

April 27, 2014

Living by God's Will

James 4:13-17

All Stand and Read Scripture

James 4:13-17

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." ¹⁴ Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵ Instead, *you ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." ¹⁶ But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ Therefore, to one who knows *the* right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

Prayer

INTRODUCTION:

Five decisions are made here.

- You will leave today or tomorrow.
- You will travel to a selected city.
- You will stay there a year.
- You will set up a business.
- You will buy and sell and make a profit.

You might ask, "So, what is wrong with planning?" Nothing, really, as long as we plan considering "what is God's will?" James tells us that our attitude should be "**If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.**"

What makes the five decisions good or bad is the attitude by which we made them.

The scriptures tell us that when we accepted Christ in our life, that we are **no longer our own**. We have been **bought with a price** by Christ's death on the cross. We are to **love God** with all of our hearts and serve only Him.

Romans 12:1-2

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

12 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is your spiritual service of worship*. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove (know) what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

I would like to consider **four** attitudes, that we might have, that will direct how we live our life.

BODY:

The first attitude people can use to determine how to live their life is a complete

I. Indifference to God's Will.

Many people are living as if the only thing that matters is that they succeed in life. They get up in the morning, plan their day, go to work, eat, pay the bills, run the errands, check their finances, and go to bed. The next day is another day exactly the same, with absolutely no consideration to God.

The goal is just to get through life as comfortably as possible with no thought to God or what happens to them when they die. Many feel that **“if” there is a God**, they will be OK because they **“lived a good life”**.

This may be one of Satan's greatest deceptions.

- Just live a good life,
- Provide for your family,
- Stay out of trouble,
- Obey the laws of the land,
- and everything will turn out OK.

Have you fallen into this trap?

Living your life without God and making these decisions in life, without considering God's will, is **foolish and worthless**. We cannot control the future. We do not have the **wisdom to know or the power to control** future events.

When we live life our way, we are only storing up treasures on earth. We cannot take our possessions with us when we die. Our whole life has been in vain.

You need the Lord to guide you in your planning. We **MUST** be storing up treasures in heaven by doing the Lord's will, not treasures on earth that will rust and go away by doing our own thing.

So what is wrong with verses 13-14?

Five decisions are made here.

- You will leave today or tomorrow.
- You will travel to a selected city.
- You will stay there a year.

- You will set up a business.
- You will buy and sell and make a profit.

If these decisions were made for your own self with a total indifference to God, then you will perish.

The second attitude people can use to determine how to live their life is an

II. Arrogance Against God's Will.

This attitude is held by people who acknowledge God, but does not seek His will in their lives. They don't care what God's will is in their life.

James 4:16

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁶ But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.

Parable of the Rich Fool

Look at all of the "I's" in this scripture.

Luke 12:16-21

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁶ And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man was very productive. ¹⁷ And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' ¹⁸ Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years *to come*; take your ease, eat, drink *and* be merry.'" ²⁰ But God said to him, 'You fool! This *very* night your soul is required of you; and *now* who will own what you have prepared?' ²¹ So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

How foolish it is to try to trump God's will. When we compete against God we will always lose. Time and life are not our own. You do not know what tomorrow will bring.

The third attitude people can use to determine how to live their life is by

III. Disobeying God's Will.

This attitude is held by people who acknowledge God, and knows a specific thing or things that God wants him to do, but refuses to do it.

James 4:17

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁷ Therefore, to one who knows *the* right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

We have a perfect example of someone who was asked to do something for the Lord and he tried to run away from it.

Jonah 1:1-4

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹ The word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying, ² “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.” ³ But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going to Tarshish, paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

⁴ The LORD hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up

Jonah knew that God wanted him to go to Nineveh and warn them of their wickedness, but Jonah decided to run from God. He chose to go the opposite direction. He got on a ship and God caused a great storm, so that even experienced sailors were scared of their lives.

Running from God is foolish. We cannot hide from God. When we try to avoid God’s will, we only make our life and the lives around us miserable. There is a punishment for disobedience. The men on the ship were experiencing the possibility of death. Jonah had to live in a great fish for three days.

