



# Harvest Warriors

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## NEWSLETTER



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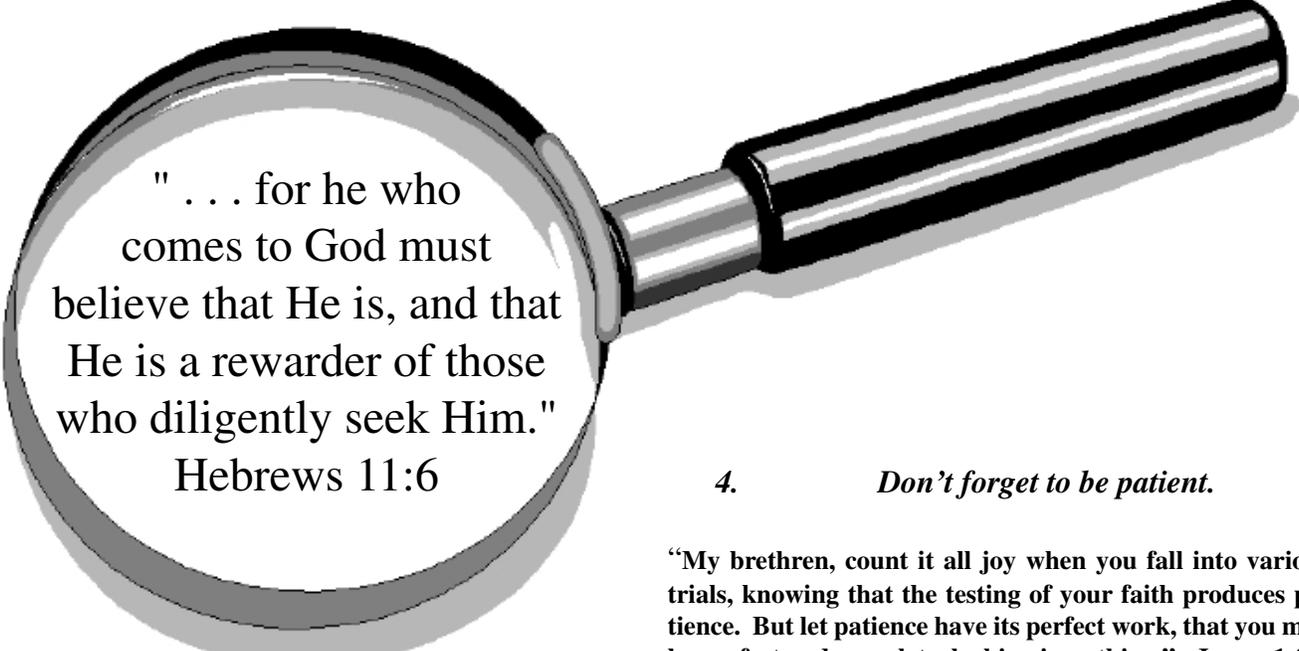
Volume 4 Issue 4

Warring to Harvest

February 2005

## Searching For God's Will

### Part 2



" . . . for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."  
Hebrews 11:6

I, Daniel, left off part one with listing some of the mistakes we make in trying to find God's will. I listed the first three in last month's newsletter. They were:

1. Doubting that God is a fully reliable source of wisdom.
2. Not being patient enough to wait for the Lord to reveal His plan and trying to get what I want for myself in my own way.
3. Our desire for freedom and independence.

Here I want to continue with mistake # 4.

#### 4. *Don't forget to be patient.*

"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." James 1:2-4

Be patient with God and be willing to accept His timing. "He makes all things beautiful in their proper time." (Ecc. 3:11) Remember that God is not obligated to show you everything your future holds right now. The truth is, you couldn't handle it if He did. Learn to patiently accept the fact that His promise to be a "lamp to your feet and a light to your path" is enough.

You might not see where the path leads, but you will see clearly the next step you are to take when you are to take it. Rarely does God show us our steps in advance. Sometimes He tests your patience and trust in Him by withholding His guidance until the 11<sup>th</sup> hour when you really need it. If God hasn't given you the answers and guidance you seek yet, continue

to wait upon Him, and He will come through. He might not always give you the answer when you want it, but He will always give you the answer when He knows you need it. And His goodness is not lacking if He waits until that moment to light your path.

