

## About this Study Guide

This study guide is designed to be used by individuals, small groups such as home groups, men's and women's study groups, youth groups, family studies, and workplace study groups, and can also be used to assist pastors in teaching through a series on knowing the will of God.

### Objectives-

While this study guide may provide you with additional benefits, the goals of this study guide are-

- 1- To help you to know the will of God for your life.
- 2- To help you to walk closer with God, enabling you to know Him more intimately.
- 3- To help you take God's truths deeper into your life, helping you to live a life of joy and fruitfulness that will transform you to be more like Christ.
- 4- To help you see the riches in God's written Word, and the benefits of reading, studying, meditating on, and obeying His Holy Scriptures (The Bible).

Each chapter study is designed to take 30 minutes to an hour to complete on your own, although you may want to spend more time digging deeper.

### You choose-

This Study guide is designed to let you choose how much and how in-depth you would like to study through *How to Know the Will of God*, in order to meet your needs. There are three sections in each of the Study guide chapters: 1- *Think, Pray and Discuss*; 2- *Digging Deeper*; and 3- *Meditate and Memorize*. You might decide to explore any or all of them, or start out by answering the *Think, Pray and Discuss* sections and come back later to work on the others.

### ***Think, Pray and Discuss-***

These questions are good for your own study, thought, and prayer. As you read through them, pray and ask the Lord, "What do you want me to see here?" and "How can I apply this to my life?" Ask Him to help you to know Him and His truths on a deeper level.

The questions are also designed to be used in a group discussion. While discussing things in a group can be tremendously beneficial, there may be some things about your life, or things you may feel that the Lord has spoken to you, that you are not comfortable sharing with others. It may be because these things are very personal, or it may be because you feel that sharing them would be boasting. Please do not feel obligated to share these things with the group. We see in the Bible that there were times when very godly people chose not to reveal things that God had spoken to them (Luke 2:19, Daniel 7:28). Feel free to skip any questions you find too easy or too difficult to answer.

### ***Digging Deeper-***

To gain more insight and understanding from the book, you may choose to dig in to the *Digging Deeper* questions. These questions include information that can stimulate thought, as well as provide additional cross-references in the Bible. It may be helpful to get a notebook so you can write down your answers to the more in-depth questions. A notebook can be a wonderful tool for the future as well, as it can help you to see how God has been guiding you

over time. You may also choose to write down action steps that come to mind that you think may be beneficial for you, prayer requests and answers to prayer, as well as insights from what others say in group discussions.

### ***Meditate and Memorize-***

God has tremendous blessings promised for those of us who will delight in, and meditate on (think about, ponder on) His Word. “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.” - Psalm 1:1-3

There are many wonderful benefits of memorizing Scripture, including helping us to fellowship with God, helping us to have more of an eternal perspective, increased faith, strength to flee from sin, and helping us to discern God’s will.

We can easily forget something we read once. It is more likely to become a part of our lives if we think about it, and much more likely if we pray about it. Memorizing Scripture can be a tremendous help as we seek to know God’s will for our lives. The Psalmist wrote, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” – Psalm 119:105

As you go through this study and you come across verses in the Bible that bless you, encourage you, help or challenge you, you might want to memorize them. A good way to do that is to write the verses on a piece of paper (or print them out) and carry the paper with you. Look at the verses over and over. Think and pray about them often, over a period of a week or more. Over time, you will find that the Lord is able to use the verses more powerfully in your life.

### **A few tips on memorizing Scripture-**

To start-

- Read the context of the verse (surrounding verses) in your Bible to help get more of an understanding of what the verse means. You may even want to read the verse in several Bible translations to help you understand it more fully.
- Pray through and think about the verse.

