

Since the Bible is the word of God (2 Timothy 3:16), we can fully trust it. God does not lie, in fact He cannot not (Titus 1:2). Thus, whenever God speaks He will always tell the truth. The fact is that God has spoken to man (Hebrews 1:1-2). God did not speak to man just to hear Himself talk. God had a purpose, a design in mind whenever He opened His mouth (2 Peter 1:3). That design and purpose was to reveal Himself unto man in a way that we can understand: "...when ye read, ye may understand..." (Ephesians 3:4). He wants me to know His will because "...He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness..." (Acts 17:31).

Not only can I understand what God's will is for me, but I can also do it! John wrote, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3). In other words, God does not ask us to do something that is beyond our ability; we can do what God commands. So what is God's will for me? Rather than dealing with all of the specific commands of the Bible (thou shalt and thou shalt not) we will deal with general principles laid down by God in His word. The duty of man is best summed up by an Old Testament passage: "And now, Israel, **what doth the LORD thy God require of thee**, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?" (Deuteronomy 10:12-13)? Of course, there are additional passages in which other requirements of man can be found, but the verse above will serve as the basis of our study.

Fear The Lord Thy God

The Bible mentions more than one type of fear. There is a fear which will cause man to be lost (Revelation 21:7-8). This was the kind of fear displayed by the one talent man in Matthew 25:25, "I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth..." He let fear control His actions; fear kept him from doing what God demanded of him. This form of fear is wrong because the whole of man, his purpose in being created is for the pleasure and service of God (Ecclesiastes 12:13; Colossians 1:16). This type of

fear is always condemned in the Bible. But there is another form of fear that we must possess in order to be pleasing to God. This "fear" will help to keep us on the right path. It is not a terror of our Creator or the belief that we cannot please Him regardless of how hard we may try. No, it is a healthy respect and honor for who God is and the things of which He is capable. This type of fear will keep man away from sin. In Romans 3:13-18, Paul gave a long list of sins in which man was involved. But, he ended this registry with the reason why men were committing these sins: "*There is no fear of God before their eyes*" (v 18). Somewhere along the line man had forgotten Who God is. He had forgotten the awesome power and abilities that He has. Jesus reminded His disciples of this power in Matthew 10:28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." God's will for us is to honor and respect Him by remembering who He is and the things of which He is capable; to fear Him.

Love Him

God not only expects us to fear Him, but also to love. Once again we must turn to the Bible in order to understand what is meant by the word "love." The bottom line is that God equates loving Him with keeping His commandments (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3, John 14:21, 23). The measure of man's love for God is not found merely in our emotions or sentiments. Rather, it is found in our obedience. This love for God stems from the feelings of gratitude and appreciation for what God has done for us. "We love Him, because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Whenever God did not have to do anything, He did everything! He demonstrated His great love for us by sending His son to die on the cross for our sins (Romans 5:8). He didn't do this because we were such loyal servants to Him. He did not do it because we were such wonderful people. He did it because He loved us! If God loved us even when we did not deserve it, should we not love Him too? How do we know that God loves us? He showed it. Likewise we show our love for God by the keeping of His commandments.

We must always remember that the commandments that God has given to man are always for his good

(Deuteronomy 10:13). God tells us to obey and honor our parents (Ephesians 6:2). But, why? "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (v 3). Generally speaking, a parent is not going to tell his/her child to do things that will bring physical harm unto them. It is out of a deep love and affection for our children that we keep them away from things that will bring sorrow and hurt into their lives. Is it any different with God? He commands us to refrain from certain things like lying, stealing, murder, drunkenness, etc. because such things will bring sorrow and hurt into our lives and the lives of our fellow man. Our Father wants us to be happy people and to live happy lives. That is why He has given us these commands! Think about God's plan for man and His laws for marriage (Matthew 19:4-6). Why did God command one man and one woman for life? It is the happiest and most fulfilling way that we can live upon this earth. It is for the happiness of the man, woman and children that are involved in that relationship. Yes, God's will for us is to demonstrate our love for Him through the keeping of His commandments. But these commandments will ultimately lead to our happiness and the happiness of others too.

