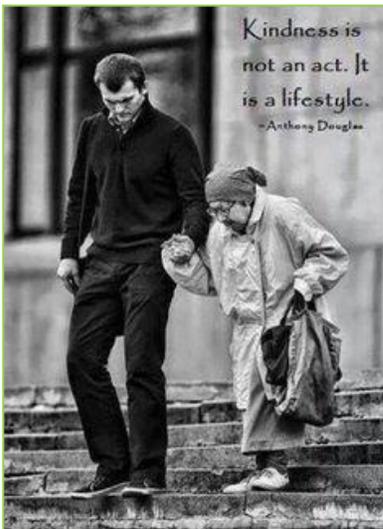
④ God's Will is always **Kind** (reflected in column #4 in the example-charts on pages 70-72), and real Kindness cannot exist without *choosing* to be Kind. Truth does not only serve to free our lives from the prison of ignorance, it also liberates us from behaviors that shackle the free will necessary to choose real Kindness (remember: "The Truth will make You Free." ~ Jesus in John 8:32) ... In essence, any act done out of obligation cannot be simultaneously done out of Love, and thus cannot reflect God's Will for your life. This is not to say that you should ignore all current promises and obligations. Indeed, we should always choose to honor the commitments we make to others. And yet, any action that is *based in* duty, obligation, responsibility, commitment &/or a conforming to societal expectations (i.e. what is "acceptable" or "normal") cannot simultaneously be in harmony with your Life Mission ("I preferred to do nothing without your consent, that your Good Deed might be voluntary and not something forced." ~ Philemon 1:14 & "Though I am Free with respect to everyone, I have made myself a servant of all ..." ~ 1 Corinthians 9:19) ...

In addition, when we are free, we inherently open ourSelves to being grateful for our lives as they already are ("Rejoice always and pray without ceasing; Give thanks in all circumstances - for this is the Will of God." ~ 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) ... The miracle that is our conscious, human life is more than enough for anyone to be thankful. For the truly Kind person, the man or woman who is free to choose this pure Gratitude, the critical question in any moment becomes not "How is Life treating me?", but rather "How am I treating Life?" ("I had heard of [God] by the hearing of my ear, but now my eye Sees [Him]" ~ Job 42:5) ... Indeed, in such moments we awaken to the truth that life is always treating us well, and that Contentment becomes tangible for us when we begin to actualize our innate abundance via a professed thankfulness for what we already have – as opposed to wishing for what we do not ("Already you have all you desire. Already you are Wealthy." ~ 1 Corinthians 4:8) ...



For those interested in experiencing such raw Kindness, the following are some “express lanes to Salvation” – actions that efficiently allow anyone selflessly engaging them to experience God’s Will firsthand:

°Be Kind to “strangers” you encounter by making eye contact, smiling, complimenting them &/or offering them assistance ... (“Remember to show hospitality to all strangers, for some have thereby entertained angels unawares” ~ Hebrews 13:2)



°Be Kind to the elderly in your neighborhood by visiting retirement homes and listening to those who live there ... (“Let your gentleness be known to everyone.” ~ Philippians 4:5)

°Be Kind to the downtrodden in your community (i.e. the poor, the homeless, the ill, and the imprisoned) by visiting shelters, hospitals &/or prisons to listen and to care for those residing there ... (“For I was hungry and you gave me food ... I was ill and you Cared for me, I was in prison and you visited me ... Just as you Do these things for the least of my brothers, so also you Do them for me.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 25:35-36+40)



°Be Kind to all children in your life by getting involved with local youth leagues, volunteering for a Big Brother/Big Sister program, or spending regular Quality-Time with your own kids ... (“Whosoever welcomes one child in my name welcomes me.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 18:5)



°Be Kind to the animals by going to your local animal shelter and being loving to those animals next in line for euthanasia ... (“Holy is the Lord of Hosts. Everything on the earth is full of His Glory.” ~ Isaiah 6:3 & “In His hand is the Life of every living thing ...” ~ Job 12:10 & “Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God’s Sight.” ~ Jesus in Luke 12:6)

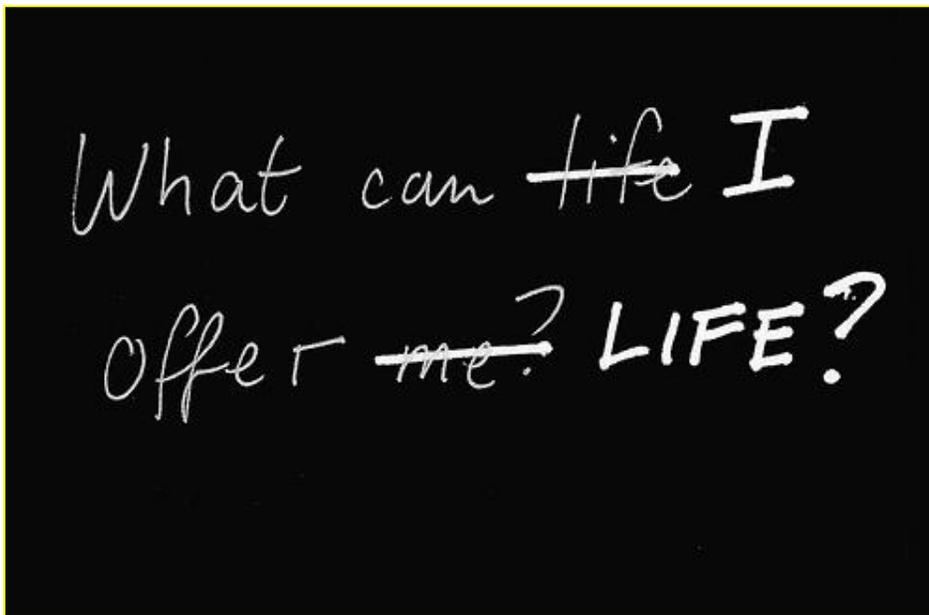


Clarifications: First of all, real “Freedom” (a necessary foundation for any act of real Kindness) is not to be confused with being “selfish” or “inconsiderate” (“All things are lawful, but not all things build up. Do not seek your own advantage, but rather that of the other.” ~ 1 Corinthians 10:23-24) ... Divine Freedom is not the right to do whatever we wish, but rather the right to serve others, in any and all ways that harmonize with Who we truly ARE (“For you were called to Freedom, only do not use your Freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through Love become servants of one another.” ~ Galatians 5:13) ... Indeed, it means nothing to be “free” if that liberty is used callously or in ways that cause harm (“Take care that your Liberty does not become a stumbling block to the weak.” ~ 1 Corinthians 8:9) ...



Similarly, being Kind does not exempt us from the benefits of being Self-Disciplined. It merely encourages us to be *voluntarily* disciplined as opposed to “doing right” because we “should” do so or appear so (“God’s Kindness is meant to lead [us] to repentance ... When [those] who do not possess the Law [still] Do instinctively what the Law requires, they ... show that what the Law requires is written on their Hearts ...” ~ Romans 2:4+14-15) ...

Finally, the gratitude embodied by true Self-Discipline is not ever “masochistic.” Choosing to be thank-full for life’s challenges does not mandate that you wish for *more* pain in your life – or even less pleasure. Instead it simply means that you choose to appreciate the ***opportunities that are always present*** within the difficulties you happen to encounter (“**Nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.**” ~ Romans 14:14) ... Regardless of whatever you do, pain will find its way into your life. Frustration & disappointment & conflict & dis-ease are always on their way in one form or another, and it is therefore never necessary for us to manifest or desire their premature arrival. The question, then, is not whether pain is on its way or not, but rather what we will choose to do with our discomforts when it does arrive. It is possible (indeed, it is quite preferable) to choose to See all difficulties, discomforts, and pains as **challenges** as opposed to “catastrophes” or “tragedies” (“**Endure everything with patience, while Joy-fully Giving Thanks to the Father.**” ~ Colossians 1:11-12) ... In short, instead of selfishly complaining about life’s pain-full times, choose to use those moments to be power-fully kind to others instead (“**To the pure, all things are pure.**” ~ Titus 1:15) ...



SYNOPSIS: Actions that are truly Kind are unfettered by external influences or personal desires ... They are free, thank-full, and fully voluntary.

