

Sermon Series: "Why" Part 3..."If God has a plan, what is his will?"
Topical exegesis Rev. Alan Thompson

Questions

- Why can't we see God's will? If God has a plan, what is it?
- Is it God's plan for bad things to happen? Does God plan to not answer my prayers?
- Is my story already fully written or is it a work in progress?

Introduction

- Good can come from difficulty. Plan may not be clear
- Mistaken recognition of plan – writing in clouds?

God's will

- Could it be a set of principles? Is it specific to each decision we make?
- Is His will irresistible? Is His will predetermined?
- Do we have freedom to resist? Is His plan for good or bad?
- Where is justice in punishing us if we are only doing God's will?

Response

- Must be ready to discern plan. Call may not be clear
- Call into ministry not clear. Explore call just like ministry exploration process
- Not fully predetermined...if so, must take into consideration bad things
- If we are just actors...what is point of life? We are not just actors.
- Searching for God's will in the good and as a way to rise above the bad
- Plans as a framework...could this be the same with God?
- Giving life to God results in a collaborative relationship...seek his will
- Outline and paradigm with choices
- We can't fully plan out a child's life...what about us?
- Given tools to make right decisions and to listen
- Freedom to make decisions. Common sense?
- Perfection comes in sanctification....it is a process
- Prescriptive will – instructions God has given that lead to deeper relationship and spiritual health
- Required to think and look different
- Relationship with scripture...deeper understanding. Study in context and theologically
- Scripture contains all that is necessary for salvation
- Obedience
- God reveals self and will in many ways. Coincident or God incident?
- We can be instrument of light. Daily opportunities to do God's will and be used by God
- Offer self...doing the most loving thing we can do is usually God's will
- Tools...scripture, spirit, prayer, people, church, groups
- We often know his will but hesitate to do it...inconvenient, hard
- Some parts of life happy while others sad...suffering is inevitable
- Life conflict, challenge, and change

Closing

- Someone being called to preach or serve?
- It is a work in progress
- Seek to love God and neighbor...this is the plan
- Live our lives worthy of God by seeking his will, knowing his will, and growing in our knowledge of him
- Not a specific or detailed plan. Invite spirit to lead us
- Following His will does not guarantee happiness or life free from trouble
- Will is faithfulness, not happiness
- Lifts us out of darkness, pain, and suffering while causing transformation
- Dark times are not the end times
- Chapters must be written...how will you write them

Scripture

- 1 Corinthians 12: 4-7 – Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good.
- 1 Corinthians 15: 58 – Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.
- Colossians 1: 10 –So that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God.
- Mark 12: 30-31 – You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.
- Matthew 16: 24 – Then Jesus told his disciples, If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.
- Matthew 7: 13-14 – Enter through the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.
- Philippians 1: 21 – For to me, living in Christ and dying is gain.
- Romans 12: 1-2 – I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.

References

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