Memorizing Scripture-

- 1- Write (or print) the verse out and carry it with you.
- 2- It can also be helpful to write the verse out in your own words, in order to better understand the verse.
- 3- When you have a minute or two of spare time, take the verse out and pray and think about it.
- 4- Repeat the verse out loud. (This can help you to learn the verse.) If it’s a long verse, or a passage of Scripture, begin with the first phrase of the verse and add more when you have learned the first part. Repeating it over and over, even 5 times or more, can help it to become engrained in your memory.
- 5- It can be helpful to say the Scripture reference out loud, before and after you say the verse. For example, “Jeremiah 29:11, ‘For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’ Jeremiah 29:11” (This helps you to learn the verse’s “address.”)
- 6- Once you have learned the verse, review it over the next few days and then once a week so that you don’t forget it. (Practicing with others can also be helpful.)

- 7- Memorize the verse word for word. If you memorize it incorrectly, it will be more difficult in the future to correct it than to learn it accurately the first time.
- 8- Pray through the verse. This can help it to become a part of your life.
- 9- Review! Review! Review! Repetition is the best way to engrain the verses in your mind and heart.

However God leads you to use this Study guide, may He bless you richly as you draw closer to Him, and seek to know His perfect will for your life.

## Introduction-

### *Think, pray and discuss-*

- 1- What do you think the difference is between “the Lord’s work” and “the Lord’s will”? (Page 11)

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- 2- Since God is omnipotent (all-powerful) (See Genesis 1:1; Mark 14:36), He could have daily instructions written out for each of us to read every morning, explaining everything we will go through that day, and how to deal with each situation. Would you like Him to guide you that way? Why or why not?

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- 3- What do you think of the statement (on page 13), “God wants to guide us more than we want to be guided.”?

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## Chapter 1- Knowing the Will of God

- 1- Chapter 1 starts out with the passage of Scripture, “...the one who does the will of God lives forever.”- 1 John 2:17 (NASB). The book of 1<sup>st</sup> John was written by John the Apostle, the cousin of Jesus. He also wrote the book of Revelation and the book of John. He wrote, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”(John 3:16) and “... this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (1 John 5:11-12). Since eternal life comes through turning to God and putting our trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, what does John mean when he says, “the one who does the will of God lives forever.”? (Additional verses- Romans 4:1-8; 10:9-13; Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 11:8)

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2- We can probably all think of times in our lives when we have made unwise decisions that we have later regretted. What are some decisions that you have made that might have turned out a lot differently if you had let God guide you?

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3- What do you think of the statement (on page 15) that "...you can live a life that pleases the Creator of the universe."? (Read Psalm 149:4; Philippians 2:13; Hebrews 11:5-6; 13:15-16; James 2:23)

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4- Read John 10:9-11. What do you think Jesus meant by the statement, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."? (John 10:10) (Page 16-17)

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5- We all have a sense of our unworthiness (Page 16-17). Is it hard to imagine God saying, "Well done" directly to you, and for Him to call you "good and faithful"? Why do you think that is? (Read Isaiah 53:4-6; Psalm 103:10-12; Romans 8:1,31-33; Matthew 10:42)

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6- Are you afraid of the will of God? Why or why not? (Pray and ask the Lord to help you answer this question.) (Page 17-20)

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7- What do you think of J. Hudson Taylor’s statement, “The real secret of an unsatisfied life lies too often in an unsundered will.”? How can surrendering one’s life lead to satisfaction? (See Matthew 16:25) (Page 18)

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***Digging Deeper*** Do you know two or three people who you think really know God? Ask them to tell you the most important truths they have learned about God. What did they say?

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8- “God should not be the way to get everything we want, as much as God should be everything we want.” (Page 22) What does it mean to “want God”? (Read Genesis 15:1; Psalm 73:24-26; John 17:3)

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9- What stood out the most to you in this chapter (or in the Introduction), and why?

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***Meditate and Memorize***- Write out any Bible verses from the Introduction and first chapter of the book that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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3) \_\_\_\_\_

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## Chapter 2- It Starts at the Cross

*Think, pray and discuss-*

1- God loves you. How does knowing that truth affect your life? (Page 26) (See 1 John 4:19)

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2- Is it hard for you to believe that God really loves YOU a lot? Why or why not?

