

Discerning God's Will – (Romans 12:2) 14 June'15

I'm also thankful to the Lord for Pastor Mike who shared with us God's Word, last Sunday. I think he touched on a very important subject about God's guidance and direction in our lives. I believe it was very well received, and I'm thankful to that, to God for that. And so I thought today I might just want to ride that wave a little and continue this subject, very important subject on discerning God's will.

So today we are going to look at guidance, going to look at God's will and I just thought I would want to deepen or continue to establish you, in how you can know God's will for your life, because all of us, will want to know God's will for our lives, whether it is for your spouse or for jobs, or life directions. This is the one thing that we would want God to give us the answers to and I'm happy to tell you God does give us answers.

So this is important. However, this is also very elusive. Many Christians don't quite have a handle to this subject on Discerning God's will. There are some people who flat out give up and say, I don't think God would ever lead me in my life. I mean, I've never seen God in person, I've never heard heard God in reality, so I don't really think God will lead me and so they have sort of given up and they have lived quite self deterministic lives. In other words, they choose to do what they want to do and they say well, whether it's for good or for worse, I have to be responsible for my choices. And God in a sense, is pretty much left out of their lives or your lives in a practical way. You, you needed God for salvation, you are looking forward to meeting with Him in the future, but from now till then, you can't quite count on His guidance.

But then there are also those who believe that seeking God's will is found in some mystical, exoteric experience or encounter. So they are regularly waiting for some sign in the sky or some dreams, some visions, some voices they hear and and they are waiting for such moments where God will reveal His will for them. Now, I think that is a very dangerous way to live because you are vulnerable and you're very subjected to, very easily subjected to deceptions and to being misled in life.

So there are those who don't believe God can be sought, there are those who who think that God can be sought, or God's will can be known, but they look for it in all kinds of wrong places and there are people who sort of say, okay, this is so difficult, I better just go and ask my pastor. So they have this tendency, whenever they have a big decision in life, they are not so sure, the number one thing they would like to do is not to seek God, but seek God's servant, so they go to the pastor. They

think that the pastor has a inside track with God, don't you? You sort of assumed that your pastor has some secret channel to God and, not secret channel, but a crystal ball at home, where he can rub and rub and God will show him the dream, the vision, the future for the person, don't you believe that?

I have balls at home, okay, I've tennis balls and golf balls but never a crystal ball. When I took over from Pastor Paul 9 years ago, he didn't hand me a crystal ball, I'm sorry. And up till today, he still hasn't told me he is going to give me any crystal ball, so if it burst your bubble, let me tell you, coming to your pastor is not going to give you God's will, because I'm not God. And I'm not you, so I won't know God's will for your life. Now, it sounds so depressing isn't it? God's will is so important, yet it's so elusive, so how can you and I consistently and reliably know the will of God, not just when you're looking for a spouse, not just when you have a career switch. But for every day of your life, in every aspect of your life.

Does the Bible tell us, does the Bible help us? Well, we are just going to look at one verse today, in fact just one phrase today, but with that one phrase it unlocks, it reveals to us a tremendous truth. I would even call it a secret, because it is so unknown today, it is so under thought, it is so obscure to people. This obvious truth, has become a secret. So the secret to Discerning God's will, I think can be found in this one verse.

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It is found in Romans 12, in verse 2 where it says,

Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing, you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

This is a great verse, and I'm sure all of you will recognize Romans 12, is one of the key pinnacles in the Christian, or the biblical landscape, it's one of the chapters you must know, you must read and in the middle of this chapter or in the beginning of this chapter, there is this great verse, that tells us about the will of God. The word will here, in the Greek, is a word that means God's desire or pleasure or choice or will. So here we are looking at God's desire, God's choice, God's pleasure. I want to know God's will. Here, this will tell you, God's desire. This verse is about that and there are some things that Paul says about God's will.

God's will is always good. Good means good you say. Well, in the Greek, it means something that is useful or beneficial. God's will is always beneficial, it's always a blessing to be doing God's will. God's will is also acceptable. You say, what is acceptable? In the Greek, it is the word that refers to something that is pleasing or pleasant. And then, the Bible tells us, God's will is perfect and the word perfect, really means something that is complete, finished, fulfilled, brought to its intended end.

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So, what's the point, Paul is saying? Paul is saying, I'm glad you want to know God's will, I'm glad you pursue to know His will, because God's will is useful, it's beneficial, it's pleasing, it's pleasant and it will always accomplish its intended end. So I'm glad this morning you came, because this message is going to help you discover what is useful, pleasing and fulfilling for your life, if you pursue the will of God. Now in this very text, Paul is also telling us, how this will, can be discerned. He tells us that it requires the renewal of your mind. The key, very simple, this is so, I don't think it's even complicated, it's as obvious as it comes. To know God's desire, choice and pleasure for your life at any given moment, you've got to have the renewal of your mind, not just the mind, but a renewal of the mind. The word renewal, is a word that refers to something that is renovated, that's really what it is. The renovation of the mind, the renewal of the mind, the complete change of the mind for something better. Nobody, renovates a house to make it worse, alright. So the renovation here is to change it for the better.

And when your mind is changed for the better, you can discern, you can know the will of God. So this is the main point, this is the main slide.

The Renewal of the Mind is key to Discerning God's Will

This slide will stay there for quite some time. It says the renewal of the mind is key to Discerning God's will. The Holy Spirit changes your mind as you go to the Word of God as you feed on the Word of God. He renews, He renovates it, so that this mind now, that thinks more and more biblically, this mind now that thinks more and more as Jesus would think, would be able to know God's will.

Now, I started by saying, your mind, the natural mind cannot know God's will. It's got to be renewed. You see, the reason is because, as man today, as sinful men today, sin has so corrupted and ruined us, that this natural mind has no capacity to know God. That's a clear teaching of the Bible. In fact, we reject God, we hate God, we run away from God, our minds are darkened, we cannot understand the ways of God. So

the natural mind today cannot know God. That's why, the Spirit of God has got to come and renew your mind. And when it is renewed, you can know God.

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So when God created man, back in the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve, they were made good and they were made able to know God and relate with Him, but once sin came in, it's like that computer virus, that has totally corrupted your operating system. It is now spoilt, spoilt, ruined, it cannot now comprehend God, know God or interact with God, it's fallen.

So it was okay in the beginning, but after sin came in, it's now corrupted, the virus has wiped it all out, then when you come to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes and restores this system, the new covenant, which we are going to study in the book of Hebrews, in time to come, the new covenant is about how God comes by His Spirit to give us a new heart and a new mind. So, with a new OS, new operating system in the computer, here, you are now able to discern the will of God.

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But this process, doesn't just end at that point of salvation, it continues, that's what is said in Romans 12 that we will continue to be transformed, we will continue to have the renewing of the mind, as we read the Word of God, the Spirit of God takes the Word of God and changes the man of God, changes his mind by giving him more truth. You see the operating system may be compatible, but with no data it cannot know God, it cannