

CROSS TRAINING – ESSENTIALS 2, CLASS 7

KNOWING AND OBEYING GOD’S WILL FOR YOUR LIFE

God’s will is not like a map that you look at and then decide whether or not you’ll go this way or that way. His will is more like a detailed set of instructions, which are necessary for success.

1. **Your ability to know God’s will for your life depends on your willingness to obey whatever His will may be.** For the Christian there can’t be a middle ground. His will is the ONLY way to experience the victorious Christian life. We can learn this the easy way (like Paul) or the hard way (like Jonah).
Jonah: Jonah 1:1-2 – God calls Jonah, Jonah 1:3 – Jonah rejects God’s plans for his life, Jonah 2 – Jonah repents – puts God back in a place of authority, Jonah 3 – God speaks a second time.
Paul: Acts 9:5-6 – Paul (Saul at the time) is told go into the city and be told what he “must do”, Acts 15-18 – Paul obeys “At once.”
 - a. There is a Biblical principal that if we know God’s will and choose to go our own way He’ll let us, the resulting consequences are not His fault (but he will often use these to develop maturity in us).
 1. He won’t violate our free will.
 2. If we aren’t being obedient to what He has already called us to, His will will seem very cloudy and unsure.
 3. When we choose to obey what He has already called us to, the rest of His will becomes clear also.
 - b. There is a second Biblical principal that if we seek God’s will with the proper motivation (obedience out of love) He will never withhold His will – but will always make it clear exactly when we need to know it.
2. **Knowing God’s will is a lifestyle that flows out of a relationship with Him.** To know God’s will you must start with an attitude of obedience, then follow these Biblical principals.
Verses: **Jer. 29:11** – *“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”*
Eph. 2:10 – *“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*
Rom. 12:1-2 – *“Therefore, I urge you brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, Holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer 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.”*
 - a. God’s Word literally gives us a three-step method for knowing His will (Rom. 12:1-2).
 1. **Present your body as a living sacrifice.** Living is a continual thing. The Word instructs us to continually put His will above our own (ie. Sacrifice our hopes, dreams and desires for His purposes). This is a lifestyle of putting Christ on the throne.
 2. **Do not be conformed to the patterns of this world.** What are some of the patterns of this world? Do not be conformed to them!! **This is the exhaling part of spiritual breathing.**
 3. **Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.** The renewing of your mind occurs when you read, meditate on, study and memorize the Word; this also involves praising Him (establishing His rightful place of authority in your life – a natural response to the Word working in you). **This is the inhaling part of spiritual breathing.**
 - b. God’s Word also implies that complete dedication to His will is required to know it.
 1. Dedication involves ¹desiring to do His will, knowing confidently that His way is best and ²being willing to do His will whatever that may be.

Remember: Knowing His will for your life requires ¹presenting your life for His service, ²not being conformed to the World and ³being transformed by the renewing of your mind. You must be willing and dedicated – Like Isaiah (Is. 6:8) – “Here am I, send me.” Imitate Christ’s attitude (Phil.2:5-8, 13).

3. **Some important characteristics of knowing God's will.**
 - a. God is eager to reveal His will (Ps.127:1).
 - b. God isn't obligated to reveal His will if you aren't willing (Jn.17:7).
 - c. God's will is often in line with the desires of a Spirit filled Christian (Phil.2:13, Ps.37:4).
 - d. God expects us to use sanctified common sense – not emotionalism or mysticism (Prov.16:9, 2Tim. 1:7).
 - e. God won't lead you into failure (Ps. 37:5, Rom. 8:28).
 - f. God's will is in the present tense – a lifestyle (Deut.30:1-6).
 - g. God won't reveal His will for your entire life all at once; He will always reveal it to you at exactly the right time (Ps.32:8).
 - h. God may not reveal more of His will to you if you are being disobedient to what He has already given you (Jonah chapters 1-3).
 - i. God's will is always in agreement with His Word (Ps.119: 9-11).
 - j. God wants you to be careful about who you go to for advice (Is.8:19-20, Prov.3:5-6, Ps. 1:1).
 - k. God's will is about a relationship not a situation – focus on Him not the circumstance (Jer.9:23, Jn.15:5, 14-15, Col.3:23, Ps. 25:14).
 - l. God's will cannot be improved upon, it is perfect (Rom.12:1-2, 1Cor.2:9).

4. **How to know God's will.** Here are some simple guidelines that will help you know God's will.
 - a. Make sure you are following Rom.12:1-2. This doesn't mean you have to be perfect but it is should be what you are committed to.
 1. Are you presenting your life continually for His purposes?
 - a. A life of surrender and obedience.
 2. Are you being conformed to His character – not the world's?
 3. Are you being transformed by the renewing of your mind (ie. reading, meditating on, studying and memorizing the Word – learning to think like He does)?
 - b. If you answered no to any of those repent (begin thinking the way He does about the issue) and confess this to God (1Jn.1:9).
 - c. Pray about the issue – maybe even fast (Mat.7:7).
 1. Ask God for wisdom (James 1:5).
 - d. Check what the Word has to say about the issue.
 1. What are the direct statements about the issue?
 2. What are the principals about the issue?
 - e. Create a pro's and con's list – this isn't wrong – but it is in line with the Word (2Tim.1:7, 1Cor.2).
 - a. God has given you a sanctified mind – use it. Pray and ask for His wisdom then write out the pro's and con's according to what you believe is His best interest – not your own selfish ambitions.
 - b. Wisdom is one of the biggest Biblical directives as far as knowing God's will – see the entire book of proverbs for example. Use wisdom and common sense in deciding God's will – this is Biblical; God will direct your thinking (**James 1:5**).
 - f. **Ps.37:4** – God will give you desires in line with His will as you walk with Him. Often a Spirit filled Christian's desires will be in line with God's will.
 - g. **Rom.12:3-8** – God will gift you with specific talents as you walk with Him. These talents will often be a part of your calling and God's will for your life.
 - h. Seek confirmation from godly authority in your life (pastor, parents, accountability partners, etc.).
 1. Do these wise people in your life agree that this is God's will for you?
 - i. God will give you specific direction at times via “speaking to you.” This is fairly rare Biblically, however, and we are never once in scripture commanded or told to wait for a “voice.” God's voice occurs primarily in scripture, but occasionally through other mechanisms (i.e. in your mind). Don't rely completely on this. There are only a few examples of this in the entire Bible and there are no commands to wait for this anywhere. He will guide your thinking according to his will but don't wait for a sensationalistic voice. Always check what you think God says with scripture and get confirmation of it from spiritual authority.
 - j. Desire to obey His will.