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***Digging Deeper-*** Spend some time in prayer. (If possible, try to find a place that is quiet and where you won't be disturbed.) Maybe you could even take some time every day, for a few days, to spend praying about God's love. Meditate on (think about, ponder on) and pray about the following verses. Thank God for His love and worship Him. Spend time not only talking to God, but also "listening." Allow time for God to put things on your heart.

John 3:16- "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

John 1:12- "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."

Hebrews 13:5- "...For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"

1 Peter 5:7- "casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."

Roman 8:31-32, 38-39- "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 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?"... "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

John 15:13- "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."



3- What do you think of the statement (top of page 28), “We can’t force ourselves to love God.”?

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4- If we want to live a life of knowing God’s will, why is it important to know that He loves us? (Page 32)

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5- When it comes to knowing God’s will, why is it comforting to know that God knows you better than you know yourself? (See Jeremiah 29:11) (Page 33)

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6- Many people like to challenge believers by asking questions like, “How can a God of love allow evil?” How is the fact that God allows people to choose good or evil, actually evidence that He is a God of love? (Pages 36-38) If God immediately destroyed anyone who made a wrong choice, how many people would there be living on the earth?

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7- It is said that God has a “perfect will” and a “permissive will.” (Page 38) How would you define those terms in your own words?

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8- What stood out the most to you in this chapter, and why?

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***Meditate and Memorize*** Write out any Bible verses from the second chapter of the book (or the study guide) that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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3) \_\_\_\_\_

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## Chapter 3- C. - Commit

*Think, pray and discuss-*

1- Write out Romans 12:1-2 in your own words. What stands out to you in this passage of Scripture?

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2- Why is it of utmost importance that you have the right motivation for doing God's will? (Read 1st John 4:19; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Ephesians 3:14-19; Matthew 15:8) (Page 42-43)

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3- You may have heard it said that the problem with being a "living sacrifice" is that we have a tendency to keep climbing off the altar. What can we do to help keep us in that place of continual surrender to the Lord and to His will? (Read Romans 12:1-2; Hebrews 12:1-3; Jude 1:20-21) (Page 44-46)

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4- "You can do this the hard way or you can do it the easy way." Why do you think it is that there sometimes seems to be a part of ourselves that says, "Well, it may be the hard way, but I think I'll take that road anyway."? (Page 48)

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5- How does walking in obedience to the Lord’s leading result in spiritual maturity in our lives? (Read Hebrews 5:13-14) (Page 48)

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***Digging Deeper-*** Spend some time praising, thanking and worshipping God. Then ask Him what areas of your life you haven’t fully surrendered to Him. Give Him some time to bring things to mind. Surrender your life fully to God in prayer. Ask Him to help you to continually surrender those areas of your life and ask Him to put on your heart any steps He wants you to take to help you to be fully surrendered to Him.

6- Jesus was “in the form of God” in Heaven, but when He came to the earth, He took “the form of a bondservant... coming in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:5-8) and as a result, “was tempted in all ways like we are.” (Hebrews 4:15) Why is it comforting to know that what Jesus went through for us will always be far more than what God will ever ask from us? (Read Hebrews 12:1-3) (Page 50)

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7- How does knowing that we are following the Lord’s leading, give us peace in difficult times? (Page 51)

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8- How does it make you feel to know that God wants to spend time with you? (Page 53-55)

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9- What do you think of the statement- “No Christian is greater than their prayer life.”? (Page 56)

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***Digging Deeper***- Spend some time every day for three days, praying through and following the suggestions at the end of the chapter (Pages 57-59).

On day four, answer this question- How did those ideas help your prayer life? Do you feel more of God’s peace in your life? (Philippians 4:6-7) Do you think you are becoming more sensitive to the Lord’s leading?

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10- What stood out the most to you in this chapter and why?

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***Meditate and Memorize***- Write out any Bible verses from the third chapter of the book (or the study guide) that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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3) \_\_\_\_\_

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# Chapter 4- R. - Read

## *Think, pray and discuss-*

1- On page 63 of the book, it says, “The difference between hearing from God and not hearing from Him is the difference between a dry, tedious life and an abundant life- a life of peace and joy, a life of knowing that God is guiding you.” Why do you think this is true?

