Finding God’s Perfect Will

Purpose: Speaking to a church about finding God’s perfect will. This particular message was focused on a church without a pastor and encouraging them to seek His will to find that perfect match but can easily adapted for a general sermon.

Scriptures:

*Ro 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

*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.*

Ask: What is God’s will and what does God’s perfect will looks like?

Prayer

If I were given the task to give a couple of scriptures to someone who is a recent Christian, I would probably give them these scriptures. It is a beautiful set of scriptures that has so much.

*“I beseech you therefore brethren”* is something that we don’t say today. Paul was emphasizing the need to take heed, trying to get our attention, this is very important. *“By the mercies of God”*, aren’t you glad we have the mercies of God?

This scripture gives us an outline for us to follow. We should present our bodies a living sacrifice. Do notice the word we? We have to do it. We have to make a contentious effort to present ourselves otherwise, we are not doing what God wants us to do. What is exactly a living sacrifice? We hear about sacrifice a lot in the church. In the natural terms, we can use the example of dieting. Does dieting come easy? No, because there is a sacrifice of “putting off” certain things or the things that battle our “fleshly desires”. Sometimes we choose to not sacrifice but God expects it from us. A living sacrifice is constantly living, walking, and saying "no" to the things of that would separate us from God. When we get to this place, we choose to live this way.

We are to be holy and acceptable unto God. He not only wants us to “put away” things in our lives but also to “put in” things that are good for us. Last week, Praise the Lord, we had a couple of people who stated that there were some things in their lives that wasn’t good and said, “I need Jesus to come in to forgive me and cleanse me. Isn’t that wonderful!!! Just like earthly diet, we should refrain from fried foods, sweets, etc, and put in the fruits and vegetables that are good for us. We need to put in and do the things that are good for us to be holy.

Example of the Christian at the tire shop: I met a person from our church at the tire shop one day. I said hello to him and had a brief conversation. The owner of the tire shop approached me and said, “Do you know him”? I answered, “Yes, he attends our church”. The owner quickly burst out, “You have to be kidding, that person is a Christian? Why he gives us fits, he is the rudest and most obnoxious person in the world! And he is a Christian?” What could I say? The only thing that came into my mind was to say, “Some of us are a work in progress, I guess”. I really wanted to hide and was embarrassed that this person has such a terrible testimony in the community. What a shame!

Sometimes we serve God conditionally. Not on purpose but in deed. I am not trying to be critical, we are faithful to Sunday mornings but get less faithful to the church as the week continues. We want God’s will for our lives but may not be willing to pay the price to position ourselves to be in that will.

I know in talking about God’s will. I remember when I was getting out of high school, I earnestly prayed for the will of God, where to go to college, who to marry, what type of career will I have? I know I prayed “great drops of blood” in seeking his will. How many has done that?

Then I heard of God’s will, God’s permissive will, and God’s perfect will. Boy, am I confused! What all does that mean?

In looking at these two scriptures, I believe God wants us to do the reasonable thing, to live our lives holy as he is holy. And our bodies are a sacrifice, clean, perfect, for His use. Can you imagine the high priest presenting a sacrifice that is dirty? How would God respond? We no longer have high priest in the church anymore. Jesus was our perfect sacrifice but if we are Christians, we should live accordingly, holy and acceptable before God, that’s only reasonable.

We can read through the Bible through and through trying to live by this way or that but these verses really simplifies things for us. Just because we attend church, just because we accept Jesus into our hearts at one time in our life, all of which are all very important, but if we are not presenting ourselves as being holy and Godly, what good is it to the world and God?

(May get awfully quiet) The second verse talks about how we are transformed. Our actions first come through our mind. Everything we do comes through thought or reason.

Story of the 80 year-old lady who had been married 4 times, the last one was a funeral director. The person interviewing her asked, “What was the occupation of the other husbands?” She said the first one was a banker, the second one owned a circus, and the third one was a minister. The reporter was puzzled and said none of these have anything in common, why did you marry these. She said, I married the first one for the money, the second for the show, the third to get ready and the fourth one was to go. Sounds like she had that all planned out.

But there is only one way to get to heaven. And that is to accept Jesus Christ. No one can come to the father except through me. Very simple and living a holy life.

God’s will is for us to live a life of holiness (seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you). Once we have a transformed life by renewing our mind or having the mind of Christ, we can look at what it speaks of us proving what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God. What could this be? How can we achieve it? I believe it is God’s will for all to come to know Him but when we truly get into His will for us personally, we have to be walking and talking with Him.

Again, as I entered into an age to seeking what God wanted me to do, I earnestly cried out to the Lord, Where should I go? What should I do? Direct my paths, oh Lord.

The best way that I can explain God’s perfect will is through examples:

Was it God’s will for Jonah to go to Ninevah? This city was about 280 miles north of Babylon. It is also known as the robber city because they robbed other countries to enrich themselves. God told Jonah to go but Jonah had other ideas. We all know the story, a great fish swallowed him up and he learned his lesson after God spared him, and God spoke to him a second time to go to Ninevah, which he did and they repented. Where was God’s perfect will here?

Was it God’s will for him to go to Ninevah? Then he got to his own thinking, remember being transformed by the renewing of our mind. Did God stop him from going the other direction? No, but Jonah nevertheless paid the consequence of disobedience. He then went back to following God’s will. But it would have been God’s perfect will for him to go there in the first place.

What about Moses delivering out the children of Israel. Was it God’s will? Or was it His perfect will? I know Moses had to come back several times before the Pharaoh finally released him.

Was it God’s will for the children of Israel to go into the promise land? What happened? Some of the spies gave a bad report that prevented them going in until 40 years later. They finally went in but wasn’t God’s perfect will. Some had to perish.

What about Joshua going around Jericho? Was it God’s will? How about His perfect will? I think so.

It may be God’s will for you to be in church but it may also be God’s perfect will for you to be here. He may allow us to go here or there but we won’t get into his perfect place until we listen and follow His direction instead of following our own thinking.

Is it God’s will for ministers to preach? Yes, but it may be God’s perfect will for one to be here at our church. And we need to be seeking Him for that perfect will. He may allow others to be here but it won’t be as good as if we earnest sought His perfect will. I know that there is protocol, we have our pulpit committee going through the search, but we as a church, must be seeking God’s direction and His perfect will.

I have been a part of many pastoral selections, and so often we become curious of what all is happening, it is not going fast enough, and so on. Let me encourage you today, to come together as a church, be united for one cause, and that is to keep and seek His perfect will.

God will allow us to do many things, that is why we have categorized wills, God’s will, His permissive will, it is a way to justify or step outside of perhaps His perfect will but let me caution you, there are dangers associated with that. You may not want to go down that trail. Remember Jonah.

I have also seen churches who have placed the wrong person in the church for just filling a spot. And I have seen that church suffer. The problem came when no one came together to unite and seek God’s perfect will.

If you want to see great and might things for your church and community, you must spend time together and pray. Renewing and transforming our minds to seeking His will instead of our own carnal thinking, whether than be our committee or church as a body. I am not saying the church or pulpit committee are not seeking God’s perfect will. If we are not careful, though, we may throw in our own ideas and preferences into the process, greatly altering or changing the will of God. I am saying, we as a body, must earnestly be seeking His guidance. And that comes from being on our knees.

Today, I would like to invite you to the alters to spend a little time praying. We may need to find God’s perfect will for our lives. We may also need to corporately come as a body to pray for guidance and wisdom in finding our new pastor. We need more than God's will for our lives and church, we need His perfect will. Can you come?

If there is anyone here who needs special prayer, I will be glad to pray for you. Come won’t you?