Like the Israelites in the wilderness, sometimes you just have to keep your eyes on the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, and when it moves, you move. Keep your eyes on God. Stay where you are for as long as He is in it, and move, when He leads you to go. The cloud and pillar of fire of His presence will be with you always. Just patiently keep your eyes on it and you will not fail to be where God wants you.

Examine your own heart and its fleshly desires. David prayed in Psalms 51 to the Lord saying, “You desire honesty in the inmost parts,” of my being. If you’re lying to yourself about what you want, you might do what you want, thinking it was what God wanted. Being honest about your hopes, dreams, and fleshly desires makes it much easier to lay those desires at the foot of the cross and follow God. *God has promised contentment to those who find their joy in Him. Honestly evaluate your heart, and you will learn not to seek after things that steal the joy of the Lord out of your life.*

**5. Disobeying the Bible, because I think I will miss out . . . trying to sin my way out of my problems.**

A lot of times when I’m conflicted about what God’s will is, it’s because I’m hoping that He will direct me to do something I want to do, that He has already told me in His word is wrong. If that’s the case, I’ll be waiting a long time, because God will never do that. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Stepping into the 21<sup>st</sup> century hasn’t changed His will, and when I decide to overlook what He tells me in His word in hopes that He will make an exception for me in my circumstances, I will remain conflicted, because God doesn’t change His mind about what He has said in His word, no matter how hard I try to persuade Him.

I make these mistakes because I think His laws will

deny me what I want and need. James Dobson illustrated this point with a story about his pet hamster. This hamster did not understand that what was best for him was not to get out of his cage. He tried with all his might to make that happen, all the while not knowing that Dobson’s pet cat was sitting below in agreement that he should be let out of the cage. You see, both Dobson and the cat knew something the hamster didn’t. The cage was not just a restriction that deprived the hamster of satisfaction. It was a safe haven Dobson provided, protecting the hamster from the cat that wanted to destroy him.

That’s what God’s laws are like. If I think God’s laws are restricting me and holding me back from ultimate satisfaction, Satan, “the cat,” will send people my way to tell me “Amen to that!” Satan wants me outside of the will and protection of God so he can destroy me. When I debate God’s laws in my own mind, I will hear plenty of voices taking the side of rationalizing sin. But if I listen to those voices of error, I’ll be misguided, and then I close the door to the Lord’s wonderful blessing on my life, and open the door to Satan’s destruction of it.

Satan has been doing that stuff since the dawn of the human race. He came to Eve and persuaded her to take what she wanted, that God had told her she couldn’t have. Satan knew that God’s warning was true – if she ate of the fruit, she would suffer a spiritual death and separation from God. Sin separates us from God and from His perfect will for our lives. That’s what Satan wants, and he will constantly bombard us with messages designed to get us to take what we want, and not seek what God provides.

When we read Romans 12, we learn that finding the will of God requires full and complete submission to His protective commands.

“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. And 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.” Romans 12:1-2

Did you catch the progression in God's formula for finding His "perfect will" in that passage? First, we present ourselves to God, offering our bodies as a living sacrifice. Many times we're willing to trust Him with our eternal soul, but unwilling to trust Him with the day-to-day things of this life.

We trust God with our soul, because that's no contest. *We weigh the horrors of Hell against the happiness of Heaven and say, "Sure God, I want heaven. Take my soul. I'll trust You with my eternity." But we don't trust Him with the here and now.* We give our souls, but not our bodies. We want control of this life. Take my soul, God, we say, but let me decide where my body will be, who it will be with, and when. Let me set my own schedule and follow my own dreams in this life, and when it's all over, my soul will follow you. But God says to find His will, we must present our bodies as a sacrifice to Him **first**. He must be given control of our day-to-day life. The first eleven chapters of Romans, talks about the mercy of God in that He promises heaven for our souls. Romans twelve begins with a "**Therefore**." In other words, Paul is saying, "*Since God has been so abundantly merciful to save your soul, I beg of you to also give Him your body. Let Him take the reins of your life now.*"

Second, after presentation of our bodies to God for service, we become transformed by His word. We give ourselves as a sacrifice, and God changes us from the inside out. Then we become able to know and do His will, because we have become obedient to the things His word tells us. *God's will evades me if I'm conformed to this world instead of being transformed by His word.* So, here are the steps to finding God's will for our lives:

- Step 1: We present ourselves to God**
- Step 2: God transforms us**
- Step 3: God reveals His perfect will to us and if we obey in His strength and power, then God is pleased.**

However, if we carry on a conversation with God in which we want Him to endorse our sin, our conversation will go somewhat like this:

*Us:* "God can I do this?"

