

When I worked with the youth group, I often heard them talking about praying a lot to God for direction. Made sense, really. These were high school kids and it was definitely time to start planing out your path forward, because that path becomes your responsibility once you graduate. You always hear kids saying 'I'm trying to find Gods will for my life'.

I always said the same thing, "Follow the passion in your heart", which was usually greeted with rolling eyes and a look that they just asked the right question to the wrong person.

But I didn't let them off that easy. I always followed up.

"Do you think when I die and go to the other side and have my judgement day that God is going to look at me and say, 'Andy, I wanted you to be a plumber, but you kept trying to make it as a writer.' - of course not! Gods will for all of us is to be happy. We all have a God-given talent that creates a passion in our heart that we should follow and use to further the love of Gods beautiful world that he has given us."

Gods will is the same for all of us.

God wants us to pursue LOVE in every conversation, every action and every decision we make for our life moving forward. When you focus on love in all things, you are doing Gods will, End of story.

Which brings me to my topic for today.

When young people are exploring the possibilities of what they want to pursue when they grow up, I think most of them totally miss looking into the one area that could probably help them the most.

Their past.

Family history can give you a lot of hints and ideas that could really help you as you look forward to the choices you make in life.

Now with a name like Andy Smith, genealogy searching is quite a challenge. But I'm not talking about following your family back all the way to an uncle Sid who actually was one of the first chosen disciples of Jesus until he realized how much walking there was, so he left the group to work at his brothers winery.

But even with a name like Smith, I was able to get enough information to help me understand where my passion for writing came from.

We are all created from a bunch of split chromosomes. The recipe for each of us is the same - half cup of Moms genes and a half cup of Dads genes, bake for nine months and welcome to the world kiddo. This recipe not only gives us physical similarities that define us as our parents child, but a lot of our emotional and spiritual leanings as well.

As I looked into my family history, my fathers family tree had nothing but writers all the way back to Ireland. My mothers side had very creative and community service people all the way back to Greece. The more I studied my family history, the more I understood why I had no desire to be a doctor, lawyer or mechanic, that's for sure.

Being a creative writer was a pretty good starting place for me. There was a natural ability for me in creating and telling stories.

Understanding my family history didn't make me pursue the same career as everyone behind me, but it gave me an understanding of what my strengths would likely be in whatever I chose to pursue. When computers were invented, obviously there would not be anyone in my family tree that had anything to do with the field of computer sciences. But with the gene pool I came from full of creative writers, I probably could have done very well in creating and advancing this new technology.

Every young person has an obligation to find that one thing that really excites them. That one subject that really gets them emotional and gives them the best opportunity to become the best version of who they are meant to be. Knowing your family history can be a huge help in getting you focused and heading in the best direction.

Praying to God for direction is never a bad idea, but don't underestimate the richness of taking a break from the fast-paced world of today and spend some time sitting with your grandparents and listen to their stories about their history and your family history going back to uncle Sid. You'll never regret those moments.