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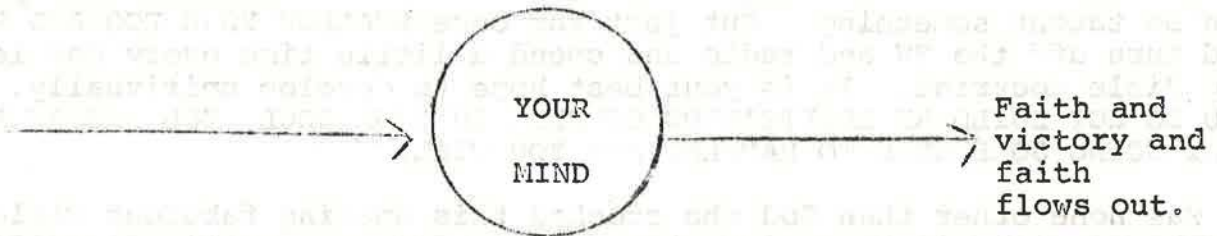
HOW, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, TO KNOW THE WILL OF GOD

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS
NUMBER 57
EPHESIANS 5:17

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EPHESIANS 5:17 "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."

The daily intake of Bible Doctrine is absolutely essential for personal growth in the Christian life.



Now for doctrine to flow out, it has to flow in. The arrow represents study, study, study. That arrow represents the work of the Pastor day after day as he attempts to get ready to share and interpret the Word of God to the people. The arrow also represents your volition and your freedom to take in truth. Once this truth is stored in your mind and you have transferred it into your human spirit by faith, then you are ready to apply the truth to your daily living. This process leads to mature, happy relaxed Christian living. This leads to the erection of the Edification Complex in your life and through this process, the believer is able to produce maximum divine good. There is no spiritual maturity apart from this process. This is the one thing in the angelic conflict which Satan cannot duplicate or counterfeit for you. You eat physical food daily in order to live. You must eat spiritual food daily in order to grow spiritually.

EPHESIANS 5:17 "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." "Wherefore" is "dia" plus the accusative and it should be translated "because of this." Because we are commanded to live one day at a time, and because we are commanded to take in doctrinal truth daily, then we should not be caught without adequate resources to take us through any problem or difficulty life may bring to us.

"Be ye not" is a present, active, imperative of "ginomai" plus the negative. "Ginomai" means to become something that you have not been before. So with the negative here it means "stop becoming" and the thing we are to "stop becoming" is the word "unwise" and it means "stupid." The believer who ignores taking in doctrine on a daily basis, pardon the expression, becomes dumber and dumber and dumber. The word for "unwise" here is "aphron" and it means to be ignorant or stupid which adds up to being a fool. It means a negative attitude toward Bible doctrine and it results in a low spiritual I.Q. It leads to the pseudo spiritual life. So this verse says, "Stop becoming a spiritual idiot."

Now if Bible doctrine is not your first love, then you are on the road to real spiritual stupidity. The worst people in the church today are people who reject Bible doctrine. They are monsters, they are the people who are building scar tissue on the soul and they are cultivating a life out of which will grow mental attitude sins and it may even lead so far that it will lead you to commit the sin unto death.

The believer who builds scar tissue on his soul becomes a pseudo spiritual monster, while the believer who builds an edification complex in his soul finds he is on the road to real victorious Christian living.

An Earnest Request

This is why, as your pastor, I want to ask again that hundreds of you get a tape recorder and start listening to at least one tape every day and start growing in your mind. Now it may deflate your ego in order to do that. It is humbling, I admit, for you to recognize that you can be taught something. But just for once SWALLOW YOUR EGO AND PRIDE and turn off the TV and radio and spend a little time every day learning Bible doctrine. It is your best hope to develop spiritually. IF YOU DO NOT BUILD AN EDIFICATION COMPLEX IN YOUR SOUL, YOU ARE AN ACCIDENT GOING SOMEWHERE TO HAPPEN, AND YOU WILL.

It was none other than God who stocked this amazing fabulous Bible warehouse with all these marvelous things for your spiritual edification. Why not open your mouth and start eating what he has provided? "But" is a conjunction of contrast. "Understanding" is a present, active imperative of "suniami" without the negative, and it means to have technical categorical knowledge. It means to know the object, frame of reference, and complete function of the subject. In other words, it is Bible doctrine in the human spirit ready to be used from the launching pad of your mind. This makes it possible for you to operate from every floor of the Edification Complex in your soul and you are relaxed and happy and growing in your Christian life every day.

The word used here for the will of the Lord is "thelema" and it means the purpose that was designed by the perfect mind of God. It was designed to meet your every need. The Lord knew the exact time in history when you would live and he stored away a supply that is adequate to meet every need you will ever face. He put all the shelves in the great warehouse and stocked every shelf with the very finest goods available to meet your every need. Then as an extra special he saved some extra goodies for you that not even David or Samuel or Isaiah or Moses or Abraham ever knew about. He didn't even share some of these things with these great men. Things like union with Christ, being indwelt by the Son of God, and the completed Canon of Scripture. But just for you, God has provided these amazing and fantastic things. Take them into your mind, transfer them into your human spirit and be ready to use them when the right moment comes.

