

## 2071 - WHAT IS GOD'S WILL - Rom 12:2

PRELIMS. The **command** in this verse (*be transformed*) is an **imperative** – the **purpose** is to *discern what the will of the Lord is!* So many people want to know ‘What is God’s will for me?’ ‘What job should I take?’ ‘Who should I marry?’ ‘Which college should I attend?’ ‘What church should I go to?’ Ans? **Change your thinking!** Don’t think the way the world thinks. Don't have **their values!**

Xns, above all people seem to be **obsessed** with knowing what God’s plan for their life is. We were ‘told’ that if we honoured God in everything, He would give us **clear directions** in all our affairs. *In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths* [Pro 3:5,6]. We were **disappointed/confused**. It was not that easy! Recently I discovered that the Hebrew verse means ‘if you obey God He will make your path right/straight’ – ie, if your **priorities** are right the path you will take will be the right one - **because** you are following the Lord’s commands, which are always ‘right’! So, the verse is **not a promise** of **special revelation** to the person who follows the Lord. Rather it is a **statement** that ‘the person who obeys God takes the right road’, he chooses the good/straight path!

Trying to find out God’s will is mainly a **pagan idea!** To **seek** God’s **special** direction is what **unbelievers** in God do! Xns don’t seek to **find out** God’s **hidden** mind - Xns are **led** - they just **follow** their Leader - Jesus Christ. They do not have to **worry** about **where** they are going - the Leader, Jesus Christ is taking care of that! It is **pagans** who **look for special signs** of direction! It is those who don’t **know God** – who are **fearful** and **uncertain** about the future. It is a sign of **spiritual immaturity** to be looking for signs and indications of what God wants us to do. Looking for special signs is an indication of **insecurity, weakness - not strength or confidence!** Xns are to have **faith** in the **promises** and **faithfulness** of God! **Faith** characterises God’s people – they **trust** God to **lead** them through all the ‘ups/downs’ of life. They are **able** to leave the future to God.

**Astrologers** looks to the **stars** for their future. Isaiah **mocks** those who look for guidance from them: *let them stand forth and save you, those who divide the heavens, who gaze at the stars, who at the new*

moons make known what shall come upon you. Behold, they are like stubble...they **cannot deliver themselves**...they wander about, each in **his own** direction; there is **no one to save you** [Isa 47:13]! Well...

So also: Fortune Tellers; Palm readers; Talking with the Spirits; Divinations! Contact with the Dead, etc. All these are ‘means’ to find out some **secret** future event or some hidden will of God. Well, God **warns us against all such** ‘means’ *There shall not be found among you anyone who who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord* [Deu 18:12]!

Xns, on the other hand, are **led by the Spirit** [Gal 5:18] Jesus Himself was **led by the Spirit into the wilderness** [L4:1], not by the stars! Paul had just told the Romans that the sons of God are *those who are led by the Spirit of God* [Rom 8:14]! Now, one **certain** way of knowing the Spirit’s leading is by studying the **Word of God** - for the Bible was all written by the Holy Spirit! Jesus **equated** the Spirit with the Word of God: *For He whom God has sent, utters the words of God, for He gives the Spirit without measure* [John 3:34] Paul: *the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God* [Eph 6:17] David said *The Spirit of the LORD speaks by me; His word is on my tongue* [2S23:2] *My Spirit that is upon you, and My words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth*[Isa 59:21] Jesus is the **Word!** *The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life* [J6:63]

There is no such concept in the Bible as ‘**Seeking God’s secret/private will**. “The New Testament gives no explicit command to ‘find God’s will’ **nor** can you find any particular **instructions on how** to go about finding God’s will”. “There is no place in the New Testament where we are taught to seek a **special revelation**” [Waltke p12 &19]. It is the ‘world’ that cherish that idea! **Jesus** said, it is *An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign* [Mat 12:39]!