*God:* "No"

*Us:* "God can't I do that?"

*God:* "No"

*Us:* "God can I date him or her?"

*God:* "No"

*Us:* "God can I go there?"

*God:* "No"

*Us:* "God never speaks to me!!! Why don't I hear His voice?!? Where is He? I ask Him again and again what He wants me to do, and I don't hear any answer!"

Sometimes when we accuse God of silence, we are speaking falsely. For example, there was a young girl a few years ago that sought Rebecca's and my guidance. She told us that she wanted God's guidance on whether she should continue dating an unbeliever who was trying to persuade her into having sex with him. She claimed that the Lord was just leaving her in the dark about what to do. He really wasn't, but because she didn't like God's answer, she convinced herself that God wasn't speaking. God had already spoken to her very clearly in His word. (2 Cor. 6:14, Acts 15:29 and others) She rationalized her disobedience by slandering God and saying that He was refusing to reveal His will for her. *Remember, God doesn't repeat Himself. If there is clear guidance in a matter in His word, then you are responsible to know and obey it. God most likely won't repeat to you something that He has already said in His word.*

Brothers and sisters, be careful not to do what that young lady did. Search the Bible. Never accuse God of silence on an issue on which He has already spoken. Ignorance of His will is often a self-imposed sickness that we give ourselves because we think that means we are not responsible to obey. Let me be clear. You are responsible to obey God's commands, even if you don't know them. (See Lev. 5:17 for an abrupt eye-opener on this topic.)

Here are a few of the things God tells us are certainly His will for our lives:

1. We know for sure it is God's will that we believe Him and trust Christ as our Savior

and make Him Lord of every area of our lives, completely surrendered to Him. If I only surrender the parts of my life I am comfortable surrendering I haven't really made Him Lord.

2. We know for sure it is God's will that once we have found Christ, we do not live the same way anymore. "*Go and sin no more,*" Jesus said. And in 1 John 2, it says, "*My little children, these things I write to you that you may not sin.*" *God's will is that we be freed from sin, not free to sin.*
3. We know for sure it is God's will that we love one another, "This is my commandment: that you love one another," Jesus said. Jesus also said, that as the Father forgives our sins, so must we forgive those who have sinned against us. Forgiveness is not an option! Once again, I want you to stop reading and pick up your Bible and read Matthew 6:14-15. Do you see what it says? This is real love — again, I say, this is real love!
4. We know for sure it is God's will that we be honest. "*You shall not bear false witness,*" the Bible says, and again, God says "*I hate and abhor lying,*" (Psalms 119:163) and again, "*a righteous man hates lying,*" (Proverbs 13:5) and again, "*put away lying,*" (Ephesians 4:25) and again, "*do not lie to one another,*" (Col. 3:9). Lying is something that most Christians do at one time or another. We make up excuses and lie to get out of doing something or going somewhere.
5. We know for sure it is God's will that we be witnesses for Christ. "*You shall be my witnesses,*" Jesus said. (Acts 1:8) And again, "*Come follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,*" He told his disciples, "*Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations.*" (Mark 16:15) **This is a commandment!**
6. We know for sure it is God's will that we don't have any sexual relationships outside of marriage. "*You shall not commit adultery.*" (Exodus 20) and again, "*For this is the will of God: your sanctification, that you should abstain from sexual immorality.*" (1 Thess 4:3) and again, "*fornicators and adulterers God will judge*" (Hebrews 13:4) and

again, "*the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord . . . or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you . . . and you are not your own?*" (1 Cor. 6:13,19)

7. We know for sure it is God's will that we not be profane or dishonorable to Him in our speech, "*You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.*" (Exodus 20:7)
8. We know for sure it is God's will that we not take anything that isn't rightfully ours or to even want to take what is not rightfully ours. "*You shall not steal . . . You shalt not covet.*" (Exodus 20:15,17)

If I study the will of God, I'll find His will very quickly on these and other matters which He has made abundantly clear to every one of us in His word. These commands from God are given to me to protect me and bring me to the most abundant life possible. These commands are because God loves me. Satan wants me to overlook the commands of God and suffer the consequences because he hates me.

