

Lecture #1: Am I Too Busy for God?

Are you the kind of person who is satisfied with how things are? Or are you seeking to discover God's plan for your life?

To understand God's will in your life, you need to first have a clean heart by personally trusting the Lord Jesus Christ and repenting of your sins. However, it is through developing a personal relationship with God and living the life of discipleship with the help of a spiritual father that you are able to have a clear mind that is receptive to listen to God's plan.

I. What hinders our relationship with God?

Do you have a clear mind, or are you too busy with material matters to hear His voice? The Bible describes many attitudes that hinder a relationship with God.

- **Double-minded:** Thinking one way but behaving in a different way. Do you make dirty jokes or watch inappropriate TV programs?
- **Repeated disobedience:** Committing repeated, willful sin with a diminishing interest in spiritual matters.
- **Hardened heart:** Indulging in unconfessed sin for such a prolonged period that you can no longer differentiate between right and wrong.
- **Fleshly mind:** Focused on world pleasures.
- **Impure mind:** Swamped by impure thoughts.
- **Hostile mind:** Hostile and angry toward God due to repeated sins.
- **Emptied mind:** Not interested in spiritual matters.
- **Darkened mind:** Controlled by the devil.

II. What are characteristics of a clear mind?

On the other hand, a clear mind is in tune with God's will. A clear mind:

- **Differentiates between right and wrong:** Not be misled by today's culture which promotes many false ideas as being true
- **Differentiates between the will of God and that of man:** If your mind is tainted by sin, you may not be able to discern God's purpose for your life
- **Uncluttered:** The cumulative exposure to ungodly television shows, listening to worthless philosophies and worldly ideas does not promote obedience to God
- **Active and progressive:** Seeking to understand the word of God and His goals in your life.
- **Controlled by the Spirit:** The Holy Spirit helps you perceive God's will in the circumstances around you.

III. Maintaining a clear mind

So, how do you maintain a clear mind especially in today's world that is full of temptations everywhere you turn?

- **Repentance and confession:** Obeying God always results in a deeper appreciation of Him and a better understanding of yourself
- **Clear your mind of sinful desires:** Evil desires keep us from understanding God's will
- **Renew your mind:** It is difficult to prevent ungodly thoughts to come into your mind. However, you should seek God's help in pushing these thoughts away
- **Set your mind on spiritual matters:** For example, start your days with a prayer asking God to show you the right path
- **Persist in prayer:** As you continue to pray, God begins to show you areas in your life which need to be examined (i.e. motives, attitudes, etc).
- **Think positively:** Dwell only on positive thoughts that honor and glorify God.

IV. How does God capture our attention?

If you are not continuously vigilant about building a close relationship with God, you will progressively slide into areas of carelessness and disobedience. God in His infinite care and love will try to capture your attention in order to get you back on the right path.

God has a number of ways to help you take notice:

- **Restless spirit:** If you experience restlessness deep within, that you just cannot explain, the wise thing to do is to stop and pray asking God to reveal His will
- **Words spoken by others:** God can speak through other people to alert you of the need for spiritual revival or guide you a certain direction. (See the story of Eli – 1 Samuel 3:4-18)
- **Unanswered prayers:** In 2 Samuel 12:16-18, David pleaded with God to save his son's life, but the infant died. That was an extreme situation to capture David's attention to his deliberate disobedience to God
- **Disappointment:** God may allow setbacks to prevent us from planning our own life without seeking His will. (See Numbers 14 for the disappointment of Israel when they voted against God's will regarding the battle to get to the Promised Land)
- **Extraordinary circumstances:** You must learn to discern God's presence in every circumstance of life. The more watchful you are, the more you will be able to recognize God's hand around you. (God got Moses attention with the burning bush in Exodus 3:1)
- **Defeat:** Be careful of the difference between defeat and failure. God may allow your defeat in a battle in life to capture your attention. That could eventually turn to a great success later in your life. (See Joshua 7 when Israel was defeated for ignoring God in their approach to the small town of Ai)
- **Financial difficulties:** It is only when Israel was driven into caves and mountains by the Midianites that they turned to God, and He then delivered them from their oppressors and blessed them (Judges 6:6)
- **Tragedy, sickness and affliction:** When Saul persecuted the Christians and God struck him with blindness, He certainly captured Saul's attention. So, when God allows a calamity in your life ask yourself "Why?"

At any given time, God knows exactly where you are in your journey towards Him, and He knows what it takes to capture your attention, so BE ALERT. Be careful how you interpret difficult situations and unanswered prayers.

- Although God loves everyone equally, but He has different plans for each one
- Sometimes what you are requesting is exactly the will of God, but He is not answering to force you to re-examine yourself
- You must never judge others who are going through difficult times and interpret their situation to be the result of sin in their lives