

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 12 (March 16-22, 2014)

We will conclude our study on the will of God with this week's devotions. Some of you have commented that the 2014 devotions "need a little more meat." The additional reading assignments are designed to meet that request.

Sunday – March 16 (read Mark 3:20-21; 31-35)

Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother. (Mark 3:35)

The verses from 31-35 seem harsh to those who do not know the **rest of the story**. Mother Mary and her other sons come to try to get Jesus to forsake His ministry and come back to the safety of their home, because He is not taking care of His personal needs (v. 20-21). The KJV translates v. 21 as "His friends," but it is obvious from the continuation of v. 31-35 that "His family" is the proper interpretation. Knowing the reason for which they have come, Jesus ignores the fact that His family is "standing outside." He then declares that **all of us** are His family who choose to do the **will of His Father**. Jesus later meets the spiritual needs of His human family when He makes sure they are in the upper room for the arrival of the Holy Spirit (see John 19:25-27 & Acts 1:14). Is there any doubt that He wants all of us to know and to do the will of God?

Monday – March 17 (read Acts 20:17-28)

For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. (Acts 20:27)

To say that the entire passage in your assigned reading is very important to me would be a gross understatement! The theme of my ministry is found in v. 20: "You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house." Therefore, I am under a spiritual mandate to "proclaim to you the **whole will of God**." Far too many ministers are caving in to political correctness or else to saying what their listeners want to hear (see 2 Timothy 4:3). The eternal consequences for doing this far outweigh the temporary thrill of being accepted (see Ezekiel 3:16-21). The last three weeks of devotions have focused on teaching how you can **know** and **do** the will of God. I pray you have been informed and blessed as well as challenged!

Tuesday – March 18 (read Ephesians 1:3-14)

*In love He predestined us to be **adopted** as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with **His pleasure and will** . . . (Ephesians 1:4b-5, emphasis mine)*

God knew that we would sin once He offered a choice to Adam and Eve; therefore, He planned, from the beginning, to **adopt** us into His family. We lost our original privileges as **true sons** in the Garden of Eden when sin entered the world, but we gained our permanent privileges as **adopted sons** through the blood of Jesus Christ (v. 7-8). Because of our standing with the Son, we have access to every **spiritual blessing** in Christ (v. 3). In His eyes, we are "**holy and blameless**" (v. 4). Those who have adopted children understand fully that a child seldom comes to anyone by accident. Children are usually adopted because a loving couple wants the child to have the same privileges as those who are heirs by birthright. Today's printed verse declares that it was **God's will** to adopt us. Wow! What more could we ask for?

Wednesday – March 19 (reread Ephesians 1:3-14)

And He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ . . . (Ephesians 1:9)

The mystery of the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament: Through Jesus, God was going “to bring all things in heaven and earth together under one head, even Christ” (v. 10). This was the **will of God** from the very beginning! All of the more than 600 laws of the Old Testament were designed to show us that it is **impossible** for sinful man to keep the law (see Romans 5:20-21). We needed a Savior! We needed someone who could put an end to the law with its impossible demands (see Romans 10:4)! We needed someone who could fulfill all the promises God made to us! Praise God! “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ” (2 Corinthians 1:20). Rejoice! The Master is in charge! God’s will is being done!

Thursday – March 20 (reread Ephesians 1:3-14)

In Him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will . . . (Eph. 1:11)

Make sure you read at least verses 11-14 in today’s assignment to get the full impact of the printed verse. Notice that God’s predestined plan is to **call** us, **choose** us and **continue** to do His work in our hearts until **His will** is done in each of us (v. 11). This, in turn, will bring much glory to Him (v. 12). The presence of His Spirit living inside you is an absolute guarantee that you will spend eternity with Him in Heaven (v. 13-14), because “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6). Wow! Praise His wonderful name today for the assurance you have in Christ!

Friday – March 21 (read James 4:13-16)

Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” (James 4:15)

Many teachers today, particularly on TV, say that you should never say, “If it be thy will,” because it expresses doubt. My only Greek word for that thought is “hogwash.” In these devotions for the past three weeks, I have taught God’s **definite will** when it comes to our salvation and sanctification. Most subjects, however, are not so definite! For example, I do not know **His will** for your healing or for the house you want to buy or for the car you want to drive. God will provide these things (see Romans 8:32) as long as you “seek first His kingdom and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33). After you have followed Matthew 6:33, learn to ask for the things you think you need (see James 4:2), but leave room for Him to say “no.” Today’s printed verse from James encourages you to leave the choices to God!

Saturday – March 22 (read Matthew 26:36-46)

“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” (Matthew 26:39b)

Do we need another example of why we should pray, “Yet not as I will, but as you will”? Jesus knew from **eternity past** that He must die for the sins of mankind. Facing the reality of His impending death along with the knowledge that He would temporarily be separated from His Father on the cross caused Jesus to make an inquiry as to the possibility of “Plan B.” There has never been any other way for sinful man to come into the presence of a Holy God. How ridiculous it is for today’s liberal people to say that, “all roads lead to God.” Claim the **promises** God has made to you with assurance, but leave the **non-promises** to the wisdom of your all-knowing God!