DETERMINING FACTOR: During decision-making, ask your Self -- “Is this particular option duty-based or can it be freely made? Is it motivated by gratitude for my life or does it tempt me to yearn for “something better”?”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

“**Do not judge by appearances**, but evaluate with sound discernment.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 7:24)

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are Children of God. For we did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but **we have received a Spirit of Adoption.**” ~ Romans 8:14-15

“If I **partake with thankfulness**, how can I be denounced because of that for which I give thanks?” ~ 1 Corinthians 10:30

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and **where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Freedom.**” ~ 2 Corinthians 3:17

“For I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities ... for whenever [my flesh is] weak, then I [can **choose to be Strong.**” ~ 2 Corinthians 12:10

“But now that Faith has come, **we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.**” ~ Galatians 3:25

“Just as at that time the child who was born according to the flesh persecuted the child who was born of the Spirit, **so it is now** also ... **For freedom Christ has set us free.** Stand firm, therefore, and **submit never again** to a yoke of slavery.” ~ Galatians 4:29+5:1

“Whatever is True, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable; if there is any excellence and **if there is anything [in your lives] worthy of praise, think on these things.**” ~ Philippians 4:8

“There is great gain in godliness combined with Contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will **be Content** with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless desires” ~ 1 Timothy 6:6-8

“**Pursue Peace with everyone**” ~ Hebrews 12:14

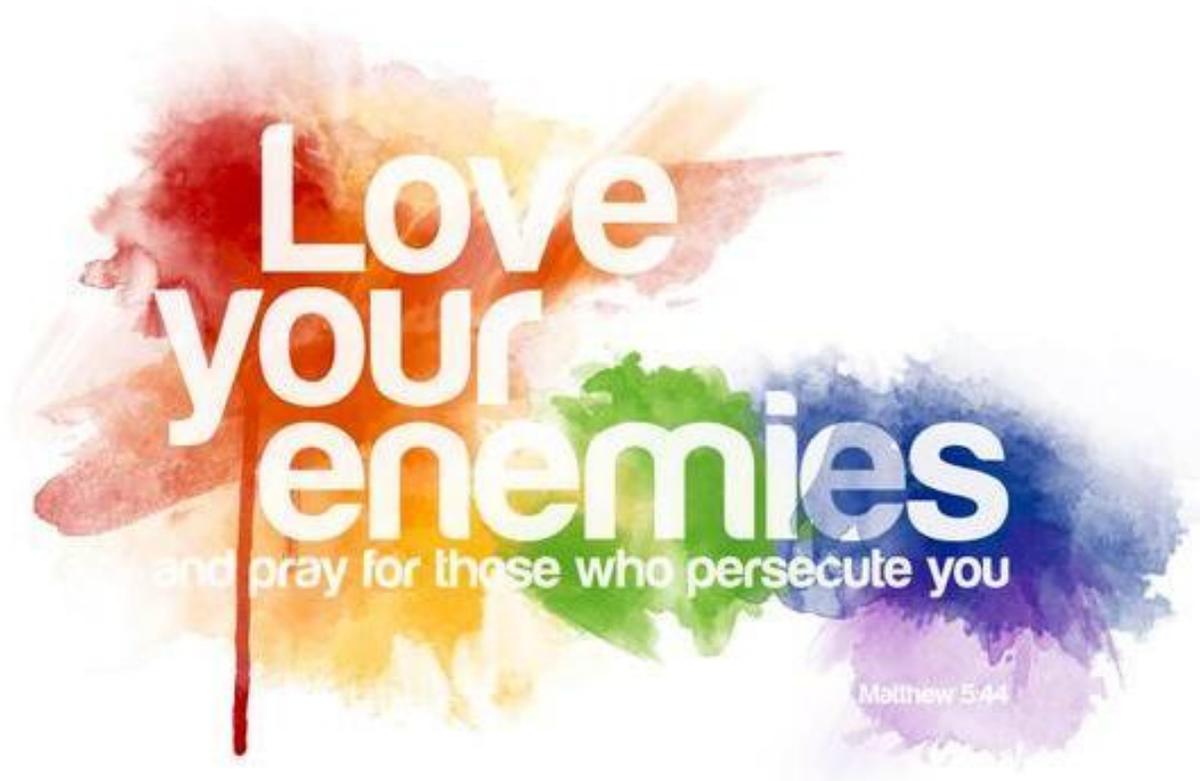
“Since we have received a Kingdom that cannot be shaken [see Luke 17:20-21], let us **Give Thanks.**” ~ Hebrews 12:28

“As Servants of God, **live as Free people**, yet do not use your Freedom as a pretext for evil. **Honor everyone.**” ~ 1 Peter 2:16-17



*The 5th Characteristic:
God's Will is always **Loving***

① God's Will is always **Loving** (reflected in column #5 in the example-charts on pages 70-72). Actions in harmony with The Way of God's Will always further Love by being Caring – always intending to cause no harm to others while simultaneously desiring the lessening of their burdens and the enhancement of their Joy (“For the whole Law is summed up in one Commandment: You shall Love your neighbor as yourself.” ~ Galatians 5:14) ... Fear-based actions, on the other hand, are self-centered; intending to further one's own survival -- often both producing pain and enhancing fear in others (“But even if you do suffer from Doing what is Right, you are still Blessed. Do not fear what others fear, and do not be intimidated.” ~ 1 Peter 3:14) ... Indeed, we have not been called to a life of ease & comfort & pleasure, but rather to a Life of sacrifice & forgiveness & service – a Life of LOVE (“Do not strive against an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also ... Love your enemies so that you may become Children of your Father in Heaven.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 5:39+44-45) ...



Clarifications: First & foremost, being truly Loving is not to be confused with “pacifism.” Kindness is not effectuated by “giving in” to another’s wishes, but rather by actively giving to them (often *regardless* of what their wishes might be). Capitulation to another’s desires often entrenches their dysfunctional behaviors, and this is not truly Caring, nor is it truly Compassionate (“Love does no wrong to another; therefore, Love is the fulfillment of the Law.” ~ Romans 13:10) ... To be truly Loving to another, we must often be strong enough to do the *Right Act*, as opposed to the one that is wished for – and we must often do so even when our own friends might be unintentionally angered by the same (“For those who want to save their own life will lose it, and those who Give their Life for the Way will Find Life.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 16:25) ... Have faith in others’ strength of character. Avoid attempting to “help” them, and simply Love them instead (“Endure when you Do Right and suffer for it ... For to this you have been Called.” ~ 1 Peter 2:20-21) ...

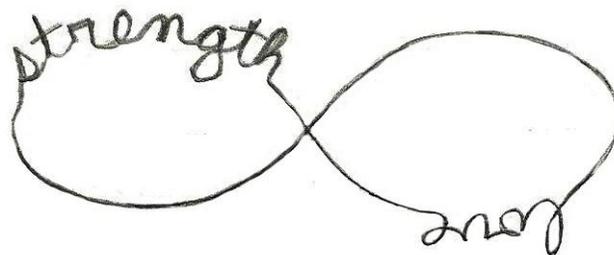


*There will be times when your LOVE is rejected or ridiculed or reviled; times when others are not prepared to either accept or appreciate your acts of Caring & Kindness ... And yet within each of these moments, there always remains one valid resolution:
... LOVE Anyway!*

Additionally, being truly “Care-full” cannot be accurately labeled as being “weak.” Choosing to be Kind to one’s enemies requires the greatest Strength imaginable (“What good is it to Love only those who Love you?” ~ Jesus in Matthew 5:46) ... Indeed, it is often uncomfortable -- even downright frightening -- to do so. Every unkind behavior inherently seeks a fear-full response. Divine Kindness (i.e. Caring for another completely without fear -- see 1 John 4:18) is always a Power-full response to any unkindness -- and therefore by nature never “weak” at all (“See that no one repays evil for evil, but rather always seek to Do Good to one another and to all ...” ~ 1 Thessalonians 5:15) ...



Finally, loving acts need neither be received nor appreciated to be potent. The effectiveness of any action rests in the nature of its Giving, not the manner of its reception (“This is my Commandment, that you Love one another as I have Loved you.” ~ Jesus in John 15:12) ... Even if an intended receiver rejects a Kindness, others will witness that compassionate deed and be moved accordingly (“Show by your Good Life that your works are done with gentleness born of Wisdom.” ~ James 3:13) ... And, the moment that our Kindness is given again after an initial rejection, the recipient thereof will feel your Compassion on the deepest, most Power-full level possible (“Let us consider how to encourage one another towards Love and Good Deeds ...” ~ Hebrews 10:24) ...



SYNOPSIS: Loving actions are innately gentle; always intending to relieve others' burdens ... They are Caring, Healing and Compassionate.

