



FIRST WORD, LAST WORD, GOD'S WORD
God's Will: Nothing More, Nothing Less, Nothing Else -
Part 1
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"I chose one. It took seven years of study and frustration before I made my first professional appearance. It took another seven to reach the Metropolitan Opera. And now I think whether it's laying bricks, writing a book--whatever we choose--we should give ourselves to it. Choose one chair." - Luciano Pavarotti

1. THE GOOD, PLEASING AND PERFECT WILL OF GOD

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12.1-2

Offer your body.

Be conformed or be transformed.

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Romans 12.2

“Why do we love modern day fairytales? Why do we love stories of transformation? Why do we love stuff about frogs turning into princes, ugly ducklings turning into swans, and marionettes turning into real boys? Why do we like those kinds of stories?” - John Ortberg

Test it.

What a God! His road stretches straight and smooth. Every GOD-direction is road-tested. Everyone who runs toward him makes it. Psalm 18.30 (Message)

Good, pleasing, and perfect will of God



2. THE WILL OF GOD AND THE WORD OF GOD

Who we are always takes priority over what we do.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3.5-6

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119.105

❑ Doing God's revealed will helps us discover His concealed will.

"God has enough trouble getting us to do his will, without making it hard to find." - Jerry Sittser

...in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3.6



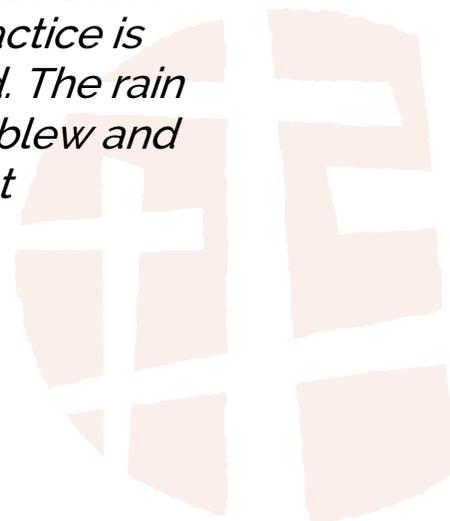
"The better you get to know the WORD OF GOD, the less confusing is the WILL OF GOD. Those who struggle the least with the will of God are those who know the Word of God best." – Dr. Charles Swindoll

Most people don't really want to know the will of God in order to do it. They want to know it in order to consider it.

The best way to know God's WILL is to say "I WILL" to God!

❑ Obedience is at the heart of the will of God.

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash. Matthew 7.24-27



The Greek word for “foolish” is moros, from which we get the word “moron.”

...everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man... v.24

...everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man... v.26

❑ For all those turned off by the word “obedience”

If you keep my commands, you'll remain intimately at home in my love. That's what I've done - kept my Father's commands and made myself at home in his love. I've told you these things for a purpose: that my joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly mature. John 15.10-11(The Message)

Why do you call me “Lord, Lord,” Jesus says, “and not do what I tell you?” Luke 6.46

Jewish people repeated a person's name as an expression of intimacy.



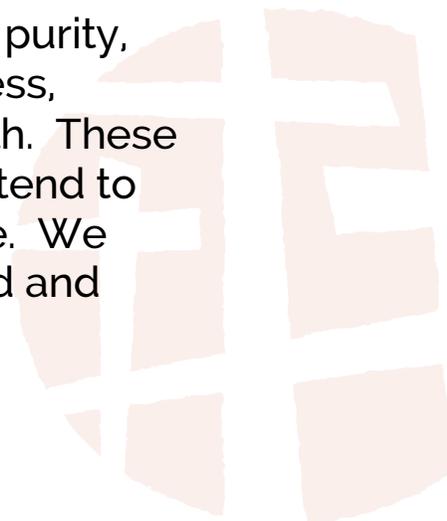
With Jesus, you can never separate "LOVE" from "OBEDIENCE."

