

Jesus is Your Way

Jesus said, "This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and the one you have sent —Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). The essence of eternal life and of this study is for you to know God and to know Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. Knowing God does not come through a program or a method. Real Christianity is not merely a religion; it is a relationship with a Person. It is an intimate love relationship with God. Through this relationship God reveals His will and invites you to join Him where He is at work. When you obey, God accomplishes through you something only He can do. Then you come to know God in a more intimate way by experiencing Him at work through your life.

I want to help you move into the kind of relationship with God through which you will experience eternal life to the fullest degree possible. Jesus said, "I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance" (John 10:10). Would you like to experience life in its fullest measure? You can if you are willing to respond to God's invitation to an intimate love relationship with Him.

When you get to the place in your life where you trust Jesus to guide you one step at a time, you experience tremendous freedom. If you don't trust Him to guide you this way, what happens if you don't know the way you should go with your life? You worry every time you make a decision. You may become immobilized by doubt. This is not the way God intends for you to live.

I have found that when I release my way to God, then I immediately respond to everything He tells me each day. He gives me plenty to do to fill every day with meaning and purpose. If I do what He says, I am in the center of His will when He wants to use me for a special assignment. My primary concern should not be, "What should I do with my life tomorrow?" But, what does God want me to do today? As you follow Jesus one day at a time, He will keep you in the center of God's will.

This content was excerpted from the Experiencing God study, unit one. Find out more about the study here! <https://www.lifeway.com/experiencinggod>

Jesus is Your Model

During this course and throughout your life, you will have times when you want to respond to situations based on your own experience or understanding. Such an approach will get you in trouble. This should be your guideline: always go to the Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth of your situation. Look to see what God says and how He works in the Scriptures. Make your decisions and evaluate your experiences based on biblical truths.

When you study the Scriptures, do not base your decision on one isolated verse or story. Look to see how God generally works throughout the Scriptures. When you learn how God has consistently related to people throughout history, you can expect Him to work in a similar way with you. Your experience is valid only as it is confirmed in the Scriptures. I never deny anyone's personal experience. I always reserve the right, however, to interpret it according to what I understand from Scripture. At times individuals get upset with me and say, "I don't care what you say. I've experienced this." I gently respond, "I don't deny your experience, but I question your interpretation of what happened because it is contrary to what I see in God's Word." Our experiences cannot be our guide. Every event in your life must be understood and interpreted by the Scriptures, for the God revealed in Scripture does not change.

"For I *am* the Lord, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob." Malachai 3:6

When people seek to know and do God's will, many ask the question, What is God's will for my life? One of my seminary professors, Gaines S. Dobbins, used to say, "If you ask the wrong question, you will get the wrong answer." Sometimes we assume every question is legitimate. However, when we ask the wrong question, we may find an answer but remain disoriented to God and His activity. Always check to see whether you have asked the correct question before you pursue the answer.

What is God's will for my life? is *not* the right question. I think the proper question is, what is God's will? Once I know God's will, then I can adjust my life to Him. In other words, what is it God is proposing to accomplish where I am? Once I know what God is doing, then I know what I need to

do. The focus needs to be on *God*, not on *my life*!

When I want to learn how to know and do God's will, I can find no better model than Jesus' life. During His approximately 33 years on earth, He perfectly completed every assignment the Father gave Him. He never failed to do the will of the Father. He never sinned. Would you like to understand how Jesus came to know and do His Father's will?

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Learning to be a Servant of God

Many Scripture passages describe Jesus as God's servant. He came as a Servant to accomplish God's will to redeem humanity. Here is what Paul said about Jesus: "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a *servant*, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Phil. 2:5-8).

In His instructions to His disciples, Jesus (the Son of man) described His own role of servanthood this way: "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:26-28). Jesus also identified what our relationship with Him should be like: "As the Father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21).

To be God's servant, you must be moldable and remain in the hand of the Master. Then the Master will use you, the instrument, as He chooses. The servant can do nothing of Kingdom value alone, just as Jesus said, "The Son is not able to do anything on his own" (John 5:19) and "you can do nothing without me" (John 15:5). With God working through a servant, however, he or she can do anything God can do. Wow! Unlimited potential! Servanthood requires obedience. Servants must do what they are instructed but must remember it's God who is accomplishing the work.

If you have been working from the human approach to being a servant, this concept should change your approach to serving God. You do not get your orders and then go out to accomplish them on your own. You relate to God, respond to Him, and adjust your life to Him so that out of your relationship with Him, He does what He wants to do through your life. Let's look at how God worked through His servant Elijah.

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