

*"I Know the*  
**PLANS**  
 **I HAVE**  
**FOR YOU."**  
*Says the Lord* 

A Six-Week Consideration  
of

Finding and Following  
God's Will for My Life

Week 1  
Clueless

## Forward

*There are widely differing views regarding the “will of God”, or the “plan of God”. Look at the world. We cannot all be right about the will of God. It is actually quite embarrassing to hear God’s name and reputation attached to some of the things people believe and do.*

*We are not benefited by simply pointing a finger at people who are, or were, “clueless” about the will of God. That doesn’t make us one bit better.*

*We can however be greatly benefited by understanding how possible it is for a sincere person to be misled. That is the purpose of all the biblical examples given.*

*Honest, humble, God-honoring Jesus-followers are not exempt from the confusion about the will of God. Sometimes we may even perpetuate it. We have our differing perspectives*

*Some hold to the position that God has a “perfect will” that is comprehensive, personal, unique, for the life of every person. His will touches on every area of our lives. It is of utmost importance that we seek out and submit to that plan in every detail. Those seekers of God’s will are sometimes frustrated and uncertain.*

*Other are equally convicted that God has a sovereign, inalterable plan for what he is doing in the world, a general plan for all people. But they insist it is not a comprehensive, personal, or unique script for each person. Acknowledging that some people have a special calling, believe this is neither normative nor exhaustively detailed.*

*This series is not intended to settle all those questions. It is aimed at helping us to see some often-overlooked, but very important insights on how God is at work in and on our lives to accomplish his ultimate plan for us – **to make us more and more like Jesus.***

*Thanks for your willingness to join us on this journey. I believe we will all be better for it.*



# *Some General Observations*

There will be a study guide produced each week during this series. You may download a copy from our website or pick up a printed copy on Sunday.

Each week's guide will contain three components:

- An outline designed to take notes to help you grasp the main points of the message. (If you miss a Sunday, we encourage you to listen to the message online.)
- A daily devotional guide for your personal reflections on the key passages presented in the Sunday message
- A discussion prompt to help prepare you to share your experiences in small group interactions.

The point of this exercise is not to bend us into an artificial conformity. It is an aid to free us to be able to listen, learn, and share freely.

The value of the exercise for you will be in direct proportion to the time and effort that you put into it. Just going through the motions is not likely to be of any benefit to anyone. Opening your heart to allow God to speak to you, through His word, by His Spirit, and in the honest sharing with other believers promises a significant return on the investment of your time and attention.

This material is available online at:

[www.monmouthchurch.org](http://www.monmouthchurch.org)



# DAILY DEVOTIONALS

*Monday*

Read – Romans 8:28-29

<sup>28</sup>And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

<sup>29</sup>For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

**Ask Yourself:**

1. Paul can affirm this knowledge about God's working. But do I believe that it is true?
2. *"Those who love God and are called according to his purpose?"* Does this description fit me? If not, why not?
3. What is the thing to which Paul says we are predestined?
4. What difference might it make in my life today if I was certain that this is the certain plan God has for me?

**Pray**

*Dear God,  
I want love you. In fact, I think I do. However poorly and inadequately, it is the desire of my heart. And I want to live according to your purpose for me. Help me today to trust that whatever happens to me, nothing is greater than your plan and purpose to make me more like Jesus.  
In Jesus' name, Amen*

## Tuesday

Read - John 7:17

<sup>17</sup>Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

### Ask Yourself

1. If God has a will for me, do I choose to do it?
2. Can I expect to know God's will if I am unwilling to do his will?
3. Might this help explain why so many people in Jesus' day were clueless about whether He was from God or working against God.
4. In what ways might my own confusion be linked to my priority interest in my will over God's will? In my knowing but not doing?

### Pray

*Dear Lord,*

*Help me to honestly recognize the state of my own heart in this matter. If I am unsure of where I stand, help me by your Spirit to want to want to do your will.*

*In Jesus' Name,  
Amen*

## Wednesday

Read – Matthew 6:9-13

<sup>9</sup>This then is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, <sup>10</sup>your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Give us today our daily bread.

<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

<sup>13</sup>And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

### Ask Yourself

1. How has this model prayer shaped my view of what prayer should be?
2. Do I pray for God’s rule and reign in my life? In the world?
3. What exactly am I praying for when I ask that God’s will be done on earth as it is in heaven?
4. Do I really want that, or am I just praying in vain?