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2- What do you think Jesus meant when He said, “The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life.”? (John 6:63) (Read John 8:31-36; 15:3-11) (Page 64)

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3- Many scholars, scientists and atheists have set out to prove that the Bible is inaccurate and in the process, have become Christians. Josh McDowell, who wrote *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, (a book about the reliability of the Bible) was one of them. Why is it extremely important that the Bible is 100% reliable? (Pages 64-66) Which Bible prophecies are the most amazing to you?

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4- How can the Scriptures be a “powerful weapon in our lives to keep us from straying from God’s perfect will.”? (Page 67)

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5- Which of the blessings mentioned in Psalm 1 are the most appealing to you? Why? (Pages 68-69)

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6- Can you think of verses in the Bible that have been more of a source of guidance for you than any other verses? (Pray about it as well.) (Pages 71-73)

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7- Can you think of a verse or two of the Bible through which God has spoken a powerful “rhema” Word to you? (Pages 73-78)

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8- Jesus said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4) He compared the Word of God to food (which most of us take in at least three times a day). How do you think God wants you to “live” on His Word?

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***Digging Deeper-*** Spend some time praying about your intake of the Word of God. What do you think He might want you to do to insure that you are truly “living” on His Word? Will you commit to doing it?

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10- What stood out the most to you in this chapter and why?

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***Meditate and Memorize***- Write out any Bible verses from the fourth chapter of the book (or the study guide) that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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# Chapter 5- O. - Observe

## *Think, pray and discuss-*

1- Psalm 37:4 says, "Delight yourself in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart." Have you ever spent some time just delighting yourself in the Lord? This comes about as we thank Him, praise Him, and worship Him. Put this study guide down and spend at least a few minutes doing that now and then come back and answer the following questions- What was your experience like? Do you feel closer to God now than before you spent some time "delighting in Him"? Do you feel like you ran out of things to thank and praise Him for? Can you see how delighting in Him will cause you to have more sensitivity to His leading? (Read Nehemiah 8:10; Isaiah 26:3; James 4:8a) (Page 87)

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2- Pray and ask the Lord to bring things to your mind as you think about this question- Can you think of some doors that you believe the Lord has opened for you in order to help guide you into His will? (Colossians 4:3) (Pages 87-90)

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***Digging Deeper-*** Pray and ask the Lord to open doors for you to be a blessing to people this week. As you seek to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and look for opportunities to bless others, He will give you opportunities. Write down five things you do this week that "seemed good" to do in order to bless people. (Luke 1:3) (Page 89)

- 1- \_\_\_\_\_
- 2- \_\_\_\_\_
- 3- \_\_\_\_\_
- 4- \_\_\_\_\_
- 5- \_\_\_\_\_

3- Pray and ask the Lord to bring to mind some of the doors that He has closed, in order to guide you into His will or to keep you from straying from His will. Can you think of a few? (Page 90-91)

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4- There are times when we look back at a closed door that we strongly desired to be opened, and we see the wisdom and love of God in not opening the door for us. Can you think of any doors that you wanted open, that God didn't open, and now you are glad He didn't?

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5- Have there been times when you thought the Lord wanted you to go in a certain direction, but there was a delay that you now see was a blessing in disguise? (Pages 91-96)

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6- Our natural tendency can be to give up when we face a closed door. Can you think of some times when your perseverance has paid off when you faced a closed door? (Page 96)

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7- What's the difference between doing what's right in our own eyes and doing what is truly good? (Pages 97-100)

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8- God told the Israelites to conquer all of Canaan (Joshua Chapter 1). He didn't say to conquer the kingdoms surrounding Canaan, so when a group of people (the Gibeonites) came to Joshua, saying they were from a far country, and wanted to make a peace treaty with them, it made total sense not to fight with them. Read Joshua Chapter 9. How many reasons can you find why it made sense for the children of Israel **not** to conquer the Gibeonites? (Page 100)

1- \_\_\_\_\_

2- \_\_\_\_\_

3- \_\_\_\_\_

4- \_\_\_\_\_

5- \_\_\_\_\_

Even though we can come up with reasons for doing something, it is very important that we don't lean heavily on our own understanding. We need to continually be seeking God's direction for our lives. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

9- What stood out the most to you in this chapter and why?