DETERMINING FACTOR: During decision-making, ask your Self --
“Does this particular option cause the least harm to others? Is it intended to quench or avoid my personal fears, or is it designed to relieve another’s burdens?”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

“Should you not have had Mercy on your fellow slave, as I had Mercy on you?” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:33)

“You shall Love the Lord your God with all your Heart ... You shall Love your neighbor as your Self. There is no other Commandment greater than these.” ~ Jesus Christ (Mark 12:30-31)

“No one has greater Love than this: to lay down one’s Life for another.”
~ Jesus Christ (John 15:13)

“**Let Love be genuine ... Love one another** with mutual affection” ~
Romans 12:9-10

“**Whoever Loves another has fulfilled the Law.**” ~ Romans 13:8

“**Let all that you do be Done in Love.**” ~ 1 Corinthians 16:14

“Be imitators of God, as beloved Children, and **Live in Love**, as Christ Loved us and gave himself up for us” ~ Ephesians 5:1-2

“I want their Hearts to **be encouraged and united in Love**, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and the knowledge of God’s Mystery ...” ~ Colossians 2:2-3

“Above all, **clothe yourselves in Love**, which unites everything in perfect Harmony.” ~ Colossians 3:14

“**Let your speech always be gracious**, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” ~ Colossians 4:6

“**Have unity of Spirit and Love for one another**; a tender Heart and a humble mind.” ~ 1 Peter 3:8

“**Do not repay evil for evil** or abuse for abuse; on the contrary, repay them with a Blessing. **It is for this that You were Called.**” ~ 1 Peter 3:9

“We know Love by this: that he laid down his life for us - and we ought to lay down our Lives for one another.” ~ 1 John 3:16

“The Commandment we have from Him is this: **those who Love God must Love their brothers and sisters** also.” ~ 1 John 4:21

“And **this is Love ... You must walk in It.**” ~ 2 John 1:6

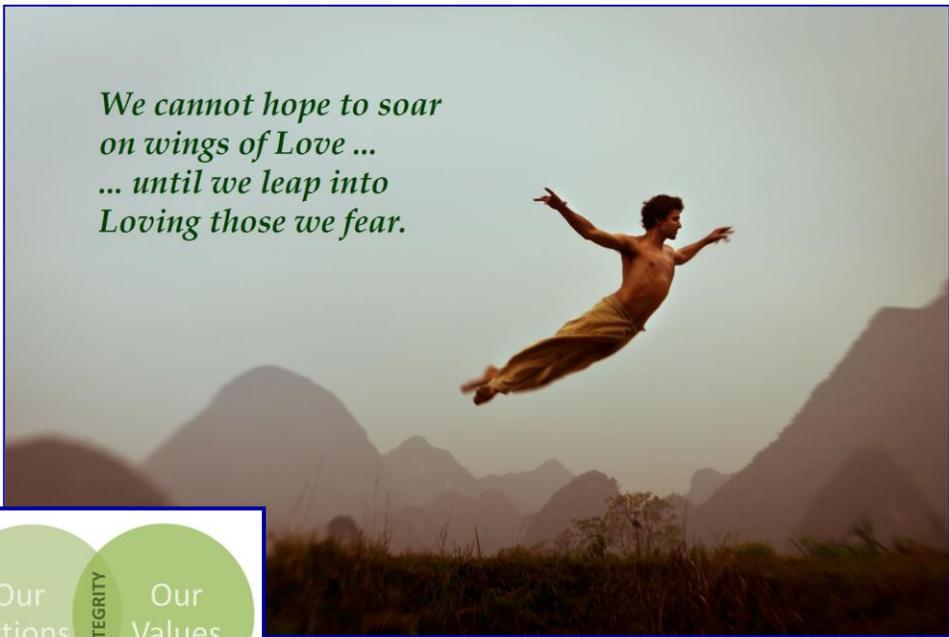
*The 6th Characteristic: God's Will is always **Self-Disciplined***

① God's Will is always **Self-Disciplined** (reflected in column #6 in the example-charts on pages 70-72). To be truly disciplined, the True Self always manifests bravery in the face of fear ("Do not fear, only Believe ..." ~ Jesus in Mark 5:36) ... It can be said that the option most feared is the option most in need of actualization; both to allow for the most personal growth back towards a reunion with what many call "God" (via the freeing of one's Soul from its ego-mind's fears), as well as to serve others more Power-fully ("Rekindle the Gift of God that is within you ... For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a Spirit of Power and of Love" ~ 2 Timothy 1:6-7) ... Remember that most of the major revelations of the Bible begin with the words "Be not afraid" (e.g. "Take heart ... Do not be afraid." ~ Jesus in Mark 6:50, and also John 14:27, Mark 6:50, Matthew 6:34, Luke 12:22-26 et al) ... Self-Discipline has us behaving courageously with others ("We have such a Hope, we act with great boldness." ~ 2 Corinthians 3:12) and worshiping God with courage as well ("Present yourself to God as one approved by Him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed" ~ 2 Timothy 2:15 & "Let us therefore approach the Throne with boldness, so that we may receive Mercy and find grace to help in time of need." ~ Hebrews 4:16) ... Indeed, Jesus himself displayed immense discipline during his own ministry; a courage exhibited in the hopes that we too would adopt The Way of Love by releasing the primal fears that tempt us to behave selfishly ("He himself shared the same things, so that through death he might free those who all their lives have been held in slavery by the fear of death." ~ Hebrews 2:14-15 & "There is no fear in Love, but **perfect Love casts out all fear**; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in Love." ~ 1 John 4:18) ...

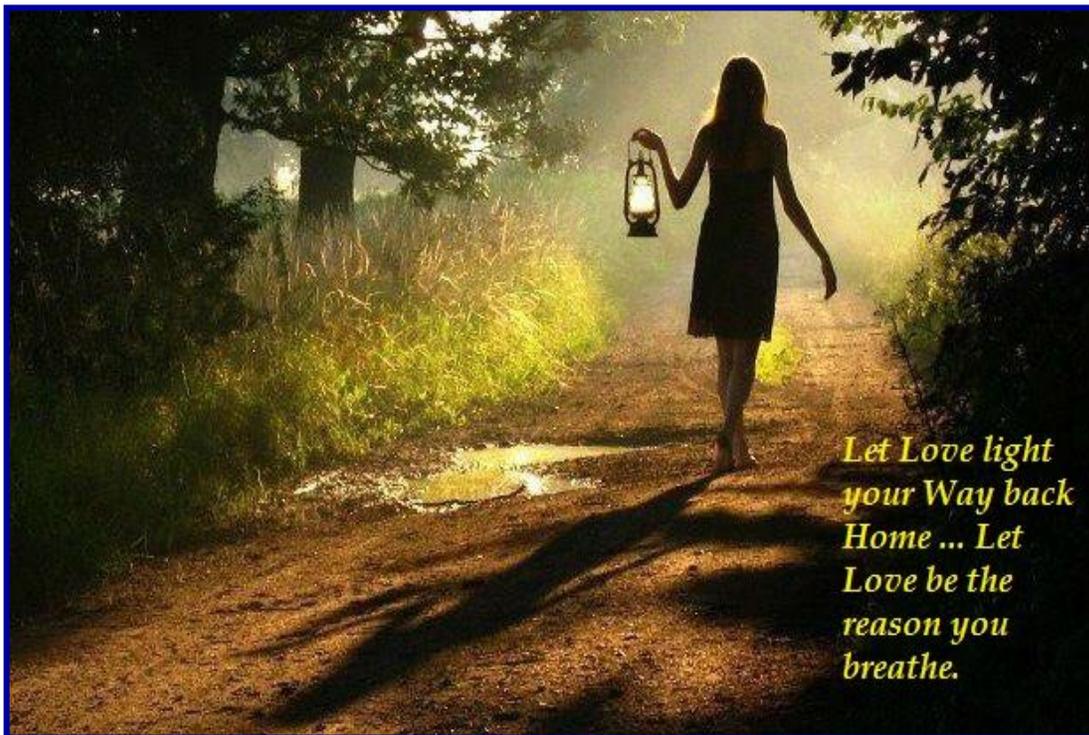


One off-shoot of this characteristic is that Self-Disciplined actions, due to the courage required to effectuate them in the face of so many temptations not to do so, tend to actively “test” your Life Path. These “tests” often take the form of actions that are unconventional; choices that fly in the face of social expectations &/or societal norms (“When there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law.” ~ Hebrews 7:12) ... Society wants us to be “safe”, to find comfort, to engage in activities that are pleasurable, and to run from pain. In short, it encourages us to live selfishly (“We must obey God rather than any human authority.” ~ Acts 5:29). Therefore, because God’s Will encourages us to openly & self-sacrificially Give to others -- often with little or no personal benefit in return, truly Loving actions are often seen by many as the “least respected”, “least honored” &/or “least powerful” ones available (“Do not sit at the place of honor ... Go [instead] and sit at the lowest place ... For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” ~ Jesus in Luke 14:8-11) ... As a consequence, these choices often require us to persevere into regions that conventional wisdom deems to be “detrimental”, “hopeless”, or “dangerous” (“By your endurance you will gain your Souls.” ~ Jesus in Luke 21:19) ...

Self-Disciplined actions therefore dismiss all fears of “failure”, all yearnings for external acceptance, and all cravings for “power”; replacing these with alternatives that bravely engage options that are less popular or less applauded (“For rules are not a terror to Good conduct, but only to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of human authority? Then Do what is Good ...” ~ Romans 13:3-4) ... It means nothing to be Self-Disciplined if we use that resolve to merely conform to societal norms (“Do not become slaves of human masters. In whatever condition you were Called, there remain with God.” ~ 1 Corinthians 7:23-24) ...

