

GOD'S WILL

The Christian Teachings of Virtue (Series 1, Part 2, Teaching #2)

Leader Guide...

See the back page for detailed facilitator instructions.

Instructions: Watch video, read aloud, underline what stands out to you most, discuss

There are only two paths in life: one where the will of God is followed, and one where the will of self is enthroned. The first leads to fulfillment; the second, to emptiness. The first is the way of virtue; the second, the way of vice. Between them lies every degree of character—every choice that shapes the soul toward holiness or hardens it in sin.

Pride, the oldest and greatest of vices, whispers that you should follow your own way, that your desires should take precedence over God's. But what greater tragedy than to cherish your own will over the will of the One who formed you? "The one thing God wants of all intellectual beings is to sacrifice their will to God's will" (St. Thomas Aquinas). To do otherwise is to resist the very hands that seek to shape you into something beautiful.

Even Christ, the perfect Son, did not cling to His own will, saying, "I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me" (John 6:38). If the Son of God Himself embraced obedience, how much more should we? "Holiness consists simply in doing God's will" (St. Thérèse of Lisieux)—not merely acknowledging it, not agreeing with it in principle, but doing it—fully, joyfully, and without reservation.



But here is the challenge: to follow God's will, you must first know God's will. And to know God's will, you must know Christ. His life, His teachings, His example—all reveal what the Father desires for you. This is why the Scriptures, the saints, and the wise of every age have spoken of the virtues—the characteristics of Christ Himself. For if you seek to fulfill the calling of becoming the person God wills, you must first understand the character God wills.

Too many spend their lives so fixated on where they've made the wrong turns, they never get on with making the right ones. Virtue gives you the tools to gain victory over your vices and rightly align the character-qualities of your soul with the will of God. For the race is not won by looking back. Nor is it won by standing still. The way forward is found in virtue.

And yet, many hesitate, fearing that God's will might cost them too much. What if surrendering to His will requires sacrifice? What if it calls for suffering? What if obedience demands that I let go of the things I desire most? But here is the deeper truth: it is not God's will that robs you, but your own. It is not His plan that leads to emptiness, but yours. The more tightly you cling to your own will, the more restless and unfulfilled you will be. But the moment you let go—the moment you trust, the moment you surrender—then, and only then, will you taste true freedom.

God's will may lead through storms, through deserts, or through silence. It may challenge your preferences, undo your expectations, and call you to surrender your plans entirely. But God's will is never without purpose. Every valley He leads you through is carved with grace. Every trial He allows becomes a forge for your sanctification. To surrender to His will is not to lose yourself—it is to find your true self in Him.

The choice is yours. But know this: the narrow path—the way of virtue, the way of surrender, the way of Christ—is the only path that leads to the fulfillment you seek. Not just in this life, but for eternity.



Watch Video: Scan the QR code to access the video for this teaching as well as additional resources such as related Scripture, quotes, and more.
Or, visit horseandchariot.com/gods-will

There are only two paths before every soul: the way of God's will and the way of self-will. One leads to peace, fulfillment, and holiness. The other leads to restlessness, emptiness, and vice. Every thought, word, and action moves you further down one path or the other. The Christian life is not merely believing in God's will—it is surrendering to it, trusting that His plans are better than your own.

1. God's will leads to life. Self-will ultimately leads to emptiness. → In your daily decisions, whose will is truly guiding you—God's or your own?

2. Surrender is the path to freedom. Clinging to control only deepens restlessness. → What are you holding onto that God may be asking you to release?

3. God's will requires trust. His path may include sacrifice, waiting, or suffering—but never without purpose. → Where is God asking you to trust Him despite uncertainty?

4. Virtue aligns you with God's desires. The more Christ-like your character becomes, the more naturally you follow His will. → Which virtue would help you better align your life with God's purposes?

5. Christ is the model of obedience. Even Jesus chose the Father's will over His own. → Are you willing to obey God even when obedience is costly or difficult?

6. Knowing God's will begins with knowing Christ. His life reveals the Father's heart. → Are you spending enough time in Scripture and prayer to recognize His voice?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SOUL SURRENDERED TO GOD'S WILL

Those who embrace God's will exhibit these traits:

1. Obedient. They seek to do what God desires rather than what feels easiest.

2. Trusting. They believe God's plans are better than their own.

3. Humble. They willingly surrender control and personal preference.

4. Peaceful. They rest in God's providence even when life is uncertain.

5. Faithful. They persevere in obedience through difficulty and sacrifice.

6. Purposeful. They live with eternal priorities rather than temporary desires.

Signs of Self-Will Taking Root...

- You resist God's commands when it conflicts with your desires.
- You become anxious when life doesn't go as you planned.
- You seek comfort or control more than holiness.
- You negotiate with God rather than surrender to Him.
- You delay obedience while waiting for easier circumstances.
- You resent sacrifices required by faithfulness.
- You pursue your own agenda without prayerful discernment.

Think: God's will is not my enemy—it is my path to freedom. The more tightly I cling to my own plans, the more restless my soul becomes. But when I surrender my will to God, I discover that His plans are not meant to diminish me, but to fulfill me. His will may lead through valleys and storms, but it always leads toward life.

Pray: Lord, teach me to desire Your will above my own. Give me the humility to surrender what I cling to and the faith to trust where You lead. When obedience is difficult, strengthen me. When sacrifice is required, sustain me. Help me to know Your voice through Scripture, prayer, and virtue, and grant me the courage to follow wherever You call me. May my life become an echo of Christ's words: "Not my will, but Yours be done." Amen.

SELF-EVALUATION & ACTION STEP

Of the areas you underlined throughout this teaching, which stood out to you most and why?
(Reflect, write down, discuss)

Rate yourself from 1-10

1 = I frequently follow my own will over God's

10 = I consistently align my will with God's will

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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(avoid 5)



Why did you give yourself this rating?

In what area of your life are you most resistant to God's direction right now?

What fear or hesitation makes surrender difficult for you?

What specific act of surrender can you make this week to place God's will above your own?

Daily Affirmation: Today, I will seek God's will above my own. By His grace, I will trust His plans, surrender my desires, and walk the path of virtue—knowing that His way leads to the fulfillment my soul was made for.

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

Courageous Facilitator,

Your willingness to step forward and lead is a gift of grace to your community and a brave act of faith. God bless you for answering the call to inspire others to grow in virtue and pursue the character of Christ.

The Holy Spirit thrives in fellowship and community, working powerfully through the connections and shared experiences of small groups. That's why these lesson plans are designed to cultivate genuine relationships, inspire meaningful conversations, and foster a spirit of transformation through shared wisdom and grace.

Facilitating these lessons is both simple and impactful. While many forms of teaching rely on one-way communication, where one person speaks and others listen, true transformation happens through two-way communication. In this format, ideas aren't merely taught—they're explored together. You'll guide, but everyone will share and learn from one another, creating a rich environment where the Holy Spirit can move and grow each mind, heart, and soul.

These lesson plans succeed because they:

- **Encourage connection** in a collaborative small group setting that fosters action and accountability
- **Empower every voice** with opportunities for each participant to share and contribute
- **Inspire growth** through educational, inspirational, and transformational teachings

Your role as a facilitator is to:

- **Follow the instructions and trust the process**—the wheel is already built, you're here to guide it.
- **Honor the schedule** by being punctual and respecting the time of your group.
- **Lead with love** and rely on God's grace to inspire, guide, and uplift everyone in the group.

Your courage to create a space for growth and fellowship will not only bless others but will deepen your own journey of faith and virtue. Together, with God's help, lives will be transformed.

To God be the glory!

FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

1. Getting Started (5-10 mins)

- ☐ Give everyone a few minutes to join before getting started. Be friendly and greet people as they arrive. Get them talking! Come prepared with some good ice-breaker questions you can ask during this time.
- ☐ 3-5 minutes in, do quick introductions for anyone new to the group. What brought them to the group? Spend a moment getting to know them.
- ☐ Open with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).

2. Watch & Read the Teaching (5-10 mins)

- ☐ Watch the video of the teaching as a group.
- ☐ Have a volunteer read all of page 1. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

3. How it Applies (5-10 mins)

- ☐ Have a volunteer read all of page 2. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

4. Reflection & Discussion (20-30 mins)

- ☐ Have everyone quietly take 5 minutes to complete the "Self-Evaluation & Action Step" on page 3.
- ☐ Then, going around the group, have each person take a minute to share what stood out to them most about the teaching and why.
- ☐ If time allows, continue the discussion using the remaining self-evaluation questions as a guide.

5. Wrap Up (5 mins)

- ☐ Remind everyone to do the daily affirmation until you meet again next time.
- ☐ Ask for any prayer requests from the group.
- ☐ Close with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).