

Praying the Powerful Prayers of Paul

Colossians 1:9-14

A Prayer to be Filled With the
Knowledge of His Will

Part 3

Popular Teaching on the Will of God

- **Popular Idea 1:** One notion teaches that God has a general and specific will for each believer.
 - General: to be a Christian, serve God, not steal, lie, etc.
 - Specific: who to marry, where to work, what car to buy, which job or career to take, what church to go to, etc.
- **Popular Idea 2:** God has a detailed life plan uniquely designed for every believer revealed through outward circumstance and inward impressions.

Popular Teaching on the Will of God

- Typical 3-Step Formula:

1. Read the Word of God and Pray
2. Read the Circumstances of Your Life, The Road Signs, Opening and Closing of Doors and Windows
3. Listen for God's still small voice, inner voice, or inner feelings, promptings, hunches, and impressions.

Result: According to the prevalent teaching the result of this process will lead you right to center of God's will.

Problems with the Popular Teaching

- Undermines the integrity of God by expecting further revelation (extra-Biblical Revelation) when God says that his word is complete.
 - Many Grace Believers will ridicule the Pentecostals for operating in this fashion before turning around and doing it themselves.
 - Ephesians 1:9—God has already made know the mystery of his will. His will is revealed for us on the pages of Scripture.

Problems with the Popular Teaching

- Looks to the reading of circumstances as a means of divine communication when that has always been the job of the word of God.
 - An event cannot communicate a message from God apart from an objective standard outside of yourself.
 - Romans 2:17-18—Even Israel the sign people of God know his will not by reading their circumstances but the Law, God's word to Israel.
- The prevalent teaching on the will of God is heavily steeped in the Deterministic and Fatalistic teachings of Calvinism.
 - Calvinism is basically theological determinism. The idea that everything happens for a reason and is part of predetermined life plan.

Closet Calvinism vs. Pauline Thinking

- *Determinism*—is the belief that all events, including human choices are determined or caused by another. For pagans it's the gods for Christian its God.
- *Indeterminism*—is the belief that all events, including human choices are uncaused.
- *Self-Determinism*—a person's moral acts are not caused by another, or uncaused, but are caused by oneself. One's actions are freely chosen, without compulsion, in a situation in which they could have done otherwise.

Time and Chance

- I Samuel 6:9
- II Samuel 1:6
- Ecclesiastes 9:11
- Luke 10:31
- There are certain events that God has predetermined but they are all recorded and revealed in Scripture. Including the mystery of his will.

Renewed Mind Thinking

- Paul did not function like a closet Calvinist. Paul made decisions based upon a renewed mind taking into account the objective facts from the word of God.
- I Corinthians 7:39
- I Corinthians 16:12
- II Corinthians 2:12-13
- Philippians 2:25
- I Thessalonians 3:1
- Philemon 15

Concluding Thoughts

- We have a completed book. Inspiration has ceased.
- Signs belong to Israel's program.
- God has never used circumstances as a means to reveal his will.
- Through the cross we have peace with God and a standing in absolute grace.
- We are not under the Law but under grace
- Therefore we are free and competent based upon our understanding of the current dispensation of grace and with a renewed mind to make decision for ourselves.
- If you will find out what God is doing and do that you will be doing the will of God in the details of your life.

Concluding Thoughts

- This puts you in charge of your own life. While time and chance exist according to the Scriptures we make our own lives. We build upon the foundation of Christ in our own way.
 - I Corinthians 3:9-12—every believer will be held accountable for how they built upon the foundation of Christ.
- God needs his ambassadors in every community and on every job site and place of occupation.