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ADVANCE NOTICE: If you are going through this study guide with a group, it will be best if you start working on the Chapter 6 questions within the next few days, since a couple of them involve exercises that you will be doing over a few day period.

***Meditate and Memorize-*** Write out any Bible verses from the fifth chapter of the book (or the study guide) that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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3) \_\_\_\_\_

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## Chapter 6- S. - Still, Small Voice

### *Think, pray and discuss-*

1- It's easy to think that God would only speak to "spiritual" people, like pastors and other church leaders. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice." (John 10:27) He didn't say, "If any of my sheep are really spiritual, then they'll hear my voice," or "If any of my sheep are really good, they'll hear my voice." He speaks to all of His followers. What do you think have been your biggest obstacles to hearing God's voice? (Pages 101-103)

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2- Jesus said, "He who is of God hears God's words." (John 8:47) It's hard to imagine a relationship in which a child grows up talking to their parents but never listening to them, and yet it's easy to go day after day praying to God, but never listening to Him. What steps can you take to help you to develop the habit of seeking to hear from God? (Read Psalm 5:1-3,7-8,11; Psalm 23:1-3; Proverbs 2:1-6; Mark 1:35) (Pages 103-107)

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***Digging Deeper-*** Follow the suggestions on pages 110-111 about "Learning to listen." In your prayer time, ask God to guide you as you write out a list of things to do on a certain day and spend time listening for His still, small voice. Try to follow His leading during the day as you seek to accomplish the things on your list. (You might want to do this for several days.) Afterwards, answer these questions- What was your experience like? Do you think the Lord was speaking to you about things you should do? Did you accomplish everything on your list? Did this help you to become more sensitive to His voice? (Don't feel "unspiritual" if you feel like God isn't putting things on your heart. In time as you talk with Him and seek to listen to Him, you will develop more of a sensitivity to His voice.)

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3- God is willing to guide us even in "the little things" in life. (Pages 111-114) Over the next few days, ask the Lord about some of the "little things" like, "Should I do the laundry today or wait until tomorrow?", "Should I get gas for the car today or wait?", "What should I have for breakfast?". Listen for Him to guide you and seek to follow His

leading. Afterwards, answer these questions- Do you think the Lord was guiding you as you tried to follow His leading? Were there any things that happened that seemed to confirm that you were hearing from Him? (Don't feel "unspiritual" if you feel like God isn't "speaking" to you. In time as you talk with Him and seek to listen to Him, you will develop more of a sensitivity to His leading.)

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4- Can you think of some times when you believe that God gave you a peace or a lack of peace about doing something and later you saw that it must have been God leading you? (Colossians 3:15) (Pages 113-114)

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5- It's amazing that God, the One who created the universe, wants to spend time with us. Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us." (Matthew 1:23) We can make the mistake of thinking that prayer is all about what we have to say to God, and what He has to say to us. What do you think about the idea that God is blessed by just spending time with you? (Psalm 16:11) (Pages 114-115)

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6- How can we know when it's not God speaking to us? (Pages 116-119)

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7- Why not tell people everything that God says to us? (119-120)

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***Meditate and Memorize***- Write out any Bible verses from the sixth chapter of the book (or the study guide), or that you have read this week in the Bible, that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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# Chapter 7- S. - Saints

*Think, pray and discuss-*

1- Why does God speak to us through other Christians? (Pages 123-125)

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2- List some examples of God speaking to you through other Christians. (Pages 125-126)

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3- What kind of people are the best to seek counsel from if we want to know God's will? (Page 127-129)