**6. We listen to bad advice from people who don't have God's will in mind.**

To many self-proclaimed prophets speak only for gain and admiration or popularity and money. Psalm 1 tells us that the person who will be blessed by God is the one, "*who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly.*" That means, to find God's blessing, I must not give ear to those who have no regard for God's will. The unsaved person and the person who spends little or no time in prayer and study of the Bible will not be equipped to direct me or anyone else in the right direction. The same Psalm says that the one who will be blessed is the one who's "*delight is in the law of the Lord . . . day and night.*"

**Obey in the general things to hear God on the specifics.**

Remember, Psalm 68:18 tells us that if we are involved in active sin, God "will not hear us." That's

why it is so important that we live our lives in obedience to God's general commands.

Sometimes finding God's will in specific things requires obeying Him in more general things, even when He commands us to do something opposite of what we want. Remember the story of Philip the apostle and how he led the eunuch from Ethiopia to Christ? First you have to understand that Philip loved preaching the gospel, and that's what Acts 8:25 tells us Philip was doing, very successfully, in Samaria.

But then God said to Philip through an angel, "Get up and go out to a certain road in the desert." No explanation was given. If you were Philip, what would you have thought? Would you have complained about God's command? "But God, " is what most Christians would have protested, "everything is going so great here. My evangelism is bearing fruit, and you want me to leave here and all this comfort to go out into the desert? There's no people out there, come on God!" You would probably quickly come to the conclusion that you didn't really hear God's voice.

But that's not what Philip did. He obeyed God and went to the desert road between Jerusalem and Gaza. There he saw a chariot, and heard the very specific command of God's voice: "Go near and overtake this chariot." When Philip did that, he found the eunuch bursting at the seams ready to receive Christ as soon as he heard from Philip exactly who Jesus was from the scriptures.

Sometimes we don't know what God wants us to do specifically because we don't do what we know He wants in general. We have to, like Philip, obey the general commands (Go to that road in the desert) in order to hear God's voice in the specific commands (overtake that chariot right there). If you don't hear God's voice on specific things, perhaps it's because He is waiting to speak until you arrive at the road He has told you to take. Perhaps you're on the wrong

road, because of disobedience in the general command.

You want to know God's choice for a spouse? Start with a commitment to obeying His general commands on marriage. (You will remain sexually abstinent until marriage; you will marry a fellow follower of Christ, you will remain married and faithful to your spouse for life, etc.) Your obedience in the general will set you to hear God's voice in the specific.

You want to know what career to pick? Start with a commitment to obey God's general commands on work. You will work hard; you will engage in honest business practices; you will do a job that is moral and honors Him and that will allow you to take part in church worship and ministry, etc. Your obedience in the general will set you up to hear God's voice in the specific.

You want to know what church to join? Start with a commitment to obey God's general commands. Do not forsake the gathering of yourselves together, and keeping the unity of the Spirit. Look for a church

that is fulfilling the great commission, spurring one another onto love, forgiveness, and good deeds. Go to a church where God is working and where you are invited to be part of God's family.

*Your obedience in the general will set you up to hear God's voice in the specific.*

***You have to know the authority of the voice!***

It's no coincidence that the root word of "authority" is "author." Authority over something can only be exercised by the author of it, or by anyone to whom the author delegates responsibility. Any authority conferred upon man by man is not legitimate authority. Legitimate authority always has God as its source. That's why we only obey man — even the human authorities or governments — so long as their commands do not conflict with the



commands of God in His word.

In John 10, Jesus gives us a beautiful view of how we hear His voice through fellowship with Him. How we recognize His voice as the voice of authority. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep . . . I am the good shepherd; and I know my sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even I know the Father. And I lay down My life for the sheep . . . My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." (John 10:11, 14-15, 27)

First of all, I see the concept of Jesus and *I knowing* each other. That's deeper than just the "knowing the Lord" that brings salvation, because Jesus is only talking about the saved when He refers to "My sheep." When the Bible talks about knowing someone, it is referring to the most intimate knowing of them. For example, it talks of man "knowing" his wife, and the two begetting a child as a result. This "knowing each other," Jesus speaks of, is just as intimate as the marital act is designed to be. To obtain that depth of intimacy in a relationship requires trust, commitment, devotion, sacrifice, time invested, and unconditional love. Jesus has unconditional love and devotion for you. He proved His love in His abundant sacrifice for you. But do you have the same love and devotion for Him that is required for intimacy with God? Or is your love and devotion for God conditional? Do you will to praise Him and love Him when things go bad for you? Are you still devoted to Him when you get busy? Does your commitment to Him waver when there is a sacrifice to be made? Do you deny your devotion to Him publicly?