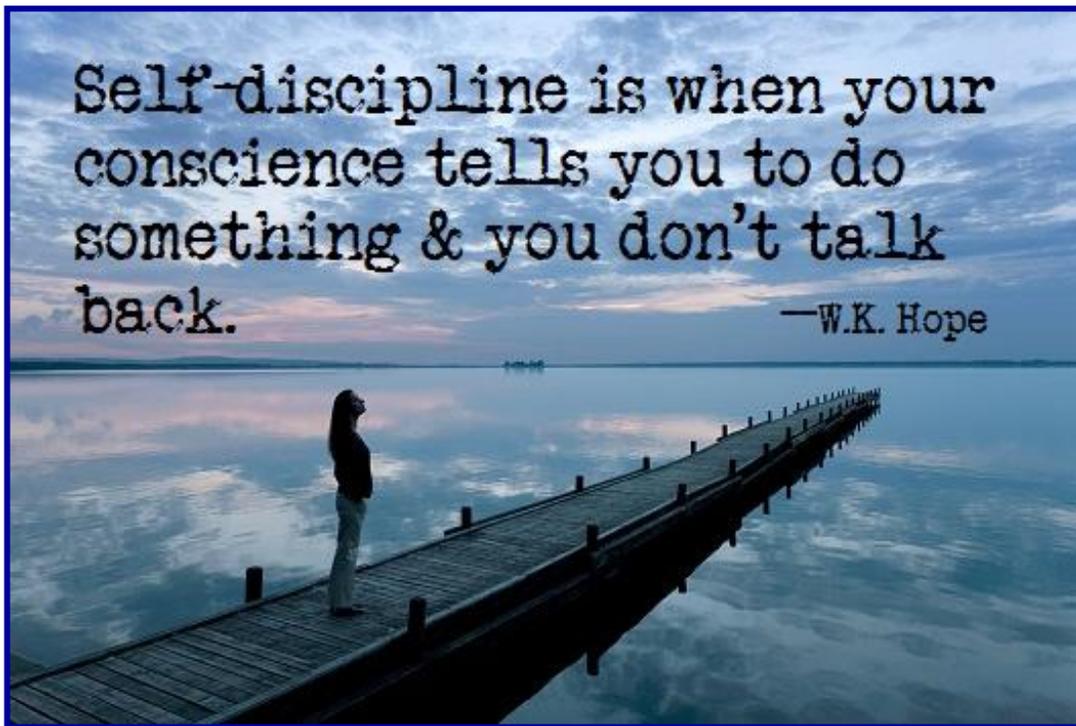


Clarifications: First off, the stalwart courage of Self-Discipline is not to be confused with recklessness -- sometimes referred to as “bravery” (“Do not put the Lord your God to the test.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 4:7) ... It is not necessary to behave with a lack of caution to exhibit real Courage. Indeed, true bravery exists in relation to *what kind* of action is taken, and not necessarily *how* that action is effectuated (“Not everyone who says to me ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only those who **Do the Will of the Father** in Heaven.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 7:21 & “Whoever **Does the Will of God** is my brother and sister and Mother.” ~ Jesus in Mark 3:34-35) ... Yes, we must *do* the Will of the Father, and yet that Will is not related to any particular deeds, but rather a specific *intention* underlying the same – the intention of selfless Love ...



Similarly, Self-Discipline is not to be confused with “stubbornness.” Just because the most courageous action is identified as such in no way “locks one in” to sticking with that particular course of action – especially when doing so is brining others “bad fruit” (“For who knows what is truly human except the Spirit within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God’s except the Spirit of God” ~ 1 Corinthians 2:11) ... In any situation, when new evidence presents itself (e.g. when an option proves to be either “too easy” or pain-inducing or simply ineffective), we are always free to set it aside and choose anew ...

Finally, the unconventionality of divine Self-Discipline in no way requires us to be disrespectful or “rebellious” (“Give to the Emperor what is the Emperor’s, and to God what is God’s.” ~ Jesus in Mark 12:17) ... What is resisted, persists, and what is fought always defends itself and ultimately grows stronger. Thus, as Christians you are not to discipline others or to direct them, but rather you are to **Love them** with true *Self-Discipline*; meaning with deeds that are in alignment with your caring sense of Dignity more than your selfish summons to sensory desires (“We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ... as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many Wealthy; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.” ~ 2 Corinthians 6:8-10) ...



SYNOPSIS: Self-Disciplined actions display courage during life’s more fear-filled moments ... They are fear-facing, conventionality-challenging, and Respect-fulfilling.

DETERMINING FACTOR: During decision-making, ask your Self -- “When I envision my current alternatives, which one do I fear the most? Is my current choice motivated by personal fear, or is it intended to courageously Love others despite any angst or concerns?”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

“Who are our adversaries? Let them confront us. It is the Holy Spirit who guides us; who will declare us unworthy? *All* of our persecutors and tempters wear out like a garment” ~ Isaiah 50:8-10

“Blessed are those who are persecuted *for righteousness’ sake*, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:10)

“*Do not let your Hearts be troubled*, and do not let them be afraid.”
~ Jesus Christ (John 14:27)

“In the world you will face persecution. But *take Courage*, I have conquered the world.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 16:33)

“It is *through* many persecutions that we must enter The Kingdom of Heaven.” ~ Acts 14:22

“...*endurance produces Character*, and Character produces Faith, and true Faith does not disappoint us ...” ~ Romans 3:4-5

“Note then both the Kindness and the severity of God: severity towards those who have fallen, but Kindness towards you, *provided you continue in his Kindness* ...” ~ Romans 11:22

“Keep alert, stand firm in your Faith, *be Courageous*, be Strong.”
~ 1 Corinthians 16:13

“So *we do not lose Heart*. Even though our outer nature is wasting away” ~ 2 Corinthians 4:16

“If you are led by the Spirit, you are no longer subject to the Law.”
~ Galatians 5:18

“Let us *run with perseverance* the race that is set before us ...”
~ Hebrews 12:1

“Blessed is anyone who *endures* temptation.” ~ James 1:12

“Be not surprised at the fiery ordeal taking place among you to test you.”
~ 1 Peter 4:12

“Let those suffering in accordance with God’s Will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, *while continuing to Do Good*.” ~ 1 Peter 4:19

“Cast all your anxieties on [God], because He cares for You. *Discipline yourselves*.” ~ 1 Peter 5:7

“And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all Grace ... will restore, support, strengthen and establish You.” ~ 1 Peter 5:10

*The 7th Characteristic: God's Will is always **Gentle***

① God's Will is always **Gentle** (reflected in column #7 in the example-charts on pages 70-72). Initially, it is important to note that in order for us to be truly gentle with others, a deep sense of Humility must be enlivened. The true Child of God remembers that our perceptions of "reality" are always malleable. Therefore, we are to keep an open mind with regards to fresh opinions -- including another's advice &/or criticisms ("Morning by morning we waken - waken our ears to Listen as those who are Taught ... We gave our back to those who strike us ... We do not hide our faces from insult." ~ Isaiah 50:5-6) ... Of course, this doesn't mean that the humble believer always agrees with or adheres to or follows those adverse opinions ("If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater ..." ~ 1 John 5:9). Rather, he or she is simply humble enough to Hear them & Respect them ...



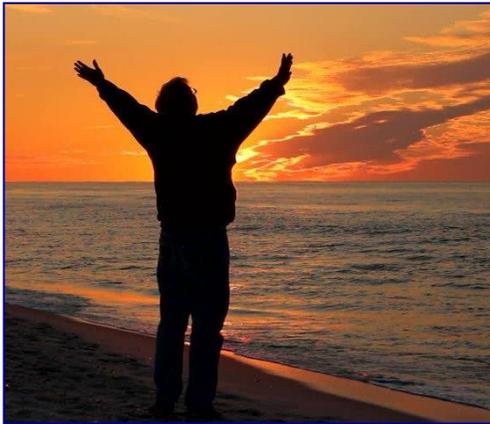
In this way, truly Gentle actions are flexible “ahead of time.” This means that whenever we are engaging a choice, instead of “knowing” that we are “right”, we simply choose to re-*mind* ourselves that, “even though I cannot be certain my choice is the best one, I stride boldly forth anyway; sincerely *intending* to harmonize with the Highest Good of God’s Will. And yet all the while I am ever-ready to alter my course of action if it becomes clear that my original choice is not the most Power-full one or does not serve what is Right & Good & True.” (“We have this Treasure [our Soul’s Light] in clay jars so that it might be made clear that this amazing Power [i.e. The Word: selfless Love] comes from God and does not belong to us.” ~ 2 Corinthians 4:7) ...



In addition, we should also be gentle with the Divine Essence many call “God”, meaning that whenever we are in doubt, it is always effective to openly ask for what many call “Divine Guidance” (“When one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.” ~ 2 Corinthians 3:16) ... This can be accomplished by paying attention to our “gut feelings” when confiding in friends, when evaluating our dreams, when praying attentively, and especially paying attention to our surroundings and the happenstances that come our way (“Devote yourselves to prayer; keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.” ~ Colossians 4:2) ... Purpose-fully make your choices “irrationally” (i.e. intuitively) by following the “hunches” that come therefrom, instead of heeding our ego’s “more rational” alternatives, a very good way to become reacquainted wit God’s Will (“The One who is within is greater than the one who is in the world.” ~ 1 John 4:4) ...



