

CALL to PRAYER - Thank God for His blessings on our land...ask for His will to be done...

Intro - Part 2 of "*Discerning God's Will*." Last week we looked at the way to find God's will. It is *the way less traveled*. It is not the way the world follows. The whole world is going with the flow ...floating downstream in the direction of destruction but we are called to swim upstream. We must have a change of direction if we want to be pointed in the direction of God's will. In short, *the way of repentance* is the way to find God's will...change of mind & direction. That path is not *the well beaten path*, but it is the right path (Rom. 12:2). But once you are on that straight & narrow path...does it mean the everything is clearly spelled out regarding God's will? NO, it does not. So how are we to act on the unknown? What is the relationship between God's will & our will? Next week (Lord willing) we will begin to address the specifics of God's will for our lives but today we deal with the vague. How do we live in the light of God's will when we are in the dark? There are black & white issues with God's will but there is also the grey & the great unknown.

## *JAMES 4:13-17 - DISCERNING GOD'S WILL - PART 2*

### *GOD'S WILL & OUR WILL*

- We are made in the I.O.G. One of God's communicable attributes is WILL (Ps. 115:3)
  - God gave animals instinct. He gave humans intellect and a will
  - We can choose or not choose...act or not act. A reasonable will weighs what it wants and acts
- We are volitional creatures & responsible creatures.
  - We are not robots. We are not preprogrammed with a predetermined script
  - We make choices and we are responsible for our choices and actions....
  - Because we have a will, we will give an account to Him who gave us that will.
- Our wills are damaged.
  - Sin didn't remove our will, but it damaged and enslaved our will.
    - Sinful man has lost the ability to choose "*the good*." (Gen. 6:5)
    - Most people really don't want to know God's will...they just want God to approve of their will. "*Not YOUR will but mine be done.*"
  - The new birth gives us a new will...a renewed freedom & ability to choose good.
- Our wills are derived from God's will and should be submissive to His will.
  - But is God's will always clearly spelled out?

### *ACTING ON THE UNKNOWN*

- James 4:13-17 addresses a common unknown - travel, residence and work.
  - God told Abram to move...but we don't have that detailed Divine information.
    - There is not "chapter & verse" on where to: go... live ....or work.
  - So how do we act on the unknown?
  - How do we choose "*the good*" not knowing specifically what God wants?

- God's will may be unknown but don't live & act as though God is *unknown or uninvolved*
  - James 4:15
  - 1 Cor. 4:18-19 (While the cats away the mice are at play. The cat is planning on coming - Lord willing)
  - 1 Cor. 16:5-7 (Planning a long stay, if God permits)
  - It is wicked not to factor in God's all-encompassing will - James 4:15-17
    - Ps. 10:4 (NKJV) *"The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts."*
- Always consider the caveat - "God's will overrules my will."
  - Prov. 16:9 Prov. 19:21
    - Do any of our lives turn out exactly like we planned?
  - We are to pray this way (Matt. 6:10) and live this way.
- How do I "choose the good" if I don't know God's will? How do I decide in the dark?
  - Two general guidelines:
    - 1] ***IF YOU CAN THANK GOD FOR IT THEN ENJOY IT*** - 1 Tim. 4:4-5
    - 2] ***IF YOU CAN GLORIFY GOD IN IT THEN DO IT*** - 1 Cor. 10:31
  - Choosing "the good" is the choosing what glorifies God and recognizing that is God who supplies everything for us to enjoy. (James 1:17)

### **DOING WHAT WE WANT**

- ❖ What God hasn't spelled out He has left for us to figure out.
  - God has not given us a detailed scrip to follow...
  - He has given us a will to act or act otherwise within His will as a guideline.
  - There is wiggle-room where God's specific will is concealed.
    - If God hasn't spelled it out the He has left you to figure it out.
    - Proverbs 25:2
- ❖ Examples of "doing what you want" within God's will.
  - Acts 18:20-21 refusing an extended stay....maybe later if..
  - Acts 21:11-14 going against advice on entering a dangerous situation
  - 1 Cor. 7:39
    - God's revealed will for the widow - if you re-marry...marry in the Lord
      - Within those parameters - marry any man you wish.
    - Red car or blue car - which do you like best?
      - Steal it or pay for it? That is clearly spelled out
  - 1 Cor. 16:12
    - Apollos didn't want to go on that missionary trip. (his choice/prerogative)
  - Rom. 12:18
    - Some things are left to our discretion...even in personal interaction.
    - 12:17 & 12:19 are the parameters, but there is wiggle room in-between.
    - Do what you want within God's revealed will...it is up to you.
- ❖ It is God's will that you apply His word & wisdom to every area of your life and act accordingly. It is God's will that you do what you want within the parameters of His will