

"True Faith and the Will of God"

James 4:13-17

Part 2

Introduction: Several weeks ago we were in our study of the book of James and in that study we started into James 4:13-17. Now there is really a twofold purpose of James writing this letter.

1. It contains great practical Truth for our lives.
2. It is a series of tests for all who read as a way to check salvation.

Now the section we are looking at is a section that deals with the will of God within our lives. The last time we were together we I showed you several scriptures concerning the will of God. Please allow me to refresh your memory for a few minutes.

Jeremiah 1:4-7

⁴ *Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*

⁵ *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*

⁶ *Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.*

⁷ *But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.*

Here we see that God had a "will" and a plan for the life of Jeremiah before he was ever born.

The very same is true of our lives also. Therefore, we must find the will of God for our lives and live it.

It is only in the will of God that we will be effective for God. But we have a choice as we pass through this world:

1. We can seek the will of God.
2. Or we can seek our own personal will.

Let me just say that when we seek our own personal will and we exclude God from our decisions in life or when we make decisions that are in complete contrast to the will of God then there will be consequences. Let me refresh your mind once again.

Jonah 1:1-5

Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

² *Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.*

³ *But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.*

⁴ *But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.*

⁵ *Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.*

Jonah's life is an example of what happens to the believer who chooses to ignore the will of God and chooses to exclude God from their plans. Jonah continued to sink lower and lower.

Jonah 1:12

¹² *And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.*

He had reached the place where he did not care if he lived or died. This is how far you can sink when you are outside the will of God.

Now let us get to the book of James. We already looked at the first point the last time.

I. The Sin of Denying God's Will

Notice James 4:13

The words "Go to now" mean "Listen to what I am about to tell you!" James needed to get their attention. The reason is seen within this verse. They were not controlled by the will

of God within their lives but they were controlled by personal gain and personal profit. They were controlled by the "STUFF" of this world.

They were planning years in advance and the basis of their plans was worldly wealth. They were making plans to go to certain cities where there would be much people passing through. They would have plans to set up business along certain trade routes that would pass through thriving cities. They would stay there while they could sell their product and then they would move on.

Now let me just say that to plan ahead is not a sin, to be involved in business is not a sin, and the Bible commands that we are to work for a living. These things were not the problem at all. The problem was God was not in their planning. They never considered the will of God and **even beyond that they were living as they were able to know the future and even to control what happened in the future.**

But here is the bigger sin in the midst of all of this: there was no dependence upon God!!!

They never set down and sought the will of God for their lives. They were living to please the desires of the flesh. So we looked at the sin of denying God's will.

II. The Truth about Tomorrow.

Notice James 4:14

James starts this verse with a straight forward statement; "No one knows what tomorrow even holds!"

In the minds of these people they were running way out into the future making plans as though they were able to guarantee the fulfillment of those plans. But James is quick to remind them that they did not even know what was going to happen tomorrow so how could they possibly know what would happen a year or two down the road?

Then James asks them a question, "What is your life?"

Then James answers the question, "It is simply a vapor that is here today and is gone tomorrow."

Let me show you some verses that show how frail and temporary our lives really are.

Proverbs 27:1

Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Job 7:6-9

⁶ My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

⁷ O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good.

⁸ The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

⁹ As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more

Job 8:9

⁹ (For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:)

Job 9:25-26

²⁵ Now my days are swifter than a post[runner]: they flee away, they see no good.

²⁶ They are passed away as the swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey.

Job 14:1-5

Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.

² He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

³ And doth thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?

⁴ Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.

⁵ Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass:

The point is that life can change in a moment but even above that thought is the Truth that as believers we must depend upon the Lord at all times. He is the One who holds our

lives in His hands. He has set our boundaries and He has appointed the path which we are to walk.

Notice James 4:15

The point which James is making here is that as believers we should depend upon God as we live our lives in this world.

Psalm 37:3-7

³ *Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*

⁴ *Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*

⁵ *Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.*

⁶ *And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.*

⁷ *Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.*

Proverbs 3:5-7a

⁵ *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

⁶ *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

⁷ *Be not wise in thine own eyes:*

III. The Sin of Disobeying God's Will

Notice James 4:16

These people had a really arrogant attitude. This tells me that they had been successful in their planning in the past. But there were 2 points which they did not realize:

1. **Their attitude was a sin.** Their lack of concern for the will of God was an offense to God.
2. **Their world could come crashing down in a moment.** Let me show you what God said about the nation of Babylon in Isaiah 47.

Isaiah 47:1, 7-11a

Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate.

⁷ And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.

⁸ Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children:

⁹ But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.

¹⁰ For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.

¹¹ Therefore shall evil come upon thee;

Notice James 4:17

Here James brings it altogether. Now we can see this verse in the context that it was intended.

The believer who knows he or she needs to be walking in the will of God but deliberately chooses to suppress that very truth is living in sin.

Conclusion:

I don't know ALL of God's will for your life but I can help you with a few things.

- 1. It is God's will for you to be saved.**

1 Timothy 2:3-4

³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

⁴ Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

- 2. It is God's will for you to live a separated life.**

1 Thessalonians 4:3

For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

3. It is God's will for you to be thankful.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

4. It is God's will for you to submit to the laws of the government.

1 Peter 2:13-15

¹³ *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;*

¹⁴ *Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.*

¹⁵ *For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:*

5. It is God's will that we trust Him in the midst of suffering.

1 Peter 4:19

Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.