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***Digging Deeper-*** Christian fellowship involves partnering with other Christians, being companions with them, partaking together. We should be devoted to (or “continuing steadfastly” in) fellowship. (Acts 2:42) Pray and ask the Lord to guide you as to how you can be continuing steadfastly in fellowship. Spend some time talking and listening to God about it. What steps (if any) do you believe He wants you to take in order to be more devoted to Christian fellowship? (Pages 129-130)

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4- It is very important that we are regularly fellowshiping with other Christians. True fellowship involves not just talking about things like sports and cooking, but sharing in spiritual matters. What can we do to help create more opportunities for other Christians to help guide us into God's will? What can we do to help our time with other Christians become more spiritual? (Read Hebrews 10:24-25; Colossians 3:16)

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5- God's will is that we will be submitted to “governing authorities.” Read Romans Chapter 13:1-7. What governing authorities do you think this includes? What about traffic signs and paying taxes to a government we disagree with? (Pages 130-131)

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6- When can we know that God's will is to disobey earthly authority? (Read Acts 5:29) (Page 131)

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7- God often guides us into His will by using the spiritual leaders that He has brought into our lives. What do the following verses say about the role of spiritual leaders? (Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Matthew 20:25-28; 1 Peter 5:2-3) (Page 132)

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8- Unbelievers will often direct us away from God's will, even though they may be wanting what they think is best for us. What's wrong with seeking to find out God's will by talking with non-Christians? (Read Psalm 1:1; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; Romans 12:2) (Pages 133-134)

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ADVANCE NOTICE: If you are going through this study guide with a group, it will be best if you don't wait until a day or two before you meet, to work on the questions for Chapter 8, since a couple of them (Question #8 and Digging Deeper) involve something that you will be doing over a several day period.

***Meditate and Memorize-*** Write out any Bible verses from the 7th chapter of the book (or the study guide), or that you have read this week in the Bible, that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
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2) \_\_\_\_\_  
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3) \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Chapter 8- Waiting and Persevering

### *Think, pray and discuss-*

1- Waiting on the Lord is not just sitting around waiting for something to happen. Waiting on the Lord involves seeking God in prayer. Waiting could also be described as looking for, hoping, expecting. What do these verses tell us about waiting on the Lord? (Read Psalm 27:14; 37:9; 130:5-6; Lamentations 3:25; Isaiah 64:4; James 5:7-8) (Pages 137-140)

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2- How can waiting for God, lead to peace in our lives? (Read Isaiah 26:3; Philippians 4:6-7) (Page 140)

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3- In order to live of life of knowing God's will, we should persevere not only in waiting on the Lord, but also in trials as well as in doing good. What do these verses tell us about persevering? (Read Romans 5:3-4; 12:12; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Hebrews 10:35; 12:1-2) (Pages 141-147)

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4- What if the Lord's will is that you only do things for Him that seem little to you? Are you willing to joyfully do them? (Page 144-146) (Read Zechariah 4:10; 1 Corinthians 10:31)

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5- More than a fourth of the Bible is prophecy- God telling us the future in advance. There are verses written 2,500 years ago that tell about events happening in our lifetime, yet when it comes to our individual lives, God often wants to lead us one step at a time. List three reasons for this. (Pages 146-147)

1- \_\_\_\_\_

2- \_\_\_\_\_

3- \_\_\_\_\_

6- Give an example or two of God leading you into His will by repeating Himself. (If you can't think of something He was leading you to do, how about His leading for you to stop doing something?) (Pages 147-148)

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***Digging Deeper-*** There are times when we need God to make His leading very clear to us. Are there any big decisions you are facing, or changes in your life that you aren't sure about which direction God wants you to go? If so, pray (with some fasting) about it and write down how the Lord is leading you. Even if you aren't praying about a big decision, get a notebook or journal and write down what you believe the Lord is saying to you every day (for at least 5 days) as you pray and read the Bible. Is He repeating Himself in order to make His leading clear? (Pages 147-152)

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7- Can you think of any situations in which your persistence in prayer paid off in terms of determining the will of God? (Read Luke 18:1-8; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Colossians 4:2; James 5:16) (Page 149)

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8- Fast for three days. (Pray about whether the Lord wants you to not eat any food, and to only drink water, or to go on a partial fast (as described on Page 152). After the three days, answer this question- Do you think the fasting helped you to hear more from God?

