

Rick Warren: 3 Simple Questions to Evaluate Your Relationship With God

“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you will ask whatever you desire, and it shall be done for you” (John 15:7).

Does God promise to answer everyone’s prayers?

John 15:7 says, “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you will ask whatever you desire, and it shall be done for you” (John 15:7). That’s a beautiful promise. But in Scripture, every promise has a premise. God promises to give us what we ask for—if we have an honest relationship with Him.

There are three questions you need to ask to evaluate if you have an honest relationship with God.

- 1. Do I refuse to admit things that I have done wrong in the past?** When we go our own way, our relationship with God is broken. We are dishonest when we try to live two different lives at once – one for God and the other for ourselves. So, what do we need to do? “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8-9). Confession is simply being honest with God and saying, “God, you’re right. I was wrong. Please forgive me.”
- 2. Am I ignoring any of God’s principles?** When I know I’m holding on to something that God wants me to let go of, it breaks the connection with him. It says in the Bible, “Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, then we have confidence before God. And whatever we ask, we will receive from Him, because we keep His commandments

and do the things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another as He commanded us" (1 John 3:21-23). You say, "How can I keep all of God's commands? Nobody's perfect!" But God does not demand perfection. He wants us to follow him in faith.

3. **Do I really want God's will for my life?** The Bible says in 1 John 5:14-15, "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. So if we know that He hears whatever we ask, we know that we have whatever we asked of Him." When we ask according to God's will, we have confidence in prayer, and we know He's going to answer.

Many people go around saying, "God, is it your will that I ask for this?" over every little item. The real issue is not, "God, what is your will regarding this specific circumstance?" The real issue is, "Is my life in harmony with God?" If it is, then my desires are going to be in harmony with His will.

God gave us the Bible so we can get to know Him and live out His will. And that can be a source of encouragement. It shows He wants us to succeed at doing the things he asks us to do

Talk It Over

- What has been your experience when you've disobeyed God? What reason would you give for your disobedience?
- What would it look like to be in harmony with God?
- How would your prayers change if you were able to pray with confidence?

***Rick Warren** is the founding pastor of Saddleback Church. His book, The Purpose Driven Church, was named one of the 100 Christian books that changed the 20th century. He is also founder of , a global internet community for pastors.*

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