Clarifications: Initially, it is important to understand that the humility of divine Gentleness is not to be confused with humiliation. Right Actions always humbly attempt to relieve another’s burdens, and thus cannot ever cause shame or embarrassment, regardless of their outcomes (“Let your adornment be the inner Self, with the lasting Beauty of a gentle and quiet Spirit.” ~ 1 Peter 3:4) ... Likewise, true Gentleness is not characterized by self-degradation, for real Humility has nothing at all to do with “obedience” to or subservience to another (“Very truly, the one who believes in me will also Do the Works I Do and, in fact, *will Do even greater Works than these ...*” ~ Jesus in John 14:12) ... On the other hand, divinely Gentle actions have everything to do with being courageously true to your True Self (“Clothe yourself with the new Self, created accorded to the likeness of God.” ~ Ephesians 4:24) ...



Additionally, though always openly flexible, truly Humble actions are not at all “wishy-washy” or “inconsequent.” When another asks you for help, your ego may tempt you to believe that you have “more important things to do”, or that the request for assistance is “unworthy” or “counterproductive.” And yet, the humility of divine Gentleness encourages us to choose to **help them anyway** (“Each of us must please our neighbor solely for the good purpose of building up that neighbor.” ~ Romans 15:2) ... As long as we can honestly have faith that our assistance neither causes future pain nor entrenches current discomfort, we engage each & every opportunity to serve, for service isn’t a burden – service is a *privilege*. As such, release all concerns related to an option’s probability of “success”, its practicality of implementation, or its “irrationality” (“Like good stewards of the manifold Grace of God, *serve one another* with whatever Gift each of you has Received.” ~ 1 Peter 4:8) ... Choose instead to **simply say “Yes”** to every request that has the probability of aiding another -- especially if that request is not in your own “best interest” (“Give to everyone who begs of you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 5:42) ... And remember that Christians do not Do Good for another in order to get rewarded; even the reward of changing the other “for the better” (“But when you Give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. And you will be Blessed, *because* they cannot repay you ...” ~ Jesus in Luke 14:13-14) ...

Finally, we are also called to Gentleness whenever we bear witness to the Good News. Indeed, “The Great Commission” is **not** a process of converting others to our own views (“This is the Covenant that I [God] will make [via Jesus] ... *I* will put my laws in their minds and *I* will write them on their Hearts ... And they shall not teach one another or say to each other ‘Know the Lord’” ~ Hebrews 8:10-11 & “You have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others, for in passing judgment on others you condemn yourself ...” ~ Romans 2:1). Rather, real Gentle Witnessing is a life of **showing** The Way to others with our actions (“Let your Light shine before others, so that they may **see** your Good Works ...” ~ Jesus in Matthew 5:16 & Mark 4:21-22) ... St. Francis of Assisi is purported to have said that we should “Testify to the Word of God; *using words only when necessary.*” Thus, we as well are to verbally share our faith **only with those who ask us** to do so (“Always be Ready to support your Way to anyone who demands from you an accounting ... and Do so with gentleness and humility” ~ 1 Peter 3:15) ... Therefore, show others The Way with your actions much more than your words, my Friends. **Show them** that Peace and Happiness are internal choices that transcend mere circumstance. Show them that neither internal temptations nor external pressures can keep us all from choosing to be true to our True Selves -- by openly Loving others with gentle deeds of Forgiveness & Charity (“My Grace is sufficient for you, for my Power is made perfect through temptations of weakness.” ~ 2 Corinthians 12:8-9) ...



SYNOPSIS: Gentle choices are humbly made and performed with deep-seated Humility ... They are open-minded, intuitive, and bold.

DETERMINING FACTOR: During decision-making, ask your Self -- “Am I certain that this particular option’s is right, or am I only faithfully ‘certain’ that it is in harmony with God’s all-Loving Will? Does it require that I inflexibly commit to its completion, or does it allow me to adjust while I engage it?”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

“God opposes the proud and *God gives Grace to the Humble.*” ~ Proverbs 3:34

“*Do not judge others*, so that you may not be judged.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 7:1)

“I thank you, Father because you have hidden these things from the ‘wise’ and the ‘intelligent’ and revealed them instead to infants” ~ Jesus (Matthew 11:25)

“Unless you change and *become like children*, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever becomes Humble like this young child is the greatest in the Kingdom.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:3-4)

“*All who humble themselves will be exalted.*” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 23:12 -- see also Luke 14:8-11 & 18:14)

“My Soul magnifies the Lord ... He has shown His Strength ... He has scattered the proud ... *He has brought down the powerful and lifted up the lowly.*” ~ Luke 1:46-47+51-52

“How can you [truly] believe when you accept glory from one another and do not Seek the Glory that comes from the one who alone is God?” ~ Jesus Christ (John 5:44)

“God has made of one blood *all nations* of men ... **In God we Live and Love and have our Being.**” ~ Acts 17:26-28

“I do not count my Life of any value to myself; only if I may finish my course and the ministry I have received” ~ Acts 20:24

“A person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a [spiritual] matter of the Heart ... Such a person receives praise not from others but from God ... Although everyone lies, **let God be proven True.**” ~ Romans 2:29+3:4

“How beautiful are the feet of those who **bring the Good News.**” ~ Romans 10:15

“Do not think more highly of yourselves than you should, but think rather with sober judgment, each according to the measure of Faith that God has assigned ... **Live in harmony with one another**; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly.” ~ Romans 12:3+16

“God chose what is low and despised in the world ... to reduce to nothing the things that are, *so that no one might boast* in the presence of God ... For neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything; only God who gives the Growth” ~ 1 Corinthians 1:28-29+3:7

“Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should *become humble so that you might become truly Wise.*” ~ 1 Corinthians 3:18

“All of us possess knowledge. *Knowledge puffs up, but only Love builds up.* Anyone who claims to know does not yet have the necessary Knowledge; but anyone who Loves is truly Known.” ~ 1 Corinthians 8:1-2

“The members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are thus treated with greater Respect.” ~ 1 Corinthians 12:22-23

“*You are the Temple of the Living God.*” ~ 2 Corinthians 6:16

“It is not those who commend themselves that are approved, but rather those whom the Lord commends.” ~ 2 Corinthians 10:18

“For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves.” ~ Galatians 6:3

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but *in Humility regard others as better* than yourselves.” ~ Philippians 2:3

“And the Peace of God, *which surpasses all [human] understanding,* will guard your Hearts and your Minds ...” ~ Philippians 4:7

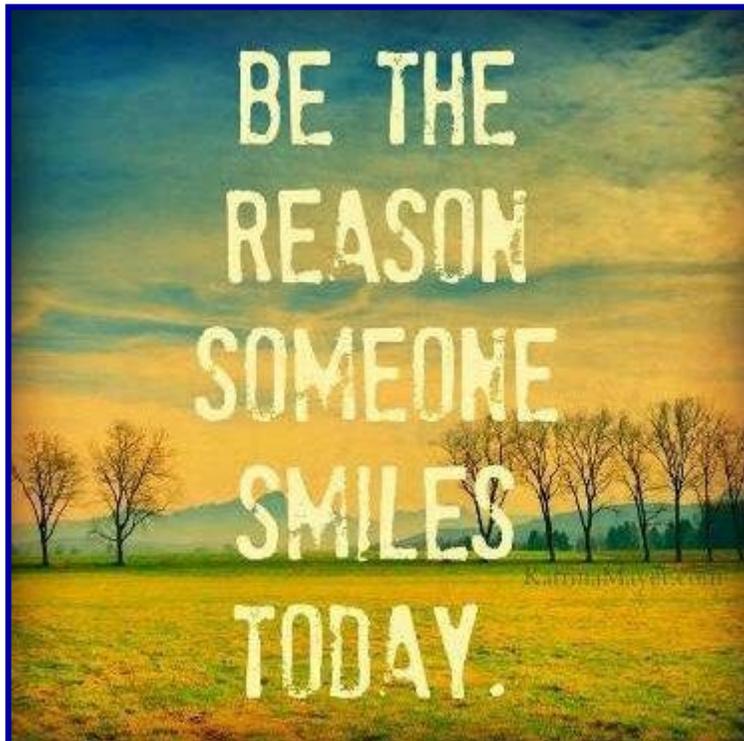
“*Humble yourselves before the Lord,* and He will exalt you.” ~ James 4:10

“And all of you must *clothe yourselves in Humility* in your dealings with one another, for God opposes the proud, but gives Grace to the humble.” ~ 1 Peter 5:5