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9- Has the Lord ever guided you through a vision or a dream? If not, do you know someone personally who says that they have been guided in this way? Explain. (Page 152-153)

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10- What stood out the most to you in this chapter and why?

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***Meditate and Memorize***- Write out any Bible verses from the 8th chapter of the book (or the study guide), or that you have read this week in the Bible, that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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3) \_\_\_\_\_

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## Chapter 9- Hindrances to Hearing

### *Think, pray and discuss-*

1- Time it- Spend at least 5 minutes thanking God- not just two or three minutes, not making requests, just thanking Him. Then answer these questions- How do you feel now? Do you feel closer to God than you did before you spent time in thanksgiving? James said, “Draw near to Him and He will draw near to you.” (James 4:8) If we want to live a life of knowing God’s will, it is absolutely vital that we have an intimate relationship with Him. Worship, praise and thanksgiving are essential. What prevents you from spending more time doing these three things? What steps can you take to ensure that you are worshipping, thanking and praising God daily? (Read Psalm 63:1-3; John 4:23-24; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Hebrews 13:15) (Pages 155-156)

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2- God’s Word says, “Exercise yourself toward godliness. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things.” (1 Timothy 4:7-8) Another translation says, “Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” (NASB) Spend some time alone in prayer. Ask the Lord to put an amount of time on your heart that He wants you to aim for in prayer. Listen for His answer. Make whatever changes are necessary in your life in order to help you to make it a discipline in your life. (Such as going to bed earlier, setting your alarm clock, etc.) (Pages 157-158) Don’t beat yourself up when you fall short, but work on making it a regular part of your life. (Read Romans 12:12; 2 Corinthians 9:7) If you are going through this study guide with a group, be ready to discuss the following question when you meet- How is it going? What changes have you made to help you to make prayer more of a priority in your life?

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3- King David prayed, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24) Spend some time in prayer and ask the Lord if there are any sins that you are holding onto that are hindering you from hearing Him. Ask Him to remind you of sins that He wants you to confess to Him and to turn from. Did He bring any to mind? (Read 1 John 1:9) (Pages 159-160)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Do not share details of your sins with the group. This is a “Yes” or “No” question.)

4- The Apostle Paul said, “For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly.” (Romans 12:3) Proud people don’t usually think they are proud. They just think they are better than others. Do you think you are better than other people? Do you think you deserve to go to Heaven? (If so, read pages 28-30 of the book again.) We should “be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” (1 Peter 5:5-6) Spend some time thinking and praying about the greatness of God and the universe He has created. Considering that “the nations are

as a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust on the scales,” (Isaiah 40:15) what does that say about how great and mighty you and I are? (Read Job 38:4-36, 40:2; 1 Corinthians 4:7) (Pages 160-161)

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5- It’s surprisingly easy for us to become offended by God- something doesn’t go the way we think it should and the next thing we know, we are angry at the God who made us, loves us, and forgives us for all of our sins. We not only lose sight of how much God loves us, but somehow we start to think we know better than He does about how things should happen. (Read Job 40:2) What do we need to confess and repent of (change our mind about) when we become offended at God? How does listening closely to what God says, make a difference? (Pages 160-164)

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6- When we start to feel impatient about God’s timing on revealing His will to us (or impatient about His timing in anything else), it’s a great reminder that it’s time to \_\_\_\_\_. (Read Philippians 4:6-7) (Pages 164-165)

7- When we feel strongly about something, it can easily keep us from hearing God as we seek His will about it. How can you make sure that your own thoughts aren’t drowning out God’s still, small voice? (Pages 165-166)

***Digging Deeper-*** There are many times when our strong feelings about something cloud our ability to know God’s will about it. Pray and ask the Lord what areas of your life you haven’t totally surrendered to Him (or that you need to surrender to Him again) and spend some time in (worship and) prayer about it every day for the next few days.

