

NOTES

~ *Will of the Father: Discovery* ~

- **Review:** God's **will** is His *plan* for the redemption and salvation of mankind through Jesus. He also *desires* certain things such as holiness through obedience out of faith.
- How do we participate in His plan and accomplish His desires?
 - Be obedient
 - Do His commandments (**1John 5:3** and Matthew 22:36-40).
 - Obedience is more important than works or sacrifice (Matthew 9:13).
 - Abstain from sexual immorality (**1Thessalonians 4:2-4**).
 - Be an 'imitator of God' (**Ephesians 5:1-20**).
 - Allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit (**Romans 8:14**).
 - Live by the Spirit (Galatians 5:25).
 - Seek His kingdom first; this requires submission (**Matthew 6:33**).
 - Obey our leaders and submit (Hebrews 13:17).
- How can we learn of the things we're to do in accomplishing His will or in learning of answers to our requests?
 - The Bible teaches principles that help in decision-making (**2Timothy 3:16-17**).
 - Ask for wisdom (**James 1:5-6**).
 - Seek wisdom (this can be from family, friends, spiritually-mature, etc.) (Proverbs 13:10).
 - Pray!!!
 - Use a 'fleece' as Gideon did (Judges 6:36-40).
- We can hinder the accomplishment of God's will or desires – even for us – through:
 - Bad motives (**James 4:3**).
 - Bad relationships (**1Peter 3:7**).
 - Unrighteousness due to disobedience and the lack of the Spirit (**John 9:31**).
 - Not allowing God's timing (i.e. Abraham).
- **Summary:** God has a plan for mankind: salvation through the Christ. He also desires fellowship and obedience from us in a pursuit of holiness. We can join in and help accomplish God's plans or desires, or we can rebel and keep Him from using us or even answering our own requests. Of course, this rebellion will result in death.
- **Next Week:** We'll cover what isn't God's will: the suffering and death of man. So, we'll talk about "why bad things happen to good people."

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Review

Last week, we talked about God's **will** - His *plan* for the redemption and salvation of mankind through Jesus. This redemption was and is necessary because of man's rebellion against God and His perfect creation.

So, God's will is His plan. But, it's also things He *desires* such as holiness through obedience out of faith. No obedience, no relationship since that's how we prove our agape love for God and Christ. No relationship, no redemption. No redemption, no salvation.

Must **FIRST** understand what God's plans and desires are. Then, we can meet them through obedience.

How do we participate in His plan and accomplish His desires? Well, we have to first understand what His plan and desires are. We do this through study, discipleship, and prayer. Then, we ensure we meet His desires and look for the things of God and His kingdom first.

Learn through study & discipleship

Here are ways we can be obedient:

- Learn of God's ways through study of Scripture.
- Honor His commandments. This is way we show that we love God and His Christ. God gave Moses His 10 commandments, which Jesus said were summed up in the two commandments He gave during His ministry. Those 10 commandments by God, summed up by Jesus' 2 commandments deal with how to treat God and our fellow humankind. **[1John 5:3]**

Honor what you learn

Remember that obedience is more important than legalism!

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No sexual immorality

- We must abstain from sexual immorality. In fact, this was one of only several things the council in Jerusalem said gentile (non-Jew) believers had to adhere to with regard to the Law of Moses. The other requirements dealt with eating food sacrificed to idols or strangled.

Sexual immorality discussed

Why is sexual immorality so bad?

Be an imitator of God

Be led by the Spirit

Be a **servant**. Seek the things of God first.

Be a **servant**. Obey our leaders.

What is sexual immorality? The Bible uses this synonymously with fornication, which is bestiality, homosexuality, adultery, and incest. Included in sexual immorality is sex with prostitutes and sexual promiscuity.

Why is sexual immorality such a big deal? God meant sex to be used as a relationship enhancer between a married male and female, and for multiplying the population. Any other use defies His intentions – His *plan* for married couples, in this case. **[1Thessalonians 4:2-4]**

- Continuing our discussion of obedience, we can be an ‘imitator of God’. To imitate God and His perfection, we must have a heart for God – like David did. We have to like what God likes and hate what He hates. **[Ephesians 5:1-20]**
- We must allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit while also living by the Spirit. Of course, we can’t do this if we don’t have the Spirit in us . . . **[Romans 8:14]**
- Seek His kingdom first; this requires submission. Basically, this means always walking in God’s ways and looking for ways to satisfy His desires. This is often done through prayer. Again, you have to know what God’s desires are and then allow yourself to be led by the Spirit, which intercedes for us. **[Matthew 6:33]**
- Obey our leaders and submit to their authority unless their laws conflict with God’s ways. This requires a servant’s heart – the same heart we must have to serve God and our fellow man according to God’s commandments.

Read the Bible like the Israelites or Bereans!

How can we learn of the things we're to do in accomplishing His will or in learning of answers to our requests? We can read the Bible regularly and often. Did you know that the Israelites read the Scriptures at least once every seven years and regularly in between? Paul commended the Bereans on reading the Scriptures to hold him accountable.

- The Bible teaches principles that help in decision-making [**2Timothy 3:16-17**]

Ask God for wisdom.

Additionally, we can ask God for wisdom. Did you know that Solomon did this instead of asking for wealth and got both? [**James 1:5-6**]

Ask those we trust for wisdom.

We can also seek wisdom from others such as godly friends, church elders, and the spiritually-mature.

Pray, pray, pray!

We should also pray!!! In fact, we're to pray and offer thanksgiving continuously. Our prayers open a highway to our God through the Spirit. This allows the Spirit to intercede on our behalf.

Fleece (Gideon).

And, we can use a 'fleece' as Gideon did (Judges 6:36-40).

We can hinder or block God.

We've covered different ways to learn of God's plan or desires and discover His responses to our requests. But can we block God's ability to work in our lives, or remove ourselves from His protection and intervention? You bet!

We can hinder the accomplishment of God's will or desires – even for us – through:

Bad motives

- Bad motives. If our motives are impure, then it's a safe bet we're not practicing righteous behavior. If we're unrighteous, we won't have the Spirit in us since the proof of that Spirit are behaviors and signs that are opposite of the wrong intent. [**James 4:3**]

Bad relationships

- Bad relationships. We're to treat our spouses and others with the agape love we've talked about regularly. Any other kind of treatment reflects ungodly behavior. [**1Peter 3:7**]

Unrighteousness and lack of the Spirit and communications

Must allow God His timing

Summary

Next week

- Unrighteousness. Only the disobedient will be unrighteous, as those who love God and our Christ will be obedient to their commandments and involved in right living. God has no communication with the unrighteous, so there'd be no Spirit or link between them and God. **[John 9:31]**
 - Not allowing God's timing (i.e. Abraham). We must allow God time to accomplish His plan.
 - **Summary:** God has a plan for mankind: salvation through the Christ. He also desires fellowship and obedience from us in a pursuit of holiness. We can join in and help accomplish God's plans or desires, or we can rebel and keep Him from using us or even answering our own requests. Of course, this rebellion will result in death.
- Next Week:** We'll cover what isn't God's will: the suffering and death of man. So, we'll talk about "why bad things happen to good people."

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. —1John 5:3.

For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 1Thessalonians 4:2-4.

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says, “Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you.” Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father —Ephesians 5:1-20.

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. —Romans 8:14.

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” —Matthew 6:33.

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. —2Timothy 3:16-17.

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. —James 1:5-6.

You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. —James 4:3.

You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered. —1Peter 3:7.

“We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him.” —John 9:31.