

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: How to Know the Will of God

SERMON REFERENCE: Acts 9:1-6

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1742

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) If the Lord Jesus stood before you today literally, bodily and physically, and you could ask Him any one question, what would that question be?
 - i) Many people would choose to ask Him, “Lord, what would You have me to do?”
- b) This scenario literally happened in the Bible.
 - i) The Lord appeared to a man named Saul, and that’s the question that Saul asked the Lord.
 - ii) Acts 9:1-6
- c) The two greatest questions that anyone could ever ask at any time:
 - i) Who are you, Lord?
 - ii) Lord, what do You want me to do?
- d) No matter how wise our plans or how capable we are, we better make certain that we are in the will of God.
- e) Jeremiah 10:23

2) GUIDANCE IS PROMISED

- a) God has promised to guide us.
 - i) Acts 9:6
 - (1) The Lord promised to tell Saul what he must do.
 - ii) Ephesians 2:10
 - (1) God has a plan for our lives.
 - iii) Psalm 37:23
 - iv) Psalm 32:8
 - v) Isaiah 58:11
 - vi) Proverbs 3:6
- b) We who know the Lord are blessed.
 - i) We have a Father above us controlling all things.
 - ii) We have a Savior beside us directing our steps.
 - iii) We have the Spirit within us impressing our hearts.
 - (1) We can know the leadership of our Lord and know His will.
- c) God’s will comes to us in three ways:
 - i) God’s sovereign will
 - (1) God’s sovereign will is always done.
 - (a) You cannot stop it.
 - (2) God is God, and He accomplishes what He desires to do.
 - (3) His sovereign will is mysterious.
 - (a) It is unknown.
 - (b) We cannot know it; it is known entirely to God alone.
 - (i) Deuteronomy 29:29
 - (ii) There are certain things that we will never understand until we get to Heaven, if we understand them then.
 - (4) God is sovereign, and not a blade of grass moves without His permission.

- ii) God's moral will
 - (1) There are certain things that God says are right and certain things that He says are wrong.
 - (a) It is wrong to commit fornication.
 - (b) It is wrong to steal.
 - (c) It is wrong to murder.
 - (d) It is wrong to lie.
 - (e) Pride is wrong.
 - (f) Love is right.
 - (g) Righteousness is right.
 - (h) Honesty is right.
 - (i) Kindness is right.
 - (2) His moral will is not going to change for you or for me.
 - (a) There is a fixed standard of right and wrong because God has said so.
 - (3) His moral will is found in the Word of God.
- iii) God's particular will
 - (1) This is God's special will for you.
 - (2) God had a particular will for Saul.
 - (a) Acts 9:15-16
 - (b) God chose him particularly to be a chosen vessel.
 - (3) God has a special, particular will for each one of us.
 - (a) For example, God sovereignly set His love upon us and saved us.
 - (b) If we marry, there is God's moral will that we marry a Christian.
 - (i) 2 Corinthians 6:14
 - (c) God also has a particular will, and that can be seen, for instance, in the specific person whom we marry.
- d) God's individual interest in us shows His great love for us.
 - i) Psalm 121:8
 - ii) Matthew 10:30
 - iii) God loves not just all of us but each of us.
- e) There are six myths about the will of God:
 - i) That God will give you a road map for your life.
 - (1) He does not do this.
 - (2) God's will for you is not a road map but a relationship.
 - (3) When God led the children of Israel through the wilderness, He did not give them a map.
 - (a) He gave them a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire and told them to follow those and stay in relationship with Him.
 - ii) That God is some celestial killjoy; that if we do the will of God, then that's the end of our joy.
 - (1) A lot of people don't want to know the will of God because they're afraid of what they might find out.
 - (2) We should never be afraid of God's will.

- (a) The will of God is what we would want for ourselves if we had enough sense to want it.
 - (3) God is a good God, and He loves us.
 - iii) The idea that God only speaks to a certain category of persons.
 - (1) That God has a will for pastors, missionaries, and people who work on church staffs, but not for the ordinary person.
 - (2) God has a particular will for you, whether you be a missionary or a secretary, whether you be a pastor or a plumber.
 - (3) God has a will for every life.
 - iv) The idea that when God shows you His will for your life, it will be some dramatic experience like the Apostle Paul had on the road to Damascus.
 - (1) It may be that way, but it may not.
 - (2) 1 Kings 19:11-13
 - (a) Elijah was up in the mountains, and God spoke to him.
 - (b) But God wasn't in the wind, He wasn't in the earthquake, and He wasn't in the fire.
 - (i) God spoke in a still, small voice.
 - (3) Sometimes God does speak in earthquakes and fires, but let God be God in your particular life.
 - v) God shows His will to young people but not to older people.
 - (1) Whether we are nine or ninety, we ought to be seeking the will of God every day of our lives.
 - (2) If God were finished with you, He would take you on to Heaven.
 - (a) God has a plan for your life.
 - (3) Even if we think we missed God's will earlier in life, find His will now.
 - (a) He will restore the years the locust has eaten.
 - (i) Joel 2:25
 - vi) Somehow, God hides His will so that we must find it.
 - (1) God does not hide His will from us.
 - (2) Throughout Scripture, God says that He wants to reveal His will.
 - (3) In the truest sense of the word, we do not find the will of God; the will of God finds us when we're walking in the Spirit.
- 3) GUIDANCE IS PROVISIONAL
 - a) There are certain provisions that come into play before we can know God's guidance.
 - b) There must be willingness.
 - i) Acts 9:6
 - (1) This presupposes that Saul wanted to do what God wanted him to do.
 - ii) Many people want to do their will and have God rubberstamp it.
 - iii) We may tell the Lord that we're willing to do whatever He wants us to do, but we don't really mean it.
 - c) There must be meekness.
 - i) Acts 9:6

