

DATE: January 1, 2012

TEXT: Psalm 119: 97-104

TITLE: "Discovering God's Will II"



Next week I will return to my sermon series on Revelation. This morning, we are looking at the process of discovering God's will for our lives. Our obvious task as Christians is to discover and walk in the will of God. To not do this would be foolish. But the truth is this.... many, many people chose to be foolish. Scripture has a very definitive definition of the word foolish. This definition is found in *Ephesians 5*. It states....

**Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.**

Foolishness, in scripture is not seeking after the will of God. Throughout the book of Proverbs a Wise person is contrasted with a fool.

The question this morning is... what do individuals use as sources of guidance? It is amazing how many people every single day read horoscopes as a source of guidance. What I want to do this morning is look at ;unreliable source of guidance and reliable sources of

guidance. First I want to look at 4 unreliable sources of guidance.

**Unreliable source # 1** Culture is a unreliable source of direction. Just because something is acceptable and legal in our society does not mean it is God's will. *I John 2:15* contrasts the world and the will of God.

**Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.**

We have a great example of this in our own community. The Adult Bookstore. Is it legal. Yes because a number of years ago in a 5 to 4 ruling of the Supreme court, pornography was deemed to be free speech. Is it God's will for our community. No...Certainly not.

The same is true in the abortion issue. Again and again we read that, depending on how the question is asked, the majority of Americans want abortion to be available in some situations. Does that tell us that abortion is right. No, of course not. What it tells us that the majority of American on this issue do not seek the will of God... they are foolish.

*Exodus 23:2* gives us great advice. It's advice those who have teenagers want to paint

on their walls. It simple says.... **"Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong."** Culture is an unreliable source of guidance.

**Unreliable source # 2** Circumstances are an unreliable source of God's will. Many, many people use various circumstances as a guide to life. "I woke up 5 minutes late on Sunday morning... must be God's will for me to not go to church this morning." "The offering plate missed my row this morning... must be God's will for me to not give this morning". "I met so and so at the store... must be God's will for me to go out with them." And on and on and on. We see again and again that God does not always guide circumstances... often Satan does... and often they just happen. Jonah was told by God to go to Ninevah. What did Jonah do. He ran in the opposite direction. He went to Joppa.... found a ship was sailing to Tarshish and got on board. Wasn't it fortunate that a ship was in port. Wasn't it fortunate that they took passengers and had room for Jonah. God's will to go to Tarshish. Wrong.

We see a similar story in Acts 27. Paul is a prisoner on a ship going to Rome. The Lord speaks to him telling him that it was dangerous for the ship to set sail. He tells the captain of

the ship. The next day the sun is shining. The breezes are favorable and the captain ignore Paul and sets sail. The next day a storm hit. It drove them for 14 days and the ship was lost. The circumstances were false. Circumstances are a false source of guidance. If a person is relying on circumstances they will never discover the will of God for their lives.

**Unreliable source # 3** Counsel from others is often unreliable. There is an awful lot of people giving counsel to others. You can read “Dear Abby” every day in the newspaper. You can turn on the T.V. and listen to Ophra or Phil or or other talk show hosts. You can buy book after book on every topic under the sun and read advice. As Christians we need to understand that the vast, vast majority of it is foolishness. It does not look to God as a source of truth.

Non-Christian counseling has one primary goal... relieve pain. At all cost relieve pain.

Christian counsel has a very different goal. Be obedient to God because He desires you to live a life of peace and joy. *Psalm 1:1 clearly teaches this lesson...*

**Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.**

That is not saying do not seek counsel from others.... it is saying seek counsel from others who desire obedience to God above all else. Counsel from others is an unreliable source of guidance.

**Unreliable source of guidance # 4** A person conscience is often a very unreliable source of guidance. Have you ever heard the expression “**Let your conscience be your guide**”. That can be very, very bad advice. Often a person conscience is wrong. How about this expression.... “**nothing that feels this good could be wrong**” That is foolishness. Many, many wrong things feel good. As a matter of fact most wrong things feel good. We need to understand that when humanity chose a path of sin... our consciences became corrupted.

*Proverbs 3:5 states....*

**Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.**

Do not lean on your own understanding. Why not. Because it is often wrong. A persons conscience is often wrong. It is not a reliable source of God’s will.

We have looked at the unreliable sources of guidance. We are left with one question...

What is the reliable source of guidance? What is the source that we can absolutely rely upon to never be wrong? The answer is God's Word. *Psalm 119:103 gives this truth...*

**How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.**

*2 Timothy 3:16 Gives this truth...* **“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,”** Scripture is the light for our lives.

Scripture is the source of guidance for every one of our lives. God's will never, ever contradicts the Word of God. If you believe you hear the will of God for your life always compare it to the Word of God to be sure it is the same. If you have a decision to make and desire that decision to be in obedience to the will of God... always compare it to the Word of God to see if the decision is in the will of god.

I want to close this sermon by letting you know what God will is. These are instances in scripture where it says.. “God's will is this”

**God's revealed will # 1** It is God's will that you have a loving everlasting relationship with Jesus Christ. *2 Peter* states this...

**The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.**

*John 6:40* states... **“My Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life”**

God wants you to have eternal life as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

**God’s revealed will # 2** God desires that you be filled with the Spirit. *Eph.5:17* teaches.

**Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.**

What does it mean to be “filled with the Spirit?” In the text I just read being filled with the Spirit is contrasted with being filled with alcohol. Our text is saying you have a choice of what controls and influences your life. You can be under the influence of alcohol... or you can be under the influence of the Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit means being controlled and guided by the Spirit and experiencing the presence of Christ in your life. That is God’s will for your life.

**God revealed will # 3** God desires that you live a pure disciplined, life. *1 Thess 4* states

**It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable**

God desires that our lifestyle reflect the love and guidance of Christ. God does care what we do. We represent Christ in all our actions.

**God's revealed will # 4** It is God's will that we maintain an attitude of gratitude.

*1 Thess 5:16 states....*

**Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**

Joy and thanksgiving is God's desire for each and every one of us.

**Finally, God's revealed will # 5** God wants each and every one of us to bring others to

Christ. Jesus in *Matt 28* gives this command

**Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."**

Evangelism is not the task of the minister. Evangelism is not the task of those who are trained and called. Sharing the love of Christ is the call of each and every Christian.

These are God's will for you life. For each and every one of our lives. Only when we are obedient to God's will can we expect to discover the joy of his promises. Only

when we are obedient in these areas of God's will can we expect to discover God's specific will for our lives. These need to be our New Years Eve's resolution

AMEN