

Understanding the Will of the Lord (Part 4) (Ephesians 5:1-18)

IV. Walking as Wise Christians in the Will of God

As we complete our journey through *Ephesians 5*, we are commanded by the Lord God to walk diligently in this world, buying back the short amount of time we have on Earth (*Ephesians 5:15-17*). If we walk wisely, we are counted by our Father to be wise children, but if we waste our time on Earth, we are counted as fools. How can we walk wisely on this Earth, properly stewarding the time that God gives us? The answer is to be filled with the Spirit and walk in the will of God. The will of God is for every believer to follow and learn about Christ (*v.1-2*), which allows our minds to be renewed by His Word (*v.3-7*). As we are renewed, we will begin to bear fruit (*v.8-14*). In addition, we will steward our time wisely.

Every person is given the same amount of time in each day. The only difference from person to person is the amount of time that we spend on Earth, which is determined by God (*James 4:13-15*). What we do with that time though, is determined by us. Each believer has the choice to steward their time wisely or waste it as a fool.

We are able to properly discern what to do with our time by following and learning about Jesus Christ, in the scriptures. In other words, we must make Jesus' priorities our priorities. Any expert of time management would agree that managing our time is about managing our priorities. We will *never* do something that we do not want to do, and will always do something that means much to us. If doing God's will is a priority for us, we will be certain to make time for it.

What is God's will? Simply doing the things that Jesus commands us to do in Scripture. He commands us to learn about Him in His Word, spend time with Him in prayer, serve Him in a local, Bible-believing church, be faithful stewards of what He gives us, and be faithful witnesses in word and deed.

Does God have a specific plan for every believer? Oh, yes, He does. But, God will not often reveal His specific will, until a believer has proven themselves to be faithful to His general will. In other words, a child that will not do the simple tasks that a father has assigned will often not be assigned more complex ones, until he is found to be faithful with the basics.

Some people worry and fret about finding God's specific will. Instead of doing this, we ought to be concerned about following His general one. As we do this, God's specific desires for us will become clear. A few things are certain about the specific will of God: He will *never* contradict His Word and will *always* guide us through it (*Psalms 109:105*).

Just as God is not the author of confusion, Satan is (*1 Corinthians 14:33*) and will sometimes try to trick us into being disobedient to the will of God. Therefore, we need the immovable foundation of the scriptures to guide us (*1 John 4:1*). If we think that God is guiding us in a certain direction, and do not have a Scripture reference to back it up, then we must not proceed, until we do. Likewise, if we think that God is guiding us, and the Bible clearly contradicts our thinking, we must recognize our thinking as the Devil's confusion, and trust the scriptures. We must never allow our feelings, notions, or circumstances to take priority over God's Word.

In addition, if we are ever confused about God's guidance, we should gather a multitude of spiritual counselors together for advice (*Proverbs 11:14*). A wise counselor will always put Scripture behind their advice and there is no harm or shame in asking wiser people for help. However, as with our thoughts, if a counsellor gives us advice that conflicts with God's Word, we must always follow the Word of God. Remember that God will not leave His child bewildered and lost in His will. He is not the author of confusion, but of peace and certainty.

God's will is clear, obtainable, and knowable for every believer. He has a general plan that applies to the lives of all believers, in addition to specific plans for every member of the church body. If we obey God's general will, He will eventually make His specific one clear to us. However, if we are confused, we must always keep the Word of God, and a group of godly counsellors, available to guide us.

How is your obedience to God's will for your life? Are you reading your Bible every day? Are you praying to God often? Do you attend a Bible-preaching, Bible-believing church? If you need help with these things, please come to one of our services, or drop by our house for a visit. We would love to help you in any way that we can.

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