Check a box each day that you pray and surrender it afresh to the Lord-

8- How can we be set free from our natural tendency to live a life of “balance” and routine, rather than a life of intimacy with God and obedience to Him? (Read John 10:27) (Pages 166-167)

9- The Apostle Paul tells us that, “all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” (2 Timothy 3:12) Jesus loves you so much that He suffered and died for you. Spend some time in prayer. Ask the Lord to remind you of times when you were not willing to suffer for Him. Confess your sins to Him and surrender your entire life afresh to the Lord. (Pages 168-171)

10- Can you think of a time or two when God guided you in a direction that didn't seem to make sense at the time, but later you realized that He guided you in that direction for a reason? (If so, write it down.) Spend some time in prayer telling the Lord that you are willing for Him to guide you one step at a time, and that you are willing to follow His leading even if you don't understand it. (Read Hebrews 11:8) (Pages 171-174)

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11- What stood out the most to you in this chapter and why?

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***Meditate and Memorize***- Write out any Bible verses from the 9th chapter of the book (or the study guide), or that you have read this week in the Bible, that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

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- 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
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# Chapter 10- Wrong Decisions and Conclusion- It Ends at the Cross

*Think, pray and discuss-*

1- Do you think the reason you are where you are now, in the situations that you are in, is because you have missed God's perfect will for your life? \_\_\_\_\_ Can you give one example of anyone (other than Jesus) following God perfectly? (Read Isaiah 53:5-6; Romans 3:10-11; 23-24; 1 John 1:8) Nobody (other than Jesus) has ever followed God perfectly. Every one of us is where we are right now, in part because we've missed God's perfect will, but God is gracious. He knew every sin you would ever commit before He made the universe, and yet He chose you anyway. God is love (1 John 4:8) and He chooses us to be His children because of how wonderful and loving He is, not because of any good thing he sees in us or good thing we've done (Read Titus 3:3-5). What do you think about that? (Pages 175-176)

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2- Even though we know that the results of sin are bad, that the consequences always outweigh any possible benefits, and that sin is never worth committing, why do you think we often are prone to wanting to commit sin anyway? The life of Samson teaches us some valuable lessons about sin. We see in Samson's life, the path that sin takes- Blind, Bind and Grind. (Read Judges Chapter 16) What surprises you about Samson's sins? What lessons can we learn from them? (Pages 177-178)

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3 - Even though the Apostle Paul had committed horrible sins against God and His people, God saved him and used him greatly for His glory. What was Paul's perspective about his past sins? (Read Philippians 3:13-14) (Pages 179-180)

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4- God promises us that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) Spend some time in prayer- worshipping God and thanking Him, and then confessing any sins that come to mind that you have ever committed. Then spend some time thanking God for His promise of forgiveness and cleansing. (Read Lamentations 3:22-23) (Page 181)

5- How can seeking to live a life of knowing the will of God result in joy? (Read Psalm 16:11) (Page 183)

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6- Explain why “There would be no relationship with God and no walking in His will, if it weren’t for Jesus dying on the cross.” (Read John 14:6) (Page 183-184)

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7- Is giving up our own lives to follow Jesus and do the will of God, easy or hard? Explain. (Read Matthew 11:28-30; Luke 9:23; Romans 12:1) (Page 184-185)

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8- Read the Bible verses on pages 188-190. Which ones do you think can be the most helpful to you as you seek to live a life of doing the will of God? (Or list some other Bible verses that you think can help you.)

***Digging Deeper***- Spend some time in prayer- praising, worshipping, and thanking God, and then ask Him if there’s anything He wants to say to you right now. Then listen.

9- What stood out the most to you in this book and why?



***Meditate and Memorize***- Write out any Bible verses from the 10th chapter or Conclusion (or the study guide), or that you have read this week in the Bible, that you would like to meditate on and memorize-

1) \_\_\_\_\_

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2) \_\_\_\_\_

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3) \_\_\_\_\_

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