Whoever has My commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves Me... John 14.21

3. OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF MISSING OUT ON THE WILL OF GOD

"Conventional understanding of God's will defines it as a specific pathway we should follow into the future. God knows what this pathway is, and he has laid it out for us to follow. Our responsibility is to discover this pathway—God's plan for our lives... If and when we make the right choice, we will receive his favor, fulfill our divine destiny and succeed in life... If we choose wrongly, we may lose our way, miss God's will for our lives, and remain lost forever in an incomprehensible maze." - Jerry Sittser, *The Will of God as a Way of Life*

"The most important issues for God are moral purity, theological fidelity, compassion, joy, our witness, faithfulness, hospitality, love, worship, and faith. These are His big concerns. The problem is that we tend to focus most of our attention on everything else. We obsess over the things God has not mentioned and



may never mention, while, by contrast, we spend little time on all the things God has already revealed to us in the Bible.” - Kevin DeYoung, Just Do Something

A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 7.39

“One significant issue is the whole notion of romantic love which is so prevalent in our society. By this I mean the notion that there is one person out there who is the perfect person for you, and if you can just find him, you will live happily ever after. The truth is that if you believe that enough, then nobody will ever quite fit or measure up, and you will go on looking for Mr. or Mrs. Right forever... never making a lasting commitment. The truth is that the whole romantic love thing is 90% hokum, because it's trying to make another person in a love relationship into a savior. There is only one Savior and He is Jesus Christ. No other human being can bear that weight.” - Dr. Robert Bellah

❑ God's purpose for my life will never change

God is not a man. He doesn't change His mind.

1 Samuel 15.29



His plans endure forever. His purposes last eternally. Psalm 33.11

God knew the problems before He made the plan.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1.) Although we would like to see the grand plan for our lives, God usually guides us one step at a time. The light He gives us is enough to illuminate the path immediately in front of us – enough light for the next step. Why is this a good thing? Why do you think God does it this way? Has this ever happened to you? Describe what that was like and what was the result.

2.) With God, who we are always takes priority over what we do. Which means, regardless of our circumstances, the drudgery of our job, the joylessness of our marriage, the discontent we have with where we live, what God is most concerned with is the person we're becoming. This is why the emphasis of Scripture is not so much on an individualized view of the will of God and more about the will of God as expressed for all believers, that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, seek justice, practice gentleness, love our enemies, care for the poor, and let our light shine. This is the will of God that applies to us all. Take some time as a group to share

your experiences with the revealed will of God in the Bible. How does knowing and living His revealed will help you with matters where you are uncertain as to what God might have you do?

3.) Pastor Keith took some time in this message to explain how obedience to God's known will is tied to loving God. How Jesus Himself asks, how can you call me Lord, Lord (a term of endearment and loving connection) and yet not do what He asked them to do? How is this understanding different from what you might have experienced or heard other Christians say. Why are those who tie obedience to a sense of duty or willpower mistaken?

4.) Most all discussion today concerning the will of God revolve around career, love interests or where one will ultimately live. Yet none of these things are addressed in significant ways in Scripture because they were non-issues as Pastor Keith explained. He said, "Maybe the will of God is about who I am and how I live regardless of whom I marry, what I do for a living or where I happen to call home. And maybe if our emphasis was on being the sort of person who lives God's will regardless of my circumstances, then maybe we wouldn't have so many miserable people who think because life is hard, life is difficult, then I must have missed the will of God and married the wrong person or chose the wrong profession or went to the wrong city." Take some time to unpack this as a group. Explain your thoughts and experiences to the

group in regard to this. How often have you seen people scapegoat onto having missed the will of God simply because their marriage, job or place where they live is not working well or is very unfulfilling.

5.) As Pastor Keith wrapped up, he reminded us that a God Who knows everything, knew every twist and turn of our life, every act of disobedience, every time we chose our way over God's way. God knew the problems before He made the plan. So many people give up hope because they feel they are past being used by God because of some choice they made along the way (as if God didn't know that would happen). So because He knew it, He's already worked it into the plan. You're still on plan "A" and you don't have to settle for a life of mediocrity or being sidelined for the rest of your life. What will you let God do in your life today? What's your next right step? Of all the things God has declared in His word as His will, where is He growing you right now?