- (1) Paul is in essence saying, “God, You are in control. I’m not in control.”
- ii) Meekness means that we’re teachable.
- iii) Psalm 25:9
- iv) If we are not willing and are not meek, then we won’t know God’s will.
- d) There must be openness.
 - i) Saul sought the will of God.
 - (1) Acts 9:6
 - ii) Don’t just simply say, “If God wants to show me, He can.”
 - iii) Have you earnestly, sincerely prayed and sought God’s will?
 - iv) Do you report for duty?
 - (1) How much time do you spend alone with God with your Bible in a quiet time, reporting for duty?
 - v) It may be that God is speaking, but you’re not listening.
 - (1) Even in prayer, it may be that you’re praying and telling God something without listening to Him.
- e) There must be yieldedness.
 - i) Acts 9:8-9
 - (1) Here was a man who was taking everyone else captive, and now he’s a docile man whom others have to take by the hand and lead.
 - (a) He is yielded.
 - ii) Romans 12:1
 - (1) We are to present our bodies a living sacrifice.
 - (a) Can you say that today and mean it?
 - (i) No hesitation, no reservation, anywhere, anytime, any cost.
 - iii) Are you ready to do God’s will if He showed it to you?
 - (1) Why should God show you His will if you’re not prepared to do it?

4) GUIDANCE IS PRACTICAL

- a) God has given some very practical ways that we can know His will.
- b) One way we can know the will of God is by miracles.
 - i) Acts 9:3-4
 - ii) God may speak to you in a vision, in a dream or in an audible voice.
 - iii) God may speak to you and guide you with a miracle.
 - iv) Though, He does not normally guide this way, He does sometimes.
 - v) Since we have the New Testament and the Bible is completed, these kinds of miracles are not greatly needed today.
 - (1) And it is not God’s normal way.
 - vi) If you do have a vision, miracle or dream, be sure to check it out by the other ways listed here in which God guides and leads us.
- c) God will speak to us and guide us with His Word.
 - i) God guided the Apostle Paul with His Word.
 - (1) Paul was a rabbi and was steeped in the Word of God, the Old Testament.

- (2) Paul had just heard a sermon from an anointed, Spirit-filled man of God whose name was Stephen.
- (3) Acts 9:5
 - (a) The “pricks” in this verse are the goads of God’s Word.
- ii) Psalm 119:105
- iii) Much of the will of God for our lives is found in the Bible.
 - (1) It is arrogant to pray and ask God to show us His will when He has already done so through His Word.
- d) God will lead us by His people.
 - i) Acts 9:10-15
 - (1) When God was speaking to Saul and telling him that He would show Saul His will, God also took Ananias and used Ananias to confirm His will.
 - ii) Proverbs 24:6
 - (1) When God is speaking to you about something, He will often confirm it to someone else.
 - iii) Matthew 18:16
 - iv) We should never be so proud or arrogant that we are afraid of the counsel of other people.
- e) God will lead us and confirm His will to us by the Spirit of God.
 - i) Acts 9:17
 - (1) From that time on, the Holy Spirit of God was leading Paul.
 - (a) It was the same man who wrote Romans 8:14.
 - (b) He also wrote Galatians 5:18.
 - ii) The Spirit of God will lead you.
 - (1) You will hear His voice.
 - (a) John 10:27
 - iii) God does not shout, and He does not shove.
 - (1) God whispers and leads.
 - (2) He leads His sheep.
 - (a) He doesn’t drive them to slaughter.
 - (b) He leads them to pasture.
 - iv) We need to become sensitive enough that we can hear the Spirit of God and know the voice of God.
- f) God will guide us by His wisdom.
 - i) He will lead us with sheer wisdom.
 - ii) Acts 9:20-22
 - (1) Right away, Paul was preaching Christ.
 - (2) God gave Paul supernatural wisdom.
 - iii) James 1:5
 - iv) The will of God can be found between our ears.
 - (1) Philippians 4:7
 - (2) 1 Corinthians 2:16
 - (a) We have the mind of Christ.

- (3) Romans 12:1-2
 - (a) The renewing of our minds
 - v) Wisdom is seeing life from God's point of view.
 - vi) We will begin to have wisdom when we pray and get the Spirit of God in us and get the Word of God in us and get the supernatural life of God in us.
 - vii) Knowledge comes by looking around; wisdom comes by looking up.
 - viii) Wisdom is having a mind that is stayed upon God, full of the Word of God, led by the Spirit of God.
- g) God leads with His providence.
 - i) Acts 9:24-25
 - (1) In the providence of God, word came to Saul that certain people were trying to kill him.
 - (2) The providence of God led him.
 - ii) God opens doors and closes doors, and the meek He simply guides.
 - iii) What we may think is happenstance is actually God's plan and His ways.
 - (1) God guides us through this world, and many times we don't even know it was His providence until years later.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) Don't be afraid of the will of God.
- b) The will of God will not take you where the power of God cannot keep you.
- c) The will of God is the absolute best thing for you and your family.
- d) The way to know the will of God for the rest of your life is to do the will of God right now.
 - i) It's hard to steer a ship that's not moving.
 - ii) The way to understand the part of the Bible you don't understand is to obey the part you do understand.
 - iii) The way to know about the future is to obey God right now.
- e) If you're interested in having the will of God in your life, then the first step is to know Jesus Christ.
 - i) Jesus is the Son of God.
 - ii) He died for your sins, and God raised Him from the grave.
 - iii) And He wants you to receive Him into your heart as your Lord and Savior.
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16