

Myth number four: God Has a Blueprint for My Life

Ephesians 5:17-18

“Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.”

Why a blueprint is a bad metaphor for God's will and why a game plan is a great metaphor for God's will.

If God has a specific plan for my life I would be a fool not to look for it – witness Jonah as only one outstanding example. However, given that God’s Will for my life seems to be very elusive there must be a way to discover what God wants most for me. Please take out your sermon notes and look at the title of the message for today. Do you see the use of the first person singular in the title? That is very intentional. My prayer as I prepared this message was that God would show me His plan for my life – and I am sharing what I have found over the decades of ministry so you can find what God has in mind for your life. So when I say “my life” in this message referring to myself, I want you to say “my life” referring to yourself.

First I believe it is important that we not confuse God’s all knowing power (theologians call it omniscience) with His divine will. Just because God knows the number of hairs on my head does that mean He considers me in rebellion if I add a couple or lose a few – thousand? If He is counting the hairs to be sure I have all the ones he wants me to have then it seems safe to say that He has a blueprint for my life.

A Blueprint contains a specific set of detailed instructions

I don’t use blueprints as guidelines to be used but instructions to be followed. When I was a young missionary one of the hats I wore was building supervisor of a crew of over 200. Actually, two crews under competent foremen. Most of the work we did was to build school and church buildings from blueprints provided by an architectural firm. However, on one occasion I decided to build a church building to my own specs.

I hear groans from you construction engineers already – wait for it – listen first.

As anyone who has built or added to a building an architect is expensive and what could possibly be wrong with drawing up my own plans. After all, the city counsel did not require an architect so what was the big deal? As it turns out – quite large as I designed a building and constructed it to roof height before learning it was too wide for the wooden trusses of that day. Well, by God’s grace, a new technology had been introduced just that month which allowed for trusses – as long as I strengthened the walls.

You don’t mess with the pros when it comes to the detail of a blueprint. The devil truly is in the details. If God has a blueprint then we don’t want to miss one aspect of it or we will find ourselves putting a roof on our lives that our lives cannot hold up. The fear that we will miss an important piece of God’s puzzle and not only through off our own lives but the lives of people we interrupt by choosing their piece leaving them to live with our piece paralyzes us.

Blueprints Paralyze from fear

Who should I marry Lord – becomes a paralyzing questions as we become so afraid to ask the question wondering if this is in fact one person God has chosen for us.

Blueprints make us more concerned with finding than with becoming

I am amazed with how many people are more concerned with who God wants them to marry than with how they are living with the men or women they are dating. Looking for God's will in marriage is not exclusive from living God's will in our sexuality. It seems that looking for God's will in finding a college does not seem to affect living God's will in how we relate to our parents. Finding God's will in a promotion too often trumps living God's will as a hard working employee.

Blueprint theology says that if I am unhappy in marriage, home or work that I am not in God's will so I need a divorce, to get away from my family or get out of my job.

Blueprint theology puts me in a "search mode" and is more about what I find than what I work at becoming. One of the reasons this interpretation of God's will is so popular in the west is because of our disposable lifestyle.

If something does not work to our satisfaction the problem must be in the item and the one operating the item.

God's will is more like a game plan

Matthew 11:28-30

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

As I read the scriptures I see more emphasis on character and daily obedience than on the kinds of decisions a person has to make. Certainly there are times what God intervenes directly such as the burning bush, Paul's blinding light, or that the Macedonian call, however, these are the exceptions and involve God's clear voice. For the most part God is more concerned with how we work out life than where or with whom we work out life.

A game plan sets out guidelines and principles that allows for flexibility with adjustments as the game unfolds. A post pattern could turn into quarterback run if the receivers are covered. But the quarterback cannot go out of bounds and then run back in bounds – so there are certain rules that the game plan has to take into account. However, as Plan A breaks down Plan B is put in play and the best teams make that change on the fly and in time to be contenders.

Learn the basics of the game and then

I need to do what I know

Proverbs 28:9

"If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable."

See also Romans 1:21-23

"For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

The starting place for finding God's will is obeying the commands and instructions we already know. We cannot ask God for direction in a major area of life when we are disobeying God's will in our daily walk. In fact God calls such prayers detestable. Don't worry so much with what you don't know as with what you are not doing.

Then get all the facts available to me

Acts 17:11

“Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”

Biblical faith is not illogical – it fits the facts. We may not understand why God’s Word requires certain actions but it is always logical to do what the creator has asked of His creation. If what we believe God is asking us to do violates God’s law or character then it is not God’s will.

When Abraham was told to take Isaac to a mountain and sacrifice him there – how did Abraham know this was the will of God? God had been requiring more and more faith from Abraham. He was speaking to Abraham face to face so Abe know the voice of God. When this ultimate test came Paul tells us...

Hebrews 11:19

“Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.”

God had promised an heir – God had delivered an heir. God had always been faithful. Therefore God would be faithful in this situation as well. Like Abraham we too must be sure to have the facts straight before committing an action to God’s will. He gave us the brain and expects us to use it.

I need to follow the play book

Romans 12:2

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

You can’t be on the field unless you have been to the team meetings. If you are going to wear the WWJD bracelet you need to be sure you know what Jesus did. Everyone on the team needs to know and practice the fundamentals. Tell the truth, show mercy, pray, be sexually pure, honor your parents, love God and everyone else. Know God’s ultimate will...

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Finally, be filled with the Holy Spirit

Memory Verse

Ephesians 5:17-18

“Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.”

Our purpose is not so much to find something as to become someone

MY NEXT STEP TODAY IS TO...

Memorize Ephesians 5:17-18.

Become obedient by being baptized.

Become the person God wants me to be in my:

Family _____; School _____; Job _____; Daily life _____.

Get on the same team by attending the following Growth Group

_____.