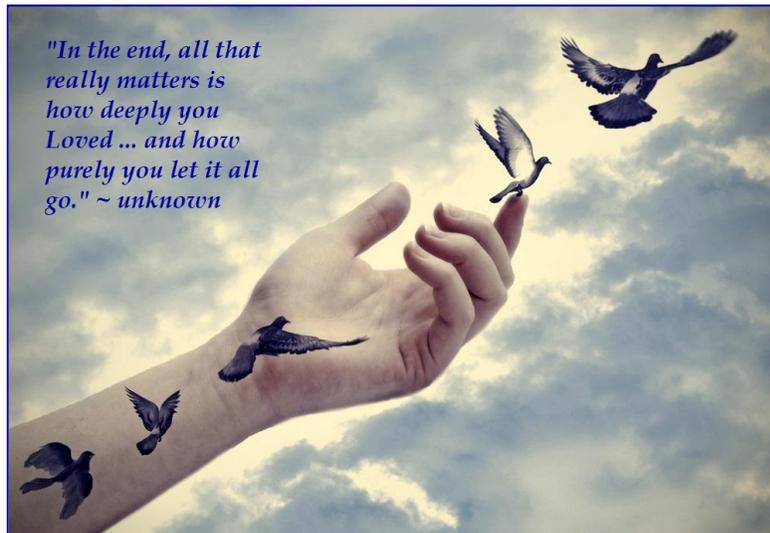


*The 8th Characteristic: God's Will is always **Joyful***

① God's Will is always **Joyful** (reflected in column #8 in the example-charts on pages 70-72). It is initially crucial to realize that divine Joy resides only in the Here & Now ("Now is the acceptable time; See, **now** is the moment of Salvation!" ~ 2 Corinthians 6:2) ... Thus, to be truly Joy-full "in Christ", we must first fully detach from our worldly concerns about the future and flow with what already *is* instead ("Be on guard so that your Hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of your life ..." ~ Jesus in Luke 21:34) ... Similarly, the joyful Christian must also purposefully release all regrets related to his or her past ("No one who puts a hand on the plow and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God." ~ Jesus in Luke 9:62) ... As a consequence, to actualize our most Power-full Path (i.e. the one in harmony with God's Will for our lives), it is counterproductive to worry about any action's potential consequences ("Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today." ~ Jesus in Matthew 6:34). Indeed, all hope for "success" must be removed from any decision-making process in order for that choice to be truly effective ("You Received without payment; Give without payment ..." ~ Jesus in Matthew 10:8). Thus, all truly Joyful actions release striving for the attainment of personal ambitions, goals &/or dreams. Instead, we are use what we already have to serve where we already Are ("Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will but *thy will be Done.*" ~ Jesus in Matthew 26:39) ...



Clarifications: First off, please note that Divine Joy’s detachment from all future-based hope is not to be confused with “callousness.” Even though a Right Action *is* fundamentally unconcerned with its consequences at the time of decision-making, it still accepts complete responsibility for any consequences that do ensue thereafter (“Do not neglect to Do Good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” ~ Hebrews 13:16). It is this selfless intention allows our actions to be unhindered by potential guilt ...Of course, if an action does happen to unintentionally cause another pain, the Child of God has compassion for that person and apologizes; all the while remaining grounded in the knowledge that his or her original choice – while obviously not to be repeated – was Right regardless at the time of its making (“God’s foolishness is wiser than human knowledge, and God’s weakness is stronger than human might.” ~ 1 Corinthians 1:25) ... Divine Joy can only exist when shame, embarrassment, and guilt are all completely extinguished, and this can only take place when we choose to act lovingly in the moment, for that moment ...



Similarly, while truly Joyful actions do tend to focus one’s attention in the more minute wonders of the present moment, they are not oblivious to life’s “bigger picture” (“Look at what is before your eyes.” ~ 2 Corinthians 10:7) ... Seeing the specialness of the moment in no way requires you to neglect life in general, much less forget the bigger vision that inspired such a choice in the first place (“Unless you see Signs & Wonders, you will not Believe ... If you Believe, you will See the Glory of God.” ~ Jesus in John 4:48 & 11:46) ... There is a marked difference between awareness and “tunnel-vision.” The former is focused on wonders that reside within the interconnected Whole, while the latter is oblivious to that Interconnection and focuses instead solely on the object at hand (“The darkness is passing away ... *The True Light is already shining.*” ~ 1 John 2:8) ...

SYNOPSIS: Truly Joy-full actions are completely oriented in the Here & Now ... They are detached from expectation, even while grounded in the Moment.

DETERMINING FACTOR: During decision-making, ask your Self -- “Is this particular option founded in a future-based hope or inspired by a memory-based fear, or is it truly grounded in this present moment?”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

“In [God’s] Presence is the fullness of Joy.” ~ Psalm 16:11

“The eye is the Lamp of the body. So, if your eye is Healthy, your whole body will be full of Light.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 6:22)

“Blessed are your eyes, for they See, and your ears, for they Hear. Many prophets and righteous people longed to See what you See, but could not See it; and to Hear what you Hear, but could not Hear it.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 13:16-17)



“The Time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand ...” ~ Jesus Christ (Mark 1:15)

“Do not be afraid, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to [continually] Give you the Kingdom ... Be dressed for action and have your Lamps lit.” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 12:32+35)

“But the hour is coming, *and is Now Here*, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and Truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship Him.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 4:23-24)



“My time has not yet come, but *your time is always Here*.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 7:6)

“*Now is the judgment of this world*; the ruler of this world will be driven out.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 12:31)



“Your Heart will rejoice, and no one will be able to take your Joy from you.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 16:22)

“For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world, His eternal Power and Divine Nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and **Seen** through the things He has made.” ~ Romans 1:19-20

“So do not become proud, but ***stand in Awe.***” ~ Romans 11:20



“You know what time it is, how ***it is Now the moment for you to wake*** from sleep.” ~ Romans 13:11

“The appointed time has grown short. From now on let those who deal with the world [do so] as though they had no dealings with it. ***For the present form of this world is passing away.***” ~ 1 Corinthians 7:29+31

“Our inner nature is being renewed Moment by Moment.”
~ 2 Corinthians 4:16



“I have said these things to you so that my Joy may be in you, and so that your ***Joy might be complete.***” ~ Jesus Christ (in John 15:11)

“Everything exposed by the Light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible **IS** Light.” ~ Ephesians 5:13-14 ... [note that “*God is Light*” in 1 John 1:5]

“Be careful then, how you Live; not as unwise people but as Wise -- **making the most of the Time**” ~ Ephesians 5:15-16

“So let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us **keep Awake**”
~ 1 Thessalonians 5:6

“But exhort one another every day, **as long as it is called ‘today’**” ~ Hebrews 3:13

“You do not even know what tomorrow will bring. What is your Life? For you are but a mist that appears for but a little while and then vanishes.”
~ James 4:14



*The 9th Characteristic:
God's Will is always **Faithful***

⓪ God's Will is always *Faith-full* (reflected in column #9 in the example-charts on pages 70-72). Both societal and man-made judgments of morality are always in some significant way fear-based -- and therefore always significantly inaccurate. Spiritual men and women, on the other hand, measure their actions using the divine standard of a morality instead – a morality that is based in real Faith (“Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner Nature is being renewed day by day, because we look not to that which can be seen but rather that which cannot be seen.” ~ 2 Corinthians 4:17-18) ... To Do so consistently, we must each follow the internal guidance of our internal Advocates by focusing primarily on others' well-being instead of our own personal “gains” ...



The true Child of God (i.e. the one who has chosen to truly abide in God's Will) chooses to see the Highest Good that resides in everything making up every moment. What *is*, is known as containing both what is Right and what is Good (“Whenever you face trials of any kind, consider them nothing but Joy ...” ~ James 1:2) ... Our Mission, then, is to *see* life as such, and it is our Faith that allows us to do so. This hyper-courageous mentality allows us to more readily harmonize with our true, interconnected **Reality**. Thus, Faith-full actions encourage us to see the “Golden Cores of Goodness” residing within *all* conscious beings we encounter – regardless of what these beings do or don't do to the contrary (“Who are you to pass judgment on the servants of another? It is before their own Lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for God is able to help them stand.” ~ Romans 14:4) ...

Clarifications: First of all, real “Faith-fullness” is not to be confused with intellectual narrow-mindedness or religious zealotry. Faith does not require our assimilation into any particular religious group or ideology (“Beware the yeast of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.” ~ Jesus in Matthew 16:6). It also doesn’t require any adherence to any particular creed. In fact, true Faith requires a **Believer** to remain completely independent from *all* man-made dogmas (“For we cannot do anything against the Truth.” ~ 2 Corinthians 13:8); raw Freedom which allows us to remain consciously interdependent with all of life (“God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who respects Him and does what is Right is acceptable to Him.” ~ Acts 10:34-35) ...



Being truly Faith-full also does not mean that we are to be in any way “passive.” To the contrary, to actualize God’s Will, we must **actively** apply our Faith in Divine Guidance – we must do so openly, and we must often do so irrationally (“Show me your Faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my Faith ... [Abraham’s] Faith was active along with his works, and his **Faith was brought to completion by those works.**” ~ James 2:18+22) ...

Your life
unfolds in
proportion
to your
courage

SYNOPSIS: Truly Faith-full actions always encourage selflessness ... They are interconnected, intuitive, and virtuous (a.k.a. “moral”).

