

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 10 (March 2-8, 2014)

Many Christians struggle with knowing and doing the will of God. I'm indebted to an evangelist named Johnny Cayton who told my youth group years ago that knowing and doing God's will is similar to potty training. Once you get the hang of it, it comes naturally, even though you may slip up and get too far away from the goal on occasions. With that profound thought, let's examine Scripture to see how we can know and do the will of God.

Sunday – March 2 (read Romans 12:1-2)

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2)

This is probably the most important single verse in the Bible on the subject of knowing and doing God's will. In Romans 12:1, Paul challenges all Christians: "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's **mercy**, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship" (emphasis mine). First, you must have a clear understanding of God's **mercy**. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), but in His **mercy**, God does not give us what our actions have earned. Instead, by His **grace**, He gives us what we do not deserve, **eternal life** in Christ Jesus. According to Hebrews 4:16, we must **receive mercy** before we can **find grace!** We will continue to dissect this verse in the next few devotions.

Monday – March 3

Returning to Romans 12:1-2 from yesterday's study, "in view of God's mercy," you should "offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God." This is where many, if not most, Christians fall far short. You cannot clearly know and do God's will while you are living in known sin and disobedience to the commands of God. The **world** accepts all lifestyles as normal and permissible, but the **Bible** defines morality from God's point of view, not men's. Many have told me, "I want Jesus to forgive my sins, but no one is going to tell me what I can do with my body." The same people have come back later to say, "I just cannot determine God's will." Read these two verses over again until you can answer, using truth from the Bible, those who say these things.

Tuesday – March 4

Today, the **fourth of March**, is the 1st birthday of my youngest grandson, Spencer. I am reminded that I need to "**March Forth**" with the truth found in Romans 12:1-2, even as he grows up in a world that rejects the notion that the Lord has a right to teach us how to know and follow the will of God. Verse 1 tells us that presenting our bodies to God is our "spiritual act of worship." King James translates it as our "reasonable act of service." Either translation teaches us that it is both "reasonable and spiritual" to honor God in our bodies. I find it interesting that "service" and "worship" come from the same Greek word. Are you serving God in the way you use your body? Are you worshiping Him as you make decisions concerning your body? If not, you may have discovered why you are having difficulty knowing and doing His will.

Wednesday – March 5

I did not set out to spend most of the week on Romans 12:1-2, but the truth taught here must be understood before other Biblical teachings can be added to it. If you want to know the will of God, you must reject the accepted worldly teachings on morality and submit your body to the authority of God's Word; however, you have to change your **mind** about sin before you can change your bodily habits. I'm aware it is difficult to replace actions that make you **temporarily** feel good with those that allow you to **live** in the knowledge and pleasure of His will. Maybe **you** are pointing a finger at the young crowd because they are tempted to use their bodies in immorality. If you feel self-righteous because you do not have similar temptations, then ask yourself how **your** body is doing in the areas of what you eat, what you drink, what you think, what you say or where you go. We all, at every age, need to present our bodies to God to understand and to do God's "good, pleasing and perfect will."

Thursday – March 6

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Since I have spent four days looking at the parallel between presenting our bodies to God and **knowing** and **doing** the will of God, I will use today's passage to further teach this truth. God tells us to "**flee** from sexual immorality" (v. 18, emphasis mine). Why is this act in God's "**flee market**?" He answers that question in the second part of v. 18: "All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body." Sexual sins cause diseases, some which are deadly, and create appetites that cannot easily be satisfied within a marriage. God has ordained marriage between a man and a woman as the proper way to satisfy sexual desires which He also ordained. All other sex is sin! Don't forget that "your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit." Don't forget the price that Christ paid for your pardon. Then you can more easily "honor God with your body."

Friday – March 7

If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own. (John 7:17)

In a nutshell, this verse teaches us that we cannot understand God's Word unless we **choose** to do His known will. God will never explain His Word and His will to someone who has no desire to "walk in the truth" (see 3 John 4). This answer from Jesus comes in response to one of my favorite questions in v. 15: "How did this man get such learning without having studied?" The Lord replies: "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me" (v. 16). Because Jesus came only to do the will of the Father (see John 6:38), God made His truth known through His Son and His Word. You, also, can understand the truth of the Bible if you make a **definite choice** to obey His Word and His will.

Saturday – March 8

He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself, but he who works for the honor of the one who sent him is a man of truth; there is nothing false about him. (John 7:18)

I want you to see why so many preachers preach their own philosophy instead of the Word of God. They do it to bring honor (and wealth) to themselves. All of our works will be placed in one of two categories according to 1 Corinthians 3:10-15: Those that brought honor and glory to God (gold, silver, costly stones), and those that brought honor and glory to themselves (wood, hay, straw). Is it your heart's desire to know and to do the will of God? Choose to **do** His will, no matter what it may be, for His glory alone, and He will show you His **will**, His **Word** and His **way**.