

The Gospel of John

Knowing the Will of God

John 7:1, 10-13

INTRODUCTION:

From the world's point of view, history is an unexplained succession of seemingly random events. A meaningless changing of causes and effects. In contrast, the Bible portrays history as the very opposite, the purposeful and perfect working of God's eternal plan.

Jesus said over and over again that He was here to do His Father's will. He did everything according to God's timing and desires.

I have been asked several times recently, "How can I know God's will in my life?" This morning we are going to try to answer that question.

All Stand and Read Scripture.

John 7:1, 10-13 (NASB)

Jesus Teaches at the Feast

7 After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him.

...¹⁰ But when His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as if, in secret. ¹¹ So the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, "Where is He?" ¹² There was much grumbling among the crowds concerning Him; some were saying, "He is a good man"; others were saying, "No, on the contrary, He leads the people astray." ¹³ Yet no one was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

Prayer

We're back in Judea, and the picture is not good. The time has come for the Feast of the Booths. Reports have been coming back from spies in Galilee to the leaders of Judea about the impact of His ministry there. The Jewish leaders were seeking to kill Jesus and they knew that Jesus would be attending. They saw Jesus as a blasphemer and a deceiver. And their influence was strong with their Jewish followers.

But God knew that the timing was wrong for Jesus to go in the caravan with his brothers to Jerusalem. So He had Jesus stay behind and secretly leave a few days later, using a different route through Samaria.

Jesus always knew God's timing and will because He was God.

John 5:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

Jesus knew and only did God's will.

BODY:

I. BE BORN AGAIN.

So you want to know God's will for your life? Then you have to desire God's will in your life above everything else, whatever that will might be, whatever it might involve. It requires that you wipe out your own agenda, your own will, your own desires, your own longings, your own hopes, dreams, plans, and ambitions.

That is where you have to start.

I can promise you that if you do not have a heart-felt commitment to the will of God, you will not experience it in its fullness. First you **MUST** obey what you already know to be God's Will.

Many people **want** to know what God's plan is for their lives, but they overlook the fact that 98% of His will is already revealed in His Word. God is very clear about many, many aspects of His will.

The first step is to hear God's word and believe, turn your life over to Christ, and be born again.

John 3:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Once we have heard the Gospel and believed, God draws us to Him. His word convicts us of our sin, and we realize that we need salvation. Jesus told us that we must be born again.

Acts 2:38 (NASB)

³⁸ Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

So believing what Jesus accomplished for us and obeying God's plan of salvation is an important first step.

II. BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT.

Second, I want you to turn to Ephesians 5. Paul tells the people in Ephesus and us how to know the **revealed** will of God.

Ephesians 5:15-20 (NASB)

¹⁵ Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most

of your time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ **So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.** ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

The word "foolish" is another word for stupid. "Do not be stupid, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

So if you don't understand the will of the Lord, what are you?

That's right, stupid. That's what it says. Paul doesn't mince any words does he?

Galatians 2:20 (NASB)

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Listen, to be filled with the Spirit means you are no longer try to satisfy yourself with worldly desires. You don't have any selfish goals. You don't have any ambitions except those that belong to the Holy Spirit, right? That's to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

It simply means you're **dominated by the mind of the Spirit**. Now, how can that be? Well, it's not just some supernatural experience. It's not some mysterious cloud that comes into you and does certain things. To be dominated by the mind of the Spirit is to be dominated by the Scriptures. I can't say it any more clearly than that.

Romans 10:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

To be controlled by the Spirit simply means that you obey the Word of God because the Word of God is revealed by the Holy Spirit, isn't it?

And Who is the author of Scripture? The Holy Spirit.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 (NASB)

¹⁴ You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become **convinced** of, (Sounds like the definition of faith, right? The assurance of things hoped for and the **conviction** of things not seen) **knowing from whom you have learned *them*,** ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷ **so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**

To be literally dominated by the Spirit is no different than being controlled by the mind of the Spirit, which is revealed in Scripture.

So what is God's will for your life?

God's **will** is that you be saved, and that you be filled with the Spirit. This means that you are **hearing, believing,** and **doing** God's word. The truths that God reveals to us through His word, are promises and truths that we can only receive from God. These are

truths that we cannot experience, see, touch, or taste in this world. As Jesus told Simon Peter when he declared that Jesus was the Messiah...

Matthew 16:15-17 (NASB)

¹⁵ He *said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

If we do not **obey** the things that God has **revealed to us clearly to be His will**, why would we think He would reveal any further information regarding His plan for our lives?