### Pray

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. Help me to mean what I pray.*

*In Jesus’ name,*

*Amen*

## Thursday

Read – Isaiah 55:8-9

<sup>8</sup>For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord.

<sup>9</sup>“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

### Ask Yourself:

1. Honestly, are there ever times when I think I could do a better job of being God than God?
2. Do I sometimes evaluate, and judge God based on my human standards and perspectives?
3. Do I ever elevate my thoughts, biases, and ways as though they were somehow “the will of God?”
4. What would it take to rid me of those tendencies?

### Pray

*Dear God,*

*You are the sovereign King of the universe. You are the Creator and Sustainer of everything. Forgive me for ever having the audacity to think that my will might be worthy of being elevated above your will. I know it never could. Help me to get out of my own way and always pursue your ways not mine.*

*In Jesus' name,*

*Amen*

## Friday

Read – John 5:37-40

<sup>37</sup>And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, <sup>38</sup> nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe in the one he sent. <sup>39</sup> You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, <sup>40</sup> yet you refuse to come to me that you might have life.

### Ask Yourself:

1. Have I sometimes approached Scripture with something less than a desire to see and know Christ and to become more like him?
2. What fruit would that kind of study yield? Do I hear God's voice?
3. What have I experienced of “*come to me that you might have life?*” Do I have that life?
4. What evidence of that life can others see in me?

### Pray

*Dear Lord,*

*Help me clarify my motives as I handle your word. Teach me. Show me. Correct me. Change me. I want to hear your voice. I want to see you and become more like you.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen*



## Saturday

Read – Acts 26:9-11

<sup>9</sup>I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>10</sup> And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. <sup>11</sup> Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them.

### Ask Yourself

1. Have I ever been as passionately committed to anything or any cause as Saul was to persecuting Christ-followers?
2. Have I ever been really convinced that I should do something others weren't sure about?
3. Can I imagine what it would feel like to discover that I was working against the will of God rather than with it?
4. What would be the hardest part of such a discovery for me?

### Pray

*Dear Lord,*

*I see that it is possible for a devote believer in God to be so certain that they are honoring you and doing your will – but be clueless that they are actually working against your kingdom purposes. I do not want to be that person, Lord. Open my eyes to see your will. I do not want to be a blind guide.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen*

## *Prep for Sunday*

### Read – Jeremiah 29

*In the second message we will take an honest look at a passage that has in a single generation risen from relative obscurity to become one of the most commonly known, cherished, displayed, and quoted verses in all the Bible. But are we clueless about what it actually says? You will be benefited by reading the entire chapter before the message.*

### Some ABC's to Prepare for Sunday

Ask God to give you a desire to do his will  
Be still and meditate on what you have already heard  
Confess any known sins to God  
Don't be listening to judge others  
Eagerly welcome the guidance of the Holy Spirit  
Find some specific thing to immediately apply to your life  
Go and do it!

### Pray

*Dear Lord,  
Thank you for the hope and encouragement your word has been giving to my life. But honestly, this letter to the exiles of Judah is not the sweet word I was expecting. Help me as I learn what it means to live as "an exile in Babylon."  
In Jesus' name,  
Amen*

## *My Small Group Experience*

**Remember:** The purpose of this small group experience is to build community.

- We do this as we seek to encourage and build each other up
- We undermine this when we only talk ourselves up and when we put others down.
- Our aim is for each to become more like Jesus.
- Let's protect one another with confidentiality.

### **Share Something –**

Tell the group something about the context in which you live your life that will help them understand your struggles.

*Listen carefully and prayerfully to what others share.*

- If you could ask God for a clear word about just one thing in your life right now, what would that be?
- What place have you given to finding and following God's will in your life?
- What has been your experience with The Lord's Prayer?

- Have you ever been so sure you were doing exactly what you thought God wanted for you only to find that you were wrong? Clueless? Can you share an instance?
- Was there anything in this week's message that was a particularly helpful insight for you?
- How have the devotional reflections gone for you? Have you experienced anything you want to share?
- What are some of the hard questions you are asking yourself right now?

Share one way the Group can pray for you this week?

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