

The Good and Acceptable and Perfect Will of God

Romans 12:2

² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The context of this verse is dedication to Christ, as seen in the first verse of the chapter:

Romans 12:1

¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

The reasonable thing for sinners saved by the sacrificial death of Christ is for us to present ourselves back to Him as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God.

² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

1 Peter 4:3-4

³ For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. ⁴ In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.

Conformed to the world vs. being transformed:

The society of this world wants us to be like it is. It wants us to adopt its mores instead of God's morals.

Mores: The world's standards for human behavior.

Morals: God's standards for human behavior.

1 John 2:15-15

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world.

The lust of the flesh= Self gratification including sexual immorality

The lust of the eyes=Covetousness (Keeping up with the neighbors)

The pride of life=Self importance (I'm better than you, I'm the greatest)

We are not to be conformed to the world set of values

James 4:4

Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Being Transformed by the renewing of our minds:

Romans 8:7-8

^{7b} The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But when we accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior we are born again.

We receive a new life from God that does not sin.

1 John 3:9

Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

But we still live in these fleshly bodies that love the attitudes of the world

As the Apostle Paul put it in **Romans 7:22 & 23:**

²² I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

We naturally love the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life, so we need to be transformed by a renewal of our minds. We need to learn to see the will of God as good, acceptable, and perfect, so we will want to,

As **Galatians 5:16** puts it:

Walk in the Spirit, and not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

A good way to start is, as **Jude 20 & 21** puts it:

²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Romans 10:17

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

But the renewing of our minds is in order that we may “Prove” what is that Good and Acceptable and Perfect will of God.

The way “Prove” is used here is in the sense of experiencing the proof of something. In this case it means that that we should be transformed by the renewal of our minds in order to experience the proof that the will of God is both good, acceptable, and perfect.

The Will of God is Good:

I believe that the word, “Good,” is used here in the moral sense of holiness, because the subsequent description of, “Perfect,” would cover the sense of God’s will resulting in the desired outcome instead of it being a lousy concept that had a disappointing outcome.

God is holy, so His will is always good!

Morality is not something that characterizes God most of the time but not all of the time

1 John 1:5

God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

Don’t ever let anyone talk you into anything that is not completely holy.

If it’s not holy (Morally Good), it’s not the will of God.

In **John 16:1-3** Jesus told His disciples:

¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.

² They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. ³ And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

Physical abuse of people that don’t believe as you do is not good and it is not the Lord’s will.

If you go to the state fair and see a tent advertising a burlesque show, don’t succumb to the temptation that God wants you to go in there and watch that show so you’ll be able to warn others about how bad it is. Nada!

Brothers and sisters in Christ, if it’s the Lord’s will, it’s good!

On the other hand, sometimes we are tempted to refrain from following the direct word of God because others say it not right. A common example is the matter of discipline in the church. I Corinthians 5 tells us to put wicked people out of the church.

1 Corinthians 5:11

I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner — not even to eat with such a person. (The Lord’s Supper?)

1 Corinthians 5:13

Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person.

Yet It's amazing how many people argue against the direct Word of God in this. "If we put them out of the church, they'll lose the church's influence help for restoration." So, should we do what the Scriptures tell us to do, or reject the stated will of God as not all that good?

Brothers and sisters in Christ, if it's the Lord's will, it's good!

And we do it!

The Will of God is Perfect:

For the sake of my imperfect logic I'd like to discuss the perfection of the will of God before we discuss its acceptability. When you and I plan something, we envision how we'd like it to be, but there are constraints. I'd love to build a retirement home with circulating fresh brewed hot coffee on tap at the kitchen sink and the rec room, but I've come to realize that our limited resources would be better spent in more practical amenities, like indoor toilets, etcetera. In contrast, God's has unlimited resources at His disposal. He can actually accomplish everything he wants to accomplish.

Being the self-centered people that we are, we usually think of the will of God in terms of how it affects us. The fact is, that God really does desire the very best for His children. And according to **Psalm 84:11 & 12:**

¹¹ The LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory;
No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

¹² O LORD of hosts, Blessed is the man who trusts in You!

But look at **1 Thessalonians 4:3-5**

³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵ not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God.

And in the last part of Romans chapter 8 we see God's will for us enlarged on:

Romans 8:26-33

²⁶ We do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Our wills are imperfect. We're so spiritually retarded we don't know what we really need, we just know what we want.

²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

God knows what we need

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

God is going to use everything that happens to us to accomplish what is best for us.

²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified

He knew who was going to believe the gospel and He predetermined that He was going to conform us to the image of His Son. In that way we will not only be justified, but also be glorified with Christ.

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

No one can stop God from accomplishing His perfect will for us.

³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

And if He gave His Son for us, what else would He not do for us that would not thwart His wonderful plans for us?

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Lord's will is perfect!

The Will of God is Acceptable:

So if God were to ask you if His will for you was acceptable to you today, How would you answer Him?

"O yes, Lord. I'd love to be conformed to the Image of Your dear Son. I'd like a lot of glory when I get to heaven. And while You're at it, how about a few of those little 'All things' that would make my life on earth a bit more pleasant?"

And God says, "OK Bud, just read the fine print and sign on the dotted line at the bottom of the contract.

So I skip down to verse 36 and read:

^{36b} "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

"What's that mean?" I ask.

And He answers, "It may take hardships, persecution and maybe even your death to accomplish it! Don't worry, I'll do whatever it takes."

"Wait a minute, Lord," I stutter out. "I'm just Bud. I'm no super hero! In fact, I'm a bit of a coward if the truth were out. I don't think I could die for You.

And the Lord says, you missed verse 37

³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us

You will be victorious in Christ if you allow My work in your life to develop you into the person that I want you to be.

As the Apostle Paul yearned:

Philippians 3:10

That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death

Is that acceptable? Are you going to sign on with me?

You might as well, because God is going to accomplish His will in us whether you want Him to or not!

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Lord's will is acceptable!

Turn with me to the 22nd Chapter of Genesis verses 1-22

¹ Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

² Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

Was it Good to offer one's son to his God like the heathen did?

If God said it, it was morally good!

Was it Acceptable?

Hebrews 11:17-19

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," ¹⁹ concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense

³ So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. ⁵ And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."

He really believed that God would raise Isaac up from the dead

⁶ So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. ⁷ But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!"

And he said, "Here I am, my son."

Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

⁸ And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

⁹ Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.

¹⁰ And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

¹¹ But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

So he said, "Here I am."

¹² And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

God didn't really want him to offer Isaac up to Him. It really was good!

¹³ Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

Was it Perfect? Abraham caught on to what God was about to do

And we got one of the most beautiful prophecies in the Bible

And Abraham's blessings were confirmed

¹⁵ Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, ¹⁶ and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son — ¹⁷ blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. ¹⁸ In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." ¹⁹ So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

Abraham experienced the proof that God's will was Good and Acceptable and Perfect.