

“Doing God’s will” 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

Some Christians talk about God’s will as if it is something vague, or hazy thing. People talk about God’s will as if it is something you have to seek or found out. ***“All I want to do is the will of God” But what is the will of God for his people? For my life? How do I find out what God’s will is? How can I do his will if I don’t know what it is?*** These are very important questions that some of us have wrestled with.

Scripture tells us that **the will of God can be known**; in order for someone to do it, you must know it.

When Jesus came to earth he told the people. ***“I came to do the will of my Father.”(John 6:38). Jesus’s food was to do the will of the Father. (John 4:34)***

Jesus said that only those who do the will of God will enter his kingdom (**Matt.7:21**) This calls you and me to really know the will of God then in order to be part of his kingdom.

Jesus said that whoever does the will of God is his spiritual family (Mark 3:35)

It is the person who does the will of God who will live forever. (1 John 2:17)

What is God’s will?

The Scriptures teach us about two aspects of the will of God. One aspect that is hidden and the other known or revealed.

God’s Supreme (Sovereign) will: God’s secret plan for everything; God does whatever he wants. **Dan.4:35**. Only God knows the future and when the end of time will be. Only God knows how things will turn out in a situation and in the world.

Det.29:29 ***“The secret things belong to the LORD, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. (ESV).***

God’s moral will: God’s revealed commands in Scripture (the Bible) that teach how men ought to believe and live. The Bible teaches us about God’s will. His revealed plan for the world and for people. For example, when God chose the nation of Israel and entered into a covenant with them, God laid out the conditions of the covenant-His will for them. **Exodus 19: 5-6** ***You will be my treasured possession, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.***

Be holy because I am holy. (Lev.20:26; Lev.11:44-45). God’s will for his people was that they would be holy, set apart for God. Their holiness depended upon following the commandments of their God.

Israel was surrounded by wicked people who worshiped many gods, involved in all sorts of sexual sins and people who just wanted to conquer others and make them their slaves. ***God’s will for Israel was to be distinct, holly, set apart. They were to do the things their God demanded; they were to represent Yahweh in their conduct among those wicked nations.***

When we get to the New Testament, the church is known as God’s people, God’s children. The church is also given the command to be holy. **1 Peter 1:13-16.**

It is God’s will that you be holy, sanctified, set apart for him. Paul wrote a letter to a church in the city of Thessalonica. Paul visited there during his 2nd missionary journey (51-53 AD)

I Thessalonians 4:1-8

Paul wrote to these Christians there to instruct them to continue to live for the Lord; as in fact they were living, (v1) Paul encouraged them to do so more and more

(v.3) It is God's will that you should be sanctified: *sanctified (from sanctification, set apart, holy living).*

Jesus had prayed that his people would be sanctified by his truth, his word. **John 17:17**

What does it mean to be sanctified or live for God in this world?

That you should avoid (stay away from) Sexual immorality (*porneian*-fornication).

Sexual immorality was a huge problem in the church in the first century and is still a problem today. A Greek orator known as **Demosthenes (384-322 BC)** had written what was the common practice among pagans.

"We have prostitutes for pleasure, mistresses for our daily body's needs and wives to bear us legitimate children and to be faithful guardians of our households."

People who became Christians, this is what they knew; this is what they practice and then they gave their lives to Jesus and Paul said that it's God's will that they should be set apart, sanctified.

-Learn to control your body in a way that is holy and honorable,

-staying away from passionate lust (lustful passions). A common practice of those who don't know God

-not sinning against your brother regarding these issues.

The warning. *God will punish men for such sins.*

God called us to live holy lives for him. He didn't call us to be impure

To reject these instructions is to reject God and his Holy Spirit.

1 Pet.1:14-16 as obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: **be holy because I am holy."**

Paul also wrote to the church in Ephesus and told them that sexual immorality is improper for God's holy people **Eph.5:3-20**. He also warned them to be careful how they lived.

We face the same pressures the Israelites and the Christians in Thessalonica faced. **God's will for us is that we live holy lives, lives set apart for him, for his glory.**

There are so many sexual sins we could engage in and God is calling his people to be distinct, set apart for him. *In our society today people want to redefine marriage in their own liking; whatever makes you happy.* God had already defined marriage to be between a man and a woman.

-The number of divorce among Christians is as high as the number of divorce among unchristian.

-Christians living with their boyfriends/girlfriends, cohabiting with one another and they think is ok.

God has given his will to his people who are supposed to represent him here. We are to be set apart, we are to honor God with our lives.

How can we live holy lives in this world? By living according to his word **Ps.119:9-11**

How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I see you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against

Are you walking in his will today?