

# 13. Knowing God's Will in our lives

First, I would like to ask you guys to choose one number between 1 and 10. Then that number times 9. Add those double digit numbers together. Subtract 5 from that result. Now you have a new number. Think about the alphabet. A as 1, B as 2, find the letter of your new number. Come up with the country's name starting with that letter. Think about the letter in the alphabet that comes right behind the first letter you chose. Now come up with the animal's name starting with that letter.

Are they 'DENMARK' and 'ELEPHANT'?  
That was a calculated guess. But it is hard and difficult to know what others have in their minds.

## A. OUR WILLS OR GOD'S WILL

Here in this portion of James, we are going to learn how we should plan and perform our daily lives with God's will in minds.

*James 4:13-15* Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

There was a woman who travels around countryside and sell buttons, thread, needles and so on. She usually carried a stick with one end decorated. Whenever she comes to intersections, she throws the stick in the air and whatever the direction the decorated end points, she goes to that direction. One day, a man saw the woman throwing the stick time after time in the air. So in curiosity, he went to her and ask what she was doing. She answered, "The road on the right looks smoother and easy, but my stick is keep on pointing at the left." She continued to throw the stick until she got the direction she wanted and off she went.

Often we're like that woman. Whether God wants us to do one particular thing or not, we frequently argue with God and try to convince God that we are right and He should follow our guidance and give us blessings and supplies as much as we want. This is foolish and hazardous to us.

## B. OUR WILLS BASES ON OUR PRIDE

Another foolish thing in our thoughts is that whatever we choose to do in our lives is what God wants us in our lives. Actually that is pride and dumb and stupid imagination in our parts.

On one sunday morning, a pastor really nailed his congregation about the pride problem they are going through. After the service was over, a lady came to him and said, "Pastor, I have to confess one thing. I have a sin of pride. Before I came to the church, I sat in front of a mirror and admired my beauty for an hour." The pastor replied to her, "My dear lady, I don't think you have a problem with sin of pride. You have a problem of imagination."

Our will never remain in the same way as God's will all the time because we have these containers called "FLESH". Often we are driven by this flesh desire which is against God's will according to Gal 5:16-17.

*Gal 5:16-17 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.*

### **C. TWO KINDS OF GOD'S WILLS FOR US**

Does it mean whatever our will are always against God's will? No, as we learn the Word of God and obey His commands, God changes our desires closer to His desires. So as we walk closer with Him, our desires and wills would match with His. But there would not be the time that everything we want is God wants.

In God's will for us, I believe that there are two kinds of will. Neither one of them is optional for those who became born-again Christians. When we became Christians, we made a covenant with God. We would be His people and He would be our God. Between Him and us, there are a few requirements as we learned about 'Bond Servant' in James 1:1. As servants of God, we should no longer want what we want but what He wants. As the Master of His people, God should provide everything we need and protect us and take care of us. The thing is He has been keeping all the promises He made to us. We are the one who have to keep our promise to Him.

The first will of God would be general will for all of us. It is His will for us to pray daily, read His word daily, live according to His way, love Him more than anyone else, love our neighbors, spreading His Good News to others, and etc. It is God's will for us to seek His face in our prayer lives and know His Word by reading His Word daily so that we may follow His ways. His general will for us does not stop there. He wants us to live with what we learned from His Word so that we may bring the glory to Himself.

*Colossians 1:9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;*

What if we are disobedient to His will even though we know what we are supposed to do? Because of His love and care, He would spank us. It is like our children playing with fire. When we see our children playing near fire, do we let them do whatever they want to do? NO! We tell them to stay away from the fire. If the child continuously play not only near fire, but he also challenge your authority by playing with fire, as parents, what do you do? You go over there fast and pick up the child and let him have on his boom boom. That is like our Father in heaven. When we continuously disobey Him, He spans us to get our attention.

The prime example of that is Jonah who disobeyed God by trying to flee from God. Because of his disobedience, the sailors and people on the same ship Jonah was on were about to be shipwreck by a storm. How often do we bring disaster to others because of our disobedience? Can we think about that before we say no to Him and His will? Eventually after he got puked out by the whale or big fish, Jonah went to the city of Nineveh to preach against it, because its wickedness had come up before the Lord. Think about this, a guy stands in front of you draped with seaweeds and all the other sea stuffs from head to toe. Not only that, but also he was bleached white by the whale's stomach acid, and tell you, "You are toasted because

of your wickedness, so repent!" Wouldn't you repent? All 250,000 of Ninevites repented in one day. That was the biggest revival in human race so far.

Isn't it better to seek His will and obey Him from the beginning than get whacked by Him because of our stubborn and disobedient hearts?

But the second one is tailor made for each one of us: This is probably one of the most amazing doctrines of the Scripture is that God, with the infinite universe on His hands, yet has a definite plan for each of His people.

In verse 13, God doesn't mind about our business transaction as long as it is godly and legal. But here this man left out God from his picture. He had no intention to seek God's will and desire for his business and life. On top of all, he was boasting about his controlability about his life. Nothing wrong with planning. As a matter of fact Jesus encourages us to plan ahead. But we should plan ahead with God in mind.

Some people go into extreme. We don't need to ask God what kind of food we should eat in the morning at our own home. We eat whatever is available. God doesn't care about that kind of things.

Some people want to know God's will for whom they should marry, what kind of job they should have, where they should live. It is rightly so.

The way I look at this tailored will for individual is like this:

### **1) Ready to get marry?**

If your fiancée is a born-again Christian and walking with God. Both of you are attracted by each other. I don't see a whole lot of problems there. One thing we need to remember is to seek His guidance in that matter through Christian premarriage counseling and guidance from other mature Christians.

### **2) Thinking about moving to different city? Or thinking about getting a different job?**

You know what kind of gifts you received from the Lord for your job. And you know that you would be good in the line of job, then go after it with unselfish motives. Getting provision for your family through that job is not selfish desire. If you think that by using that job position you go high up in the corporate ladder to satisfy your ambition, that is selfish.

## ***D. THE BOTTOM LINE - GOD'S WAY***

The bottom line is not what kind of job we have, nor what kind of home we live in, nor which city or countryside we reside. It is important what we do in those circumstance. How we do in the job place is more important than what kind of job, how we live in our home is more important than how luxury your home is. God gave us common sense in our brains. Yes, in every important matter we need to seek His guidance and will. The same time He gives us to make a choice within His boundary.

When we ask the Lord for His guidance, we can ask Him for His wisdom and discernment.

Saying "If it is in the Lord's will," should not be a some sort of Christian cliches, but it should be our attitude to Him. If that is what the Lord wants and permit, that is what we would like to do. The more we get to know Him through the Word, He will reveal His will for our lives to us clearly. So let seek Him.

*James 4:16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.* Boasting and bragging is coming from pride. God hates pride. There is a tremendous difference in confidence in your God given capability and boasting about what we have accomplished and what we know.

*2 Cor 11:30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity.*

*2 Cor 12:5-6 Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me.*

*2 Cor 12:9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

*James 4:17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

It cannot be any more clear than this. We know what we are supposed to do, but not do? That is a sin, period. Wow!!!!!!!

## **E. APPLICATIONS**

- 1) It's God's will for us to live for Him, not for our own.
- 2) Let's remember the middle letter of 'SIN' and 'PRIDE' is 'I.'