ILLUSTRATION:

As a golfer approached the first tee, he faced a difficult hole that had a green surrounded by water, he debated if he should use his new golf ball. Deciding that the hole was too risky, he pulled out an old ball and placed it on the tee. Just then he heard a voice from above say loudly: "**Use the new ball!**" Frightened, he replaced the old ball with the new one and approached the tee.

Now the voice from above shouted: "**Take a practice swing!**" With this, the golfer stepped backward and took a swing.

Feeling more confident, he approached the tee when the voice again rang out: "**Use the old ball!**"

We should seek only to do the will of God. He may stop us from what we are intending to do and turn us in a different direction but we must follow his lead.

III. SEEK PURITY AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Now we've said God's will is that you be saved. God's will is that you be Spirit-controlled or Spirit-filled.

This brings us to the third point of knowing God's will. This is the part that applies **specifically** to you. It is how you know the part of God's will that is not revealed in Scripture. In other words, how do I know God's will when it comes to my job, who I will marry, my family, and my major decisions in life

Now listen to this,

1 Thessalonians 4:3a, 7-8 (NASB)

³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification;

How about that? Wasn't as hard to find as you thought, was it? Right there all the time.

What does that mean?

Holiness, purity, "not being conformed to the ways of the world but being transformed by the **renewing of your mind**". That's God's will in your life!

⁷ For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification. ⁸ So, he who

rejects *this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.*

I look at it this way. If God is for us who can be against us.

If God puts something in front of us that we do not know how it can possibly be done, trust that if God wants it done, He will provide a way. Nothing is too difficult for God! And what a blessing it is when what once seemed impossible materializes in front of your eyes!

ILLUSTRATION:

There is an interesting fact concerning the Mississippi River. Even though everyone knows it flows from north to south, if you fly the length of the river, you will find it at times flows east, north, and, even at other times, west. But ultimately, the river flows south. It starts near Canada and empties into the Gulf of Mexico. What really matters is not the river's temporary direction, but its ultimate destination.

Sudden changes in our plans may be hard to accept. But they may be forced upon us by some circumstance over which we may have no control. We can only see things from our own present realities, but God knows the end from the beginning. I am sure that there have been times when we might have been involved in a fatal crash if we had been just a few minutes earlier or later on one of our trips. He sees us and knows when our current path is beset with danger and He plans our ways and guides us accordingly. That is why he often permits reversals and failure to come our way. He changes our plans, for He sees the danger in them. What a blessing, then, that God does not always let us carry out our own plans!

God's plans are always perfect.

God has created you to fulfill a specific role in this world. There is no one else who can achieve completely what God has purposely created you to do.

God has gifted every one of us to perform a special mission for which we alone were created. How amazing is that?

It is that will of God that is essentially expressed in...

Romans 8:28 (NASB)

²⁸ And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

So, when you seek to discover God's will for your life, pay attention to how He has gifted you. His plan for you will always be directly related to the gifts that He has bestowed upon you. You may not even know that you have those gifts yet, but the great news is that you will automatically be good at whatever it is that He has called you to do!

CONCLUSION:

Romans 12:1-2 (NASB)

12 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, (then

listen to how he finishes) **so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.**

So, what is the will of God? To be saved, Spirit-filled, and live a new life in Christ. Accept every single thing that comes into your life as that which God has brought for your good and His glory and have a thankful heart. That's it. That's what God says about His will. You say, "But, but, what about me?"

Are you ready for this? If you're saved, Spirit-filled, and living a new life in Christ, do you realize what wants you to do? **Whatever you want!** Do you like that? Do whatever you want!

You say, "You're kidding?"

No, I'm not kidding.

You say, "What do you mean? I can't just go do what I want!"

Yes you can, because if that's how you're living, guess who's in charge of your wants? Hmm. The Holy Spirit, right?

You see, that is what we read in...

Psalm 37:4 (NASB)

⁴ Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart.

He is your delight! You're consumed with Him and you desire to do only His will. When you delight yourself in the Lord, He will give you what? **The desires of your heart!**

Why? Because **if** you have fully surrendered to Him, He is in control of them! The desires that you have are His desires.

That is how Jesus worked, right?

John 5:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

So go do what you desire. When it says, "**He'll give you the desire of your heart,**" it doesn't mean that He will give you what you **selfishly want**. It means He will cause you to desire what **HE wants**. Faith requires completely trusting that God's promises are true. It is up to us to fully believe. How is that good news? Knowing and doing God's will is not nearly as mysterious as it may seem.

John 10:27-28a (NASB)

²⁷ My sheep **hear My voice, and I know them, and **they follow Me;** ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them,**

That is how you know and accomplish God's will in your life.

The Family of God.