If you really do want to hear God's voice, and you're not just kidding yourself about desiring that, then you must be willing to develop intimacy with God. For that to happen, everything that is currently preventing it is going to have to go. Your schedule is



going to have to change. Your priorities are going to have to change. Do not expect to hear God when you are unwilling to love Him enough to sit and talk with Him for as long as it takes you to learn the unmistakable sound of His voice. Don't play games with God. You will get serious about intimacy with Christ if you truly want to hear Him.

Take some time to pray right now, pray and meditate before reading on. Ask the lord to show you how to love Him and trust Him more so that you will have that kind of special "*knowing*" between you and your Savior. **Then read on.**

Once that level of intimate knowing in our relationship with Christ has been developed, Jesus tells us two things that are going to happen in John 10:27:

*First:* We will hear His voice. There's no "might" or "could" or "maybe" or "hopefully" about that statement. He just says that we will hear His voice.

*Second:* We will follow Him. We will not just know, but will DO the will of Christ. Again, there are no "maybes" here. Just a declaration. *When Jesus and you know each other intimately you WILL hear His voice, and you WILL follow it — PERIOD.*

**Another key:**

Another key to building our trust in God, to find His wisdom and guidance, is to remember our track record with Him. When you realize that God has earned your trust with His faithfulness in the past, your trust in Him grows. Can God trust and depend on you, or are you a draft dodger?

God saved us, and if we look back over our lives, we'll see that it was just one of the many miraculous things He has done for us. He has earned our trust. We should trust Him totally — with everything. His will is perfect, and He loves us too much to ever deny us what is truly best for us.

*God loves us beyond our ability to comprehend. He desires to fulfill our needs, and He's the only one who can.*

### ***Obtaining Divine Guidance***

Because He is the perfect Guide, you can afford to “trust the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Be God-centered in your thinking. That means committing yourself to never letting a “hunch” or a “desire” take precedence over the expressed will of God. It means never allowing your emotional perception to be your truth — Jesus is the truth.



It means never taking action without God in it with you. It also means never failing to act when God has spoken. It means never running ahead of God, and never lagging behind. It means never letting your intellectual understanding be the source of your wisdom, but “taking every thought captive in obedience to Jesus Christ.” (2 Cor. 10:5) It means being willing to trust and obey, even when God’s commands don’t make sense in your heart and mind. The peace that following God was the right decision, might not come to you sometimes until AFTER you have committed to obeying Him. This is because God is not obligated to explain Himself to us, only to guide us. Our responsibility to follow is just as great, even when we don’t understand why He is directing us in a certain way, as when we do understand.

Study the word of God, come to Him in faith, trust Him to provide wisdom and lay out His perfect loving plan for your life. This is all part of your prayers. But, be willing to obey what He tells you in response to your prayers, even if it isn’t what you wanted to hear or do. It doesn’t cost us nearly as much to follow God’s will as it does not to. Disobeying His will always hurts, ALWAYS.

*If you trust and obey, God’s will for your life cannot and will not elude you.* If you live in this way, you will rejoice as you reap the benefits of the great privilege of being in the center of God’s plan for your life.

Remember:

***The Creator of the universe has a wonderful plan for every aspect of your life. Follow Him and Prosper!***

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We are a faith-supported ministry. That means, we are directly dependant on your obedience to God to meet our needs and keep the many facets of this ministry going. We really need your monthly support! Just to put out this newsletter costs us close to \$3,000 per month, and the Lord is telling me to start sending it out in Spanish. We need our monthly support to increase to cover this need. We do not charge anything for the newsletter, and are determined to continue to send it out free. I have an opportunity to travel to other countries, but am unable to do so simply because I cannot cover the cost of my air-plane tickets. Please pray and ask the Lord what He would have you do to support this ministry.

We deeply appreciate those of you who do support us. As you send your gifts, we lay our hands on and pray over each one, asking the Lord to richly bless the sender in return. Please send your offering in the enclosed envelope.

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***We are warring to harvest!***