Jonah 1:12-17

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹² He said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will become calm for you, for I know that on account of me this great storm *has come upon you.*” ¹³ However, the men rowed *desperately* to return to land but they could not, for the sea was becoming *even* stormier against them. ¹⁴ Then they called on the LORD and said, “We earnestly pray, O LORD, do not let us perish on account of this man’s life and do not put innocent blood on us; for You, O LORD, have done as You have pleased.”

¹⁵ So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging. ¹⁶ Then the men feared the LORD greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.

¹⁷ And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

God told Jonah a second time to go to Nineveh, which he did, but his attitude was wrong. He warned them to turn from their wicked ways and they did. This made Jonah angry because he wanted his warning to see them overthrown be true.

Jonah 3:10-4:1

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁰ When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do *it*.

4 But it greatly displeased Jonah and he became angry.

We must not only do God's will, but we must do it with the right heart. Somehow many people believe that the sin of omission (not doing something) is not a sin like the sins of commission (doing something that is wrong).

James reminds us that **one who knows *the* right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.**

The fourth attitude people can use to determine how to live their life is

IV. Living by God's Will.

We know we should be seeking God's will in our life. Jesus taught his disciples how to pray in the Lord's prayer "**Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.**

How can we know what His will is?

God's Word

We must read God's word and understand what He expects from us.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

¹⁶ All Scripture is ^[a]inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for ^[b]training in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Keep Your mind on God

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁶ Rejoice always; ¹⁷ pray without ceasing; ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Too many times we have not let God's Word penetrate our heart. We as Christians tend to be one-sided with God. We pray and ask Him for things, but I believe we fail to be quiet and listen to Him.

Knowing that we are to take up our cross and do God's will is great, but how are we to know what His will is in our lives if we do not listen. When was the last time you prayed to God ["What would you have me do today?"](#)

Five decisions are made here.

- You will leave today or tomorrow.
- You will travel to a selected city.
- You will stay there a year.
- You will set up a business.
- You will buy and sell and make a profit.

Only when these decisions are made considering the will of God, are they acceptable.

Take each day one day at a time and seek God's will.

CONCLUSION:

How are you living your life?

- Are you living your life without any consideration of God's will in your life?
- Do you know that God wants you to live by His will, but you are being arrogant and choosing to do it your own way?
- Do you know things that God wants you to do, but you are unwilling to serve Him?
- Or, are you constantly seeking, listening for, and doing God's will in your life?

God is not willing that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Christ died on the cross, was buried, and rose again on the third day. God sacrificed His son so that we could have forgiveness of sins.

Christ died for **all** of our sins once for all. But, unless you accept Him as your Lord and Savior and live by His WILL, you will not receive the forgiveness of sins that He died to forgive for you.

We are commanded to be baptized by immersion in water for the forgiveness of sin. When we are baptized, we are being baptized into Christ's death. Just as Christ was buried and arose from the dead, we are also baptized into Christ's death so that we too might walk in newness of life.

Christ's death on the cross covers **all** of our sins permanently when you have surrendered to Him and claimed your hope of eternal salvation. There is no need for any more sacrifices. He was the perfect sacrifice. No sin is too great for Christ as long as you are truly repentant of your sins.

The scriptures tell us that ALL have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. There is none righteous, no not one. Unless you know Jesus as your personal savior, you will perish.

If you do not know Christ as your personal Savior, the window of opportunity is open for you now. James is telling us that **our life is just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away**. Consider that our life on earth is very short compared to an **eternity** with God. God wants to come into your life. If you have not been baptized into Christ, won't you come forward this morning and let God know that you are ready to turn your life around for Him and start living your life by His WILL?

Your destiny is determined by how you live. Will it be for yourself or by doing the will of God?

If you have wandered away from the Lord and the Holy Spirit is convicting you this morning to come back home, this invitation is open to you to rededicate your life to Christ by stepping forward.

We are also here with open arms, if you would like to identify yourself as part of this family of God in the Greenwood Christian church.

The Family of God

I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God.
I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood!
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,
For I'm part of the family, the family of God.