Walk In All His Ways

God's will for me is not only to fear and love Him, but also to walk in all of His ways. Job was a man who the Bible describes as "perfect and upright" (Job 1:1). Such language is reminiscent of the parents of John, the cousin of Jesus: "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." These great men and women of God were doing everything that God demanded of them. This does not mean that they had never done wrong or would never do wrong again (Romans 3:23). But, it does mean that they concerned themselves with every commandment of God. Jesus Himself said, "...It is written, '*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*'" (Matthew 4:4). *God expects us to hang upon His*

every word; to honor and respect every commandment that He has given unto us, not just the ones that come easy or the ones that we like.

Whenever Jesus spoke unto the seven churches of Asia, at least four of them were less than perfect in His sight. While they may have been doing part or even most of what He had commanded them, they were still lacking. He said unto the church at Ephesus, "...I have somewhat against thee..." (Revelation 2:4); unto the church at Pergamos and Thyatira, "...I have a few things against thee..." (2:14, 20); and unto the church at Sardis, "...I have not found thy works perfect before God..." (3:2). What was Jesus attitude toward these congregations? Was it the oft found attitude of many today, "But we got most of it right!" No! He said, "Repent." On another occasion a rich young ruler came to Jesus professing the desire to enter into heaven. He asked what one must do in order to go there. After Jesus recited six of the original ten commandments, the young man answered in excitement that he was doing those very things. But, he wanted to know if there was anything else that he should be doing. Jesus told him, "...If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" (Matthew 19:21). Notice that He did not say, "You are doing a lot of things right, do not worry about the rest." Is it acceptable to be mostly right whenever it comes to obeying the gospel? In other words, would it be acceptable with God if we only obeyed four of the five steps of salvation? After all, we did most of what God asked. What about our worship to God? Would it be O.K. if we got four of the five acts of worship unto God right? Let's say that we just have instrumental music accompanying our singing to God. Would it be acceptable to refrain from fornication or murder most of time? In what area has it ever been right to just do most of what God says? Then why would we think it would be O.K. to just be mostly faithful unto the Lord (James 4:17)? God demands us to respect every word, every command that He has given unto us; not just some of them (Psalm 119:6).

Serve Him with All Of Our Heart And Soul

The first and greatest commandment given to us by God involves the attitude and spirit of man in

obedience (Matthew 22:35-38). Our obedience to the commandments of God is not to be rigid in nature. In other words it is not just living by the letter of the law, it is much, much more! Jesus dealt with this principle in Matthew chapter five. The Jews were infamous for living by the letter of the law, but not the spirit in which it was written. They would not dream of murdering anyone outwardly (the law forbade it), yet they saw no harm in harboring deep hatred within their hearts (Matthew 5:21-22). They were not guilty of physical murder, but they were guilty of spiritual murder (1 John 3:15). While they would never commit the outward act of adultery with anyone's wife, yet they would look upon that woman and imagine all kinds of scenarios with her in their minds (Matthew 5:27-28). No, they were not guilty of physical adultery, but they were guilty of spiritual adultery. You see, serving God and keeping His commandments goes beyond just the outward keeping of the Law. It extends into the very heart and spirit in which the laws were written. God's will for me is to live by the letter and the spirit of the laws which He has given us.

Conclusion

Are we going to get it right all of the time? NO! Whenever we fall short of God's will for us we need to repent. A faithful servant of God cannot and will not be satisfied with living in sin. So whenever we get it wrong, do not be too hard on yourself. But, do not be too easy on yourself either. Because you know what God's will is for you and you know that you can do it!

This tract is condensed from a lesson presented at the
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"I Know"

To hear or view the complete lesson go to
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I Know...

God's Will For Me (And I Can Do It)

by
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