DETERMINING FACTOR: During decision-making, ask your Self -- “Is this particular option a selfish one or a selfless (i.e. virtuous) One? Is it inflexibly ‘certain’, or is it flowing & open-minded?”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE:

“According to *your* Faith, let it be done for you ...” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 9:29)

“Ye of little Faith, *why do you doubt?*” ~ Jesus Christ (in Matthew 14:31)

“If you *have Faith the size of a mustard seed*, nothing will be impossible for You.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 17:20)

“Blessed is she who Believed, for there will be a fulfillment of what was spoken *to her* by the Lord.” ~ Luke 1:45

“*Your Faith has Saved you; Go in Peace.*” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 7:50)

“Receive your Sight; *your Faith has Saved you.*” ~ Jesus Christ (Luke 18:42)

“Do not doubt, but Believe ... Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to Believe.” ~ Jesus Christ (John 20:27+29)

“*Everyone* who calls on the name of the Lord [see Exodus 3:14 & Matthew 1:23] shall be Saved.” ~ Acts 2:21

“The Righteousness of God is revealed through Faith *for Faith* ... **The one who is Righteous will Live by Faith** ... For it is not the hearers of the Law who are Righteous in God’s Sight, but rather *the Doers of the Law who are justified* ... For we hold that a person is justified by Faith apart from those works that are prescribed by the law.” ~ Romans 1:17+2:13+3:28

“*We walk by Faith, not by sight.*” ~ 2 Corinthians 5:7

“Now it is evident that no one is justified before God via the law; for the one that is Righteous via Faith will Live ... **The only thing that counts is Faith working through Love.**” ~ Galatians 3:11+5:6

“What good is it if you say you have Faith but do not have Works? ... **Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead** ... You may believe that God is One and do well, but even the demons believe and shudder ... Know, therefore, that a person is justified by works and never by Faith alone.” ~ James 2:14+17+19+24

More Biblical evidence of the Spirit's 9 Fruits

There are four other instances in the New Testament where Paul points out that we are to actively fulfill these same nine characteristics of God's Will. To aid your Christian journey, I have cited them here and referenced Paul's [Galatians 5:22-23](#) terminology where applicable ...

“Let Love be genuine ... Love one another with mutual affection (**Love**); outdo one another in showing honor (**Generosity**). Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in Spirit (**Joy**), Serve the Lord. Rejoice in Hope (**Faithfulness**), be patient in suffering (**Patience**) ... Extend hospitality to strangers (**Self-Discipline**). Bless those who persecute you (**Peace**) ... Live in Harmony with one another (**Kindness**), do not be haughty ... do not claim to be wiser than you are (**Gentleness**).” ~ Romans 12:9-16

“Love is Patient (**Patience**), Love is Kind (**Kindness**); Love is not envious or boastful or arrogant (**Gentleness**) ... It is not irritable or resentful (**Peace**); It does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in Truth (**Love**). It bears all things (**Generosity**), believes all things (**Joy**), hopes all things (**Faithfulness**), and endures all things (**Self-Discipline**). Love never ends.” ~ 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

“As servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way ... by purity (**Joy**), Knowledge (**Gentleness**), patience (**Patience**), kindness (**Kindness**), Holiness of Spirit (**Faithfulness**), genuine Love (**Love**), truthful speech (**Self-Discipline**), and the Power of God (**Generosity**); with the Weapons of Righteousness (**Peace**) for the right hand and the left” ~ 2 Corinthians 6:4+6-7

“As God's chosen ones, clothe yourselves with Compassion (**Love**), Kindness (**Kindness**), Humility (**Gentleness**), Meekness (**Self-Discipline**) and Patience (**Patience**) ... Forgive (**Peace**) each other ... Above all, clothe yourselves with Love (**Joy**), which binds everything together in perfect Harmony. Let the Peace of Christ (**Faithfulness**) rule in your Hearts ... And be thankful (**Generosity**).” ~ Colossians 3:12-15

Even though the specific key terms in these four passages often differ from Paul's message in [Galatians](#), and even though these four passages are not specifically speaking of the “Fruit of the Spirit”, it is interesting -- and quite pertinent -- that each passage advocates the actualization of **nine** different Virtues -- **nine** Virtues that reflect the same **nine** “Fruits of the Spirit” that Paul mentions in [Galatians 5:22-23](#) ...

Practicing the Preaching

It is one thing to comprehend these characteristics, and another thing to apply them into your everyday life. Thus, the following recommendations have been provided to make it easier for you to do so ...

Example A: *Everyday Decisions* ... The nine characteristics of Right Action can be utilized during our everyday decision-making. To do so, simply chart any choice’s alternatives on a piece of paper in any two (or more) ways . My two most effective methods of doing so are demonstrated as follows:

Example A - Chart 1: “Counting Crosses” ... Analyze each alternative comparatively with regards to each individual characteristic; giving the alternative that most purely embodies the particular characteristic a “cross” (in this case representing the pure selflessness of God’s perfect Love). When analyzing 5 or more alternatives, you may give your second-most power-full alternative a “cross” as well (but only if it purely embodies that particular characteristic). Do this for all nine characteristics and then add up each alternative's “crosses.” The option with the most “crosses” is then your most Power-full choice; the course of action most likely to bring you Peace, enlighten your True Path, and give others the Love that could emPower them to make similarly courageous decisions – in other words: the choice most in harmony with the Will of God.

Below is a sample chart with five alternatives that were options from a time in my “previous life.” As we can see, while it may easier for someone to stay late at the office, go to the gym or write in a diary, the easier courses of action in life are often the least Power-full -- thus bringing lesser amounts of Joy and Peace into the lives of others; and thus bringing less Peace & Joy ultimately into our own lives as well. Investing in others’ well-being, on the other hand, always require more effort -- and therefore always brings more results ...

The 9 Fruits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
<i>The Alternatives</i>										
Write in Diary	+			+						2
Work Late										0
Go to the Gym										0
Dinner with wife		+	+		+	+	+			5
Play with kid(s)		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	8

Example A - Chart 2: “Cumulative Rating” ... The “cumulative rating” method also charts alternatives in relation to the 9 individual characteristics of God’s Will in relation to each particular option. This method is a bit different, however, in that it assigns each alternative a numerical value per characteristic - a “1” for the alternative that most purely embodies that characteristic of God’s Will, a “2” for the “next-best” alternative, and so on. After all nine characteristics have been so evaluated, the nine -scores for each alternative are added together, with the *lowest* score being the choice most in alignment with God’s Will ...

The 9 Fruits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
<i>The Alternatives</i>										
Write in Diary	1	3	5	2	3	5	5	1	3	28
Work Late	2	5	3	5	5	4	4	4	5	37
Go to the Gym	5	4	4	4	4	3	3	5	4	36
Dinner with wife	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	21
Play with kid(s)	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	13

***NOTE to the Reader:** Use these charts *only when in doubt* as to your Right course of action. The scores in these examples do not indicate that you should abandon all activities that are self-oriented (e.g. in this case the gym, the diary, or the job). The chart-method does not identify “wrong” choices; merely those that are more (or less) Power-full in relation to manifesting God’s Will in any particular moment of your life ... Thus, the previous results indicate that playing with my child was my most Power-full option at that particular time on that particular day; the alternative most in harmony with God’s Will. Therefore, whenever in doubt as to what “to do”, I should engage this choice over other, more self-centered ones. It can also be Right Action to care for your body, examine your Self in a diary and work hard for your company. It is not Right, however, to do so at the expense of radically Loving others in your life.



Example B: “Bigger” Decisions ... This “chart-method” is equally effective when analyzing your life as a whole. We often wonder things like “What is my Vocation?”, “What is my Purpose in life?” or “What particular Life Path should I be following?” It has been my experience that we each innately **Know** (albeit often deep down) the answer(s) to such questions -- even though we often cleverly convince ourselves that these solutions are “beyond knowing” or “forever mysteries.” Fortunately, when we have the Courage to engage the chart-method honestly, it is always possible to identify our moment's true “Life Mission” ...

Example B - Chart 1: “Counting Crosses” ... The sample chart that follows contains the five major “Life Avenue Alternatives” that I was *fully willing* to undertake back in 2003 just before commencing with my current life as a Peace Pilgrim ... Even though it is not necessary to include options that you “know” to be feasible, it *is* crucial that you only include alternatives that you are *completely willing* to engage. Thus, this method only functions powerfully when we are truly ready to become aware of our calling and faithfully follow God’s Will thereafter. Otherwise, our egos will prevent us from even including the choices that best reflect that Calling in the chart at all. Note as well that, for this exercise to be effective, it is necessary to dismiss all your concerns related to “practicality” &/or “probability of success.” You are always free to dream -- and you are always free to actualize those dreams!

The 9 Fruits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
<i>The Alternatives</i>										
Politician										0
K-6 Teacher’s Aid		+	+		+			+	+	5
Civil Rights Attorney						+				1
Writer/Author	+			+						2
Peace Pilgrim	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	9

Example B - Chart 2: “Cumulative Rating” ... In principle, this chart functions similarly to Example A’s second chart (see page 72) ...

The 9 Fruits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Totals
<i>The Alternatives</i>										
Politician	5	5	4	5	5	2	4	5	5	40
K-6 Teacher’s Aid	3	2	2	3	2	4	2	2	2	22
Civil Rights Attorney	4	4	3	4	3	3	5	4	3	33
Writer/Author	2	3	5	2	4	5	3	3	4	31
Peace Pilgrim	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	09

***Please NOTE** that these charts do not identify “wrong” options. It is not “wrong” to be a politician, for example. In this instance, the charts simply show that, for myself at least, politician would have been the least-powerful choice; the option least in alignment with God’s Will for my life at that time.

Always God's Will ... Loving your Neighbor!

We also know from the teachings of Jesus that only the believer who *actively* loves his or her neighbor attains the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus, even if we aren't certain of our particular Life Mission, we *can* always know that loving others is always in harmony with God's Will ...

“Those who are Righteous plan Noble Acts, and *by Noble Acts they stand.*” ~ Isaiah 32:8

“Glory and Peace *for everyone who does Good*, ... For God shows no partiality.” ~ Romans 2:10-11

“*Do what is Good*, and you will receive the approval of all Just authority.” ~ Romans 13:3

“For *the whole Law* is summed up in one Commandment: You shall *Love your neighbor as yourSelf.*” ~ Galatians 5:14

“We must no longer be adolescents, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But **speaking the Truth in Love**, we must Grow Up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped ... **promotes the body's growth in building itself up in Love.**” ~ Ephesians 4:14-15

“Live as Children of the Light - for *the fruit of the Light is found in all that is Good* and Right and True.” ~ Ephesians 5:8-9

“Anyone, then, who knows the Right Thing to do and fails to *Do It*, commits sin.” ~ James 4:17

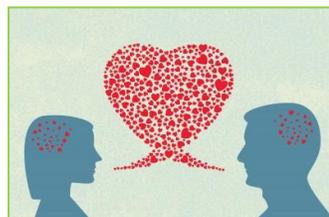
“Know by this may we be sure that we Know Him: if we *Obey his Commandments.*” ~ 1 John 2:3 [see also Matthew 22:37-40]

“We pass from death to Life when we Love one another ... *Let us Love*, not in thought or speech, but *in Truth and Action.*” ~ 1 John 3:14+18

“*If we Love one another, God Lives in us*, and His Love is perfected in us.” ~ 1 John 4:12

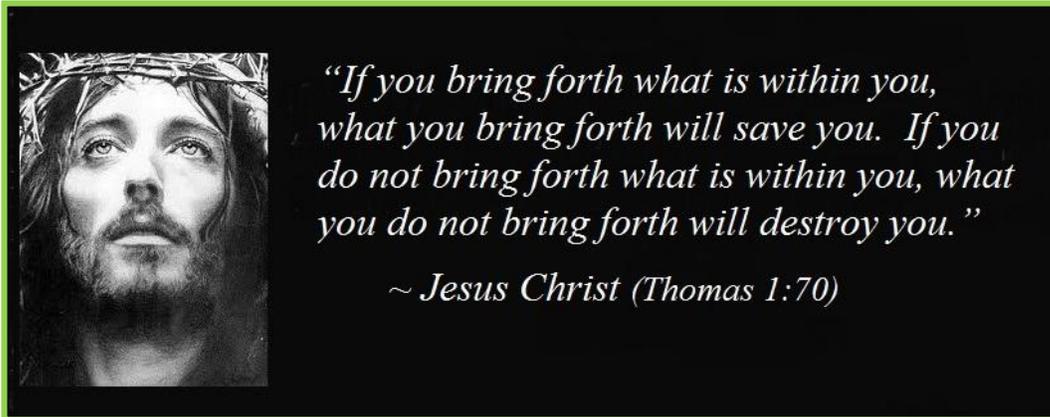
“*God is Love*, and *those who abide in Love abide in God*, and God abides in them.” ~ 1 John 4:16

“Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but imitate what is Good. *Whoever does Good is from God*; whoever does evil has not yet Seen God.” ~ 3 John 1:11



Summary & Conclusion

The critical shifts in life always come when the desire to harmonize with our existence becomes greater than our fear of the process of change. The outcome of any particular shift is already success-full the minute you honestly choose to believe that: “I am completely *willing* to serve God’s Will over my own.” The more purely an action harmonizes with God’s Will, the more obvious its divine characteristics (i.e. its “Good Fruit”) will become, and the more Power-full that choice will be once you to follow through with it ...



There is no such thing as only one “best choice” in any given moment. Many have paralyzed themselves by making no choice at all rather than risk making the “wrong choice” (or missing out on the “best alternative”, or waiting for the “better time” etc). It has been my personal experience that there are always *hundreds* of “best choices” for each of us in every single moment of our Lives; hundreds of opportunities for us to courageously Love others in harmony with God’s Will . We may not ever actualize the most-powerful of these options, and yet our challenge is merely to actualize **one** of them as often as possible ...

Wisdom
is knowing the right path to take...

Integrity
is taking it.

In essence, there can never be a “failure” in your life when your actions’ intentions are based in selfless Compassion for others (“You have Seen the Purpose of the Lord, how He is Compassionate and Merciful.” ~ James 5:11) ... Your ego may try to convince you that you are “too small” or “too weak” or “too inexperienced” to fulfill your Life Mission. This fear is irrelevant (“Be steadfast and immovable, always excelling in the Work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is never in vain.” ~ 1 Corinthians 15:58 & “And this is the boldness we have in Him, that if we ask anything *according to His Will*, He hears us.” ~ 1 John 5:14) ... Contentment can be lived moment-to-moment whether we fully complete our Calling or not (“The Works that the Father has given Me to complete, **the Works that I am Doing, testify on my behalf ...**” ~ Jesus in John 5:36), for the journey truly is the destination as far as God’s Will is concerned. Life is only found in its living. The quantity of things “done”, completed, “accomplished”, or even commenced matters not to God. All that matters is that we set ourselves in motion and strive to live as agents of His perfect Love (“Like good stewards of the manifold Grace of God, Serve one another with whatever Gift each of you has received.” ~ 1 Peter 4:10) ...



My dear Friends, there are opportunities single every day (indeed, in every single moment) to re-embody what it means to live as a Child of God – in full harmony with God’s ever-radiant Will. Every emotion felt is an opportunity to honestly express the same ... Every moment of surprise is an opportunity to Love with selfless courage (as opposed to reacting with selfish fear) ... Every confrontation with something new is an opportunity to stand in awe without analysis, pre-conception, or judgment ... Every “coincidence” is a wonder-full opportunity to see God “speaking” with you ... Every time you are either attacked or supported is an opportunity to look past the man-made labels of “enemy” or “friend” -- and simply accept what is being given to you; be that gift the challenge to lovingly forgive the “foe”, or the opportunity to be humbly thank-full for the “allegiance” ...

One day of pro-active, Purpose-full work is enough to bring you Peace ...

One day, every day ... Starting *today*.

Neither I nor anyone else has the faintest idea what your “True Purpose” is. Fortunately, ***You Do!*** And the obvious fact that you are reading this book right now means that you are already in some way seeking God’s Will -- and this means that you will indeed inevitably find It (“Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the Light of Life.” ~ Jesus in John 8:12) ... And the speed with which you will do so will be in direct proportion to the courageousness of the choices you make from here on out (“Know that your last works are greater than your first.” ~ Romans 2:19) ...

So, go forth today and ***live courageously***, my Friends ...

Go forth and ***Live LOVE!***

“For the Kingdom of God depends not on talk but on Action.” ~ 1 Corinthians 4:20

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. **To everyone is given the manifestation of The Spirit for the common good.**” ~ 1 Corinthians 12:4

“For we are what he has made us, **created in Christ Jesus for Good Works**, which God prepared beforehand to be our Way of Life.” ~ Ephesians 2:10

“All Scripture is inspired by God, and useful for teaching ... so that everyone may be proficient; ***equipped for every Good Work.***”
~ 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Faith allows for Peace ...
 Peace allows for **Patience** ...
Patience allows for **Generosity** ...
Generosity allows for **Kindness** ...
Kindness allows for **Compassion** ...
Compassion allows for **Self-Discipline** ...
Self-Discipline allows for **Gentleness** ...
Gentleness allows for **Joyfulness** ...
Joyfulness allows for **Faith** ...
Faith allows for Peace ...
 Peace allows for **Patience** ...
Patience allows for **Generosity** ...
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Patience allows for **Generosity** ...
Generosity allows for **Kindness** ...
Kindness allows for **Compassion** ...
Compassion allows for **Self-Discipline** ...
Self-Discipline allows for **Gentleness** ...
Gentleness allows for **Joyfulness** ...
Joyfulness allows for **Faith** ...
Faith allows for Peace ...

“In many cases, our need to wonder about or be told what God wants in a certain situation is nothing short of a clear indication that we are indeed not engaged in His Work.” ~ Dallas Willard

*God is talking
to you, Are
you listening?*



*“And I will take one from a thousand
and two from ten thousand,
and they shall Become a single One.”
~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 23)*