

THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S WILL

STUDY ELEVEN

A Better Way to Look at God's Will

Job 23:3–14; Romans 8:25–30

There is a mystery about the living God that forces us to trust Him when we cannot figure out His will. He is inexplicable. He is unfathomable. He is infinite.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

EVERY loving parent likely has had a conversation with his or her young child, the gist of which is this: *There is a better way to look at this situation.*

For example, let's say a parent takes away a toy. The child doesn't understand that the reason the parent took it away is because it's broken and unsafe. The tearful little one only knows that the toy is gone. He or she must learn to see the toy—and the world—through the parent's wiser, more experienced eyes.

What is your perspective when your heavenly Father does things you don't understand? Do you see only what's in front of you? The breakup of a relationship. The job you lost. The tornado that ripped apart your home. The loved one who died suddenly.

Through human eyes, God's actions don't make sense. If it were up to us, good people would live to a ripe old age, no natural disasters would destroy people's lives, and there would only be happily-ever-after romances. When we measure God against our standard of what's right and fair, we feel disappointed. Our faith crumbles.

Instead of scrutinizing life's disappointing situations through human eyes, let's try seeing them through God's eyes. *His will makes perfect sense to Him!* We need His perspective, and the best lens through which to capture His view is the truth of Scripture.

If parents know a better way to view life, how much more does our infinite God know *a better way for us to look at His will?* As we wrap up our series, this final *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study turns to God's Word to help us think theologically, instead of humanly, about God's mysterious ways and learn to rest in His perfect will.



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

As you prepare your heart to engage His Word today, join the psalmist David in basking in the goodness of our ever-present, all-knowing God. Apply Psalm 139:1–6 as your prayer of praise to Him.

*O LORD, you have examined my heart
and know everything about me.
You know when I sit down or stand up.
You know my thoughts even when I'm far away.
You see me when I travel
and when I rest at home.
You know everything I do.
You know what I am going to say
even before I say it, LORD.
You go before me and follow me.
You place your hand of blessing on my head.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too great for me to understand!*



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Thinking theologically about God's will begins with God Himself—His transcendence, omniscience, and holiness. He is the starting point. Review these Scriptures: [Romans 11:33](#); [Isaiah 55:9](#); and [Proverbs 20:24](#). Record key words you observe and create a summary sentence.¹

Remember poor Job? His terrible ordeal made no sense from a human perspective. Read [Job 1:1](#) and [2:1–3](#). How is his character described?

Let's consider Job's situation more deeply and his perspective toward God's test.

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Observation: Seeing Trials through God's Eyes

God permitted Satan to severely test Job, despite Job's godly character. Review *Job 1:12–19* and *2:7* and record what Job lost.

What was Job's response according to *1:20–22*?

Job's friends sought to console him, but beneath their warm blanket of consolation they hid clubs of accusation. In defense, Job turned his plea heavenward.

In *23:3–4*, what desire did Job express?

According to *23:5–7*, what brought Job reassurance?

In *23:8–9*, Job reverted to his earlier questions. What did he lament?

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Job's vacillation then led to a profound insight, found in [Job 23:10](#). What did he understand about God's purpose through his severe testing?

After Job recounted his faithfulness before God in [23:11–12](#), he exhaled and settled into a realization, found in [23:13–14](#). What did Job acknowledge?

To understand and live out God's will, we do well to reflect on Job—his life, his testing, and his ultimate consolation. God is more interested in growing our character and faith than in explaining His ways—burning off the dross in our lives and fashioning us into pure gold.



Interpretation: The Goal Is Christlikeness

Amid the fire, we do well to remember that there is a purpose to God's mysteries. His larger plan is to grow us "in every way more and more like Christ" (Ephesians 4:15).

What does it mean for us to be "like" Christ? How is Christlikeness possible?

God's goal is to shape us into the image of His Son, Christ, which means His discipline, His endurance, His faithfulness, His purity, His attitude, His whole approach to life. For some of us, that is a lifetime task.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Correlation: Trusting God's Goodness

Four truths in *Romans 8:25–30* frame God's plan to make us like Christ. First, according to *8:25*, what virtue is necessary to exercise? What does this virtue develop in you?

The second truth emerges in *8:26–27*. Who prays *for* you through hard times you don't understand? Why is this promise valuable? According to the last phrase of *8:27*, why else is this promise greatly reassuring?

Third, Paul helps you *rest* in our sovereign God and in His plan in *8:28*. What circumstances are included in this promise? How do you know?

What five words in *8:29–30* capture the extent of God's sovereign work in your life? What is significant about the verb tenses used in each of those sovereign works? How does that bring you peace in your times of trial?

The star of the show is God. He is the beginning, He will be the ending. He's maneuvering a plan that's perfect. It'll be for His glory and for our good, all of our losses, and heartaches, and joys. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Application: Biblical Thinking Encourages Endurance and Obedience

God's will may involve moving us from one job to the next or one state to the next. It may involve which house we live in and what kind of car we drive. It may involve where we go to school, whom we marry, and how many children we have. However, as much as we like to focus on these major life issues, God's will is primarily about the larger issue of maturity.

So when you find yourself in the midst of one of God's mysteries, keep in mind these points.

First, *wait and persevere*. Don't panic. Don't doubt God's love. Don't give up hope.

Second, *face the test on your knees*. It's okay to express your emotion in groaning to the Lord. With the Spirit's help, the Father will understand.

Third, *rest in sovereign God and His plan*. God's ways are often beyond us, so don't spin your wheels trying to figure them out. Instead, focus your mind on Him—His truths in Scripture and His character.

Fourth, *let God conform you to the image of Christ*. Spend less time analyzing God and more time obeying Him. Be sensitive to the lessons He is teaching you during the misty, mysterious seasons of life.

In what area of your faith journey is God asking you to more fully yield to His apparent plan for you? Is there a struggle? A stronghold? What steps will you take to yield to His good plan?

Which of the four principles above most assures you and gives you guidance in your current situation?

It's not easy to admit our inability to understand God's ways. We want explanations. We want to be able to reason things out. Our perception is limited to the few threads of the divine tapestry we can see. God views His entire masterpiece and bases His will for us on His understanding—which is infinite, immeasurable, and incomprehensible.

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Can you obey God even though you don't understand Him? Can you surrender to the Weaver's hand and let go of your unanswered questions? Release your questions to Him now, and rest in Him. Call His will what it is—unfathomable yet glorious—and leave it with Him who loves you with an undying love.

I desire that we all learn how to think theologically, that is, biblically. I want to see life through the lenses of God's eyes for the rest of my days. I don't want to argue with Him. I don't want to fight Him. I don't have to understand Him, but I do want to obey Him. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



A FINAL PRAYER

Close your study by making Pastor Chuck's prayer your own.

Lord, we are human, and often we try to uncover something that's mysterious and designed to be profound and deeper than our understanding. Perhaps we've gotten just a corner of it, just a glimpse of it enough to find help in this journey from earth to heaven. I pray for those especially troubled with unanswered questions, that they may find a sense of peace and a corner of calm, having heard what they've heard from Your Word. In Jesus' magnificent name. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"

For the 2025 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Marshall F. Davis in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 1999, 2025 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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