

# The Known Will of God

Ephesians 5:17

## I. Intro

- A. Will of God – different attitudes of believers; some genuinely desire to know, others indifferent
- B. Youth, VBS – Wednesday, little concern about God’s will for their life
- C. **Question:** As believers, how concerned should we be about God’s will for our lives?
  - i. Walking in the ways of God, or walking in the Spirit; few weeks ago, Fruit of the Spirit; Galatians 5:25 (ESV)  
25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with *[walk by]* the Spirit.; Literal translation phrases as *living* and *walking IN the Spirit*
  - ii. **Question:** How can we do that without knowing, even being concerned about, what God’s will is?
- D. Passage today – **READ Ephesians 5:15 – 17**
- E. Learning God’s will certainly comes through prayer, time in His Word, and time with other believers which includes the church
- F. However, no one can know their purpose or what to accomplish on this earth without knowing the will of God; but finding God’s will for our life shouldn’t look like trying to find answers by gazing into a crystal ball
- G. Even though we may not know what God’s will/purpose is for specific areas of our life, we can know God’s will regarding spiritual areas of our life – focus on today; more important than just knowing God’s will is doing God’s will

## II. Change of Will

- A. As a disciple/follower of Christ grows spiritually, and their relationship with Him becomes closer/more intimate, a change of ambition begins to take place – no longer about pursuing what we want in life, but about pursuing what God wants
- B. Jesus taught His disciples to seek after and discern what God’s will was – part of prayer example He taught the disciples; Matthew 6:10 (ESV)  
10 Your kingdom come, **your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**
- C. Seeking the will of God isn’t to be about wanting to know our future; God won’t always give us details about the future because He wants us to completely trust Him FOR the future and obey Him IN the present
- D. God first calling Abraham, to make him the Father of the Jewish people and ultimately the nation of Israel: Genesis 12:1-2 (ESV)  
1 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country (hometown, place of birth) and your kindred (leave family with exception of immediate

family) and your father's house (**residence, place of comfort**) to the land that **I will show you**. (very few details, just have to trust and go on faith)

2 (If he obeys ... ) And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

i. God wanted Abraham to obey in the present and trust Him for the future

E. Seeking and pursuing after God's will is more about trust and obedience instead of all about knowing; part of our spiritual growth/maturing (discipleship) is learning to trust and obey God more

F. That's living in and walking by the Spirit – walking wisely, not unwisely (v. 15)

G. Hymn - Trust and Obey lyrics:

*When we walk with the Lord in the light of His word*

*What a glory He sheds on our way*

*While we do His good will He abides with us still*

*and with all who will trust and obey*

*Trust and obey, for there's no other way*

*to be happy in Jesus*

*But to trust and obey*

H. So as believer/disciple/follower of Christ, our will is to be conformed/changed to align with God's will – that comes through trusting Him for the future and obeying in the present

### III. Action of Will

A. The real challenge is not KNOWING God's will, but DOING

B. All through scripture, God's makes His will known to many different people, and some of them obeyed and followed, some hesitated and were reluctant, and some refused

C. Example of hesitation and reluctance – Jonah; go to Ninevah, preach repentance and turning from sin and back to God, Jonah refuses to start with but after God gets his attention by letting him spend several days in the belly of a fish, Jonah reluctantly obeys; Jonah 2:7 (ESV)

7 When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.; Wasn't thrilled about obeying, but he did because he quickly realized and understood - Jonah 2:9 (ESV)

9 "... Salvation belongs to the LORD!"

D. Example of refusal – King Saul; Amalekites – enemies of Israel, God through Samuel the prophet gives Saul permission to destroy them

i. 1 Samuel 15:2-3 (ESV)

2 Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came up out of Egypt.

3 Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction all that they have. Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.”

ii. **Saul didn't obey God completely – He spared Agag, the Amalekite king, and - 1 Samuel 15:9 (ESV)**

9 ... the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fattened calves and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them. All that was despised and worthless they devoted to destruction.

iii. **Lord's word to Saul through Samuel as result of his disobedience: 1 Samuel 15:26-28 (ESV)**

26 ... you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel.”

27 As Samuel turned to go away, Saul seized the skirt of his robe, and it tore.

28 And Samuel said to him, “The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. **(King David – a man after God's own heart)**

E. **Example of obedience – God's Son, Jesus Christ: Knew God's will that He die for the sins of the world – doing this was not easy for Jesus: Matthew 26:39 (ESV)**

39 ... he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”

F. **Some things that God wills will happen regardless of our actions – set in stone and will take place – destroying of heaven and earth as we know it, destruction of all sin and ungodliness, new heaven and new earth, etc.**

G. **Other things, God communicates to us His will/desire, but still gives us the freedom to choose – such as He commands us we are to make disciples, but we have the choice whether to obey or not**

H. **(v. 16) Making the best use of the time ... understanding and obeying God's will for our life and for all humanity; must happen especially now because the days are evil; Let's not be foolish, but seek/desire to know/understand what the will of the Lord is (v. 17)**

#### IV. Close

A. **It is entirely possible to be Christian and yet not be pursuing God's will; leads to flat/unexciting spiritual life**

B. **The more in sync we are with God's will, the more energized our spiritual journey will be**

C. **Now we know for certain several things God wills for us – for our will to conform to His will, and to obey Him in the present and trust Him for the future**

- D. Invitation:** God's will someone believe/surrender to Christ, His Son as Lord and Savior; that someone become part of this church family by placing their church membership here – transfer or statement of faith as baptized believer
- E. Question:** If that applies to you, will you follow in obedience today, and then trust Him for what He has in store for you in the future