God of course **can/does** give special revelation – but in **Scripture** it (1) is **rare** and is (2) **never** at **our** request! He **never** asks us ‘**to seek**’ His private/will – that is something which He has **reserved** for **Himself alone** – that is why it is **secret!** Remember even **Jesus** did

**not know** the time of some things! Disciples asked *When shall these things be...* He replied *concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels...nor the Son* [Mar 13:32]! Another occasion they asked... *will You at this time restore the kingdom...it is not for you to know the times or seasons the Father has fixed by His own authority* [Acts 1:7]. When James/John asked Jesus *we want You to do for us whatever we ask* Jesus replied *it is not Mine to grant* [Mr 10:40]! God does **not want** us to know some things. Instead, He wants His people just to **trust** Him. \*So what are we to do? How are we to **organise/plan** our lives? Do we just **sit and do nothing – no!!**

### **WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR US?**

God's will for your/my life is to **obey** what He **has** revealed! It is simply to **trust** Him for the future and in the meantime, to **keep His commandments** and **then**, we will be 'led' and have **peace** about decision making. We will not be hassled about that! *Do not be conformed to the methods/patterns of this world but be transformed by the renewal of your methods and practices - then you will know what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable to Him!* You will be happy doing it. It won't be a worrying or a hassle for you!

Friends - **what has** God revealed to us? **The Ten Commandments!** You keep these Ten Commands **constantly** (not perfectly) and I guarantee you will not go wrong in your choices - things **will** go well with you. Be **open, honest**, avoid deceit, lies, cheating, swearing, stealing, greed, immorality, drunkenness, fits of anger, jealousy - and I guarantee you, you will have a good life! \*\*God really only gives us guidance on the **big things** in life! The **most important** things to God are: **moral purity, fidelity, compassion, joy, faithfulness, hospitality, worship!** These things are what **God** is concerned about!

**What** are **we** concerned about? Do I take the bus or the train to Glasgow? What will I wear to the wedding? What car should I buy? We spend most of our time thinking about **non-ethical** decisions! **None** of these things are revealed in Scripture - **none** of them are **sins!** God is not worried what you wear (provided it is not immoral). **Fear breaking** any of the commandments - don't be afraid of what kind of car you get (provided you don't steal it or cheat in the deal.)

Paul to Ephesians ...**understand** what the **Lord's will is** – this – **do not be foolish...do not get drunk...** etc [Eph 5:15-18]! The way you **live** is so important to God – it is **not** simply what you **believe** that God looks for when He leads/guides He looks at the **way they live**.

To Thess: *this is **God's will** for you* What is? *see that no one repays anyone **evil for evil** but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone...for this is **the will of God in Christ Jesus** for you ... **rejoice** always...give **thanks in all circumstances** [1Th5:15-18]*

Have you been **revengeful**, wanting to get your own back on people? No wonder we are confused about God's will – He won't guide us if we are living in **opposition** to His **revealed** will and **not repenting!** Have you been kind to **everyone**, or have you left out someone deliberately? Have you been thankful in **all situations**, even the difficult ones? Well, it is God's will for us that we do **these** things!

...*this is the **will of God** for you - **your sanctification!*** What's that? Paul goes on to tell us *that you should **abstain from sexual immorality**. That each of you should know how to **control** his own body in holiness and honour; **not in the passion of lust** [1Thes4:3,4]!* Do you **avoid** situations where sexual immorality is **possible**, or do you **invite** such situations? What **TV programmes** do you watch?

If Christ is **dwelling** in you, then He is **shaping** your **desires**. If Christ is dwelling in you, then you have the seed of God in you and He is **shaping** your **affections** - unless you are rejecting His Word! If Christ is in control of your life then He is in control of your **desires!** \*Our problem is **not** that we don't have God's mind/will on life – it is that we have the same desires as the world! We have **not** been transformed in our minds! We seek what the world seeks!

When we **choose** something, **pray** for light as to what would **help** us **most** to **love** the Lord, and is best for our **sanctification!** **Don't lose sleep** about **choosing in non-moral areas** of decision-making - as long as it is **not sinful!** Don't ask Him to make the decision for you! **Don't ask** God to **intervene** in our lives – He will do it when **He** wants! As a Xn you have that **responsibility** to **trust** Him. Solomon: **Keep** His commands...*whole duty!* But Jesus: *Seek **first** the kingdom of God and **His righteousness** and all these things will be added!*