What Is The Will Of The Lord For Me?

I am sure that many of you want to know what the will of the Lord is for you. The problem is divine guidance, and it is all there in the plain Word of God. So we are right back where we began. YOU CANNOT KNOW THE WILL OF GOD UNLESS YOU KNOW THE WORD OF GOD. Bible doctrine in the human spirit not only lets you know what the will of God is, but it gives you inspiration and drive and desire to accomplish that will. The will of God is divine norm and standard actually becoming your norm and standard. There is no longer any conflict because your norms and standards have been revamped into norms and standards that are fashioned by the mind of Christ. You now are living by divine viewpoint and these grace norms and standards blot out the legalism and self-righteousness and prejudice that used to dominate your mind.

Where Modern Psychology Is Wrong

Many modern psychologists say that you can never get away from your background. Well, that is only a partial truth, and a partial truth may be the worst kind of a falsehood. The one thing that can offset your warped background is the amazing truth of the Perfect Word of God. But it takes a maximum cycling of Bible doctrine from the mind into the human spirit and this can offset any kind of a background no matter how warped that background might have been. And please remember, all this was accomplished by the grace of God. When one has a grace operation in his life, everything changes, even the training of childhood or the stupidity of years when you were negative toward Bible doctrine. It is impossible to clear away all that underbrush of falsehood. It grew there in your childhood, but now the truth of the Word of God clears away that underbrush. The will and purpose and design of God moves in-to focus and you come to know and do the will of God.

THE DOCTRINE OF DIVINE GUIDANCE1. THERE ARE THREE CATEGORIES OF WILLS IN HISTORY.

- a. The will of God.
- b. The will of angels.
- c. The will of man.

God's will is based on God's plan. Man's will is based on what man wants to do. Then the angels interject their wills. Thus we have the angelic conflict. Man is caught in the cross fire.

2. THE CARDINAL PRINCIPLE OF DIVINE GUIDANCE.

1 JOHN 3:23 "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."

Here is the will of God stated for the whole human race. Christ went to the cross to solve the problem of man's old sin nature. At the cross man's sins were judged, and man's human good was rejected. The human good of all believers will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ as explained in 1 Cor. 3. The human good of the unbeliever will be judged, along with the unbeliever, at the Great White Judgment Throne, as explained in Rev. 20:12-15. Both the unbeliever and his human good will be cast in the lake of fire to burn forever. The will of God is that all men believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and this is a system of non-meritorious thinking. After belief, then one is capable of loving others.

3. THE HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST HAS FREE WILL.

Matthew 20:22, 26:42; Hebrews 10:7 and 9.

MATTHEW 20:22 "But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able."

Jesus Christ is the unique person of the universe. As God he is sovereign. As a human he has free will. Christ made many decisions in his free will. Christ's humanity will never once contradicted the perfect will of God.

4. THERE ARE THREE TYPES OF THE WILL OF GOD FOR THE HUMAN RACE.

(These three types emerge from a study of the life of Balaam.)

- a. The direct will of God.

NUMBERS 22:12 "And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed."

The direct will of God for Balaam was that he not go and curse Israel. God told him not to go, but Balaam wanted to go. He wanted the money that was to be given him for this service.

b. The permissive will of God.

NUMBERS 22:20 "And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do."

God permitted Balaam to go but would not let him violate the direct will of God for the nation. God is a gentleman and he will never violate a man's free will. He never has and he never will. An adult also learns how to take responsibility for his own decisions.

c. The over-ruling will of God.

Numbers 23:5, 12, 26

NUMBERS 23:5 "And the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak."

God would not permit Balaam to curse Israel. God always protects his people.

5. THE ACADEMIC PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN GUIDANCE.

a. Knowledge. Doctrine in the human spirit.

ISAIAH 58:11 "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

ROMANS 12:2 "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

PSALM 132:8 "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

b. Yieldedness. This means a state of being filled with the Holy Spirit. This is the believer walking in the Spirit.

c. Growth.

2 PETER 3:18 "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen." We must grow up as Christians.

6. SOME CATEGORIES OF THE WILL OF GOD FOR THE BELIEVER AS HE LIVES OUT HIS CHRISTIAN LIFE EVERY DAY.

a. The viewpoint will of God.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:16 "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." This is thinking the Lord's thoughts after him.

b. The operational will of God.

What does he want me to do?

c. The geographical will of God.

Where does he want me to be?

7. THE MECHANICS OF THE WILL OF GOD.a. Guidance through prayer.

ACTS 11:5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:"

b. Thinking through a problem.

ACTS 11:6 "Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air."

c. Guidance through the Word of God.

ACTS 11:7-10 "And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven."

d. Guidance through providential circumstances.

ACTS 11:11 "And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me."

e. Guidance by the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 11:12 "And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house;"

f. Guidance through fellowship with others.

ACTS 11:13 "And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;"

g. Guidance through memory of Scripture.

ACTS 11:16 "Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit."