

1. I feel like I am supposed to pursue ministry full time and I pray about it often, but how can I be SURE that's what I'm called to do? How do I know I'm supposed to devote my life to ministry in international missions if I've never heard God clearly tell me that's my path in life?

A famous preacher once said that a successful person is one who finds out what God wants them to accomplish in life and then fulfills it. That is a very profound statement. The true measure of a person's success is not their social status or bank account, or their influence and fame. It is simply doing what God wants them to do. The will of God is not physical, but spiritual. It is never connected with a set of rules, a geographical location or a specific ministry. The will of God is not to be confused with the plan of God for your life. God has a specific plan for your life individually, and only God can give you all of the details regarding it, because it is HIS plan for you, not any man's. The will of God is the same for every person on earth, to be conformed to the image of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Where can I find the plan of God for my life?

You will never find the will of God or the plan of God outside of the Word of God. You find God's will and plan by renewing your mind. (Romans 12:1-2) You renew your mind by letting "... this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:5) You must replace carnal thoughts with God's thoughts by immersing yourself in the Word of God. (II Corinthians 10:5)

How does God reveal His plan for my life?

- You must be in conformity to the will of God before He will reveal His plan to you. Your priority should be to fulfill the general will of God in your daily life, then trust Him to guide you in the detailed plan.
- God is infinitely more interested in your being the type of person He wants you to be than in your doing for Him all the "mighty works." Be what He wants you to be, and He will show you what to do.

Why doesn't God reveal His plan for me now?

- It would overwhelm you before you got started.
- You may not be equipped to handle it yet.
- You may not be the type of person God wants you to be yet.
- God will reveal what you can handle when you can handle it.
- This is illustrated by the old question asked of children, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" If all the five-year olds in America were surveyed on this question, then forced to stick with their answer, in 20 years there would be nothing but firemen, policemen and nurses. As time goes on and you grow spiritually, your interests, talents and desire will grow and change. Be patient and wait on God while fulfilling His specific will for your life.

2. **Why is it that when we pray, we pray with a Calvinistic mindset, praising God for the work He has done, i.e. “giving me faith, saving me, opening my eyes to Your goodness ...” and yet when confronted with theology of Calvinism we utterly reject it? Thoughts? Are you a Calvinist? If not, why?**

First, let me say that I am not a Calvinist because I do not hold to all five points of Calvinism. Further, because the Calvinist debate has spanned almost the entire history of the church, we can safely say that there are tensions in the scriptures with resolution that may be beyond our understanding. Simply put, I believe that... IN GOD’S SOVERIGNTY, HE GIVES US FREEWILL.

In order to enjoy the power of prayer, we must understand the purpose of prayer. God is not a genie in a bottle. He is an all-knowing, all-powerful, all-good Being who desires to pour out HIS BLESSINGS on His people. Prayer is not our way of getting our will done in Heaven. It is God’s way of getting His will done on Earth. With this in mind, we can pray freely and with confidence that God hears us and is proactively prepared to meet our needs when we ask. However, perhaps it is more important that we hear what God wants from and for us.

3. **Are we going to start the new discipleship (mentoring) groups this fall?**

Yes. However, this will be delayed because of our search for the next Pastor.

4. **We had a great discussion in our connection group this morning regarding "Truth". Can you give me some texts or materials to get me pointed in the right direction?**

I would start with the first chapter of my book, *Prove It*. You can pick up a copy on Amazon or at our Hospitality desk. Also, I have some good articles about Truth on my website: www.StephenCutchins.com.

5. **When one is pressured to take on yet another task in his/her church, is there a scripture he/she can use to support an answer of “No, I’m maxed-out at church! You’ll have to ask someone else.”**

In order to say yes to the right things in life, we must say no to the wrong things. Jesus said no to all kinds of things. In Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus said no to Satan’s offers.

JESUS ALSO SAYS NO TO THINGS THAT ARE NOT OBVIOUSLY WRONG

- Jesus says “no” to healing the sick (Mark 1:36-37).
- Jesus says “no” to getting involved in a dispute (Luke 12:13-15).
- Jesus says “no” to the being made king (John 6:15).
- Jesus says “no” to feeding the hungry (John 6:26).

Even Jesus was submitted to God’s plan enough to say no. Both to things that were obviously wrong and to things that were just not in the plan. God loves you and He has a plan for you. Realize that “no” is a short word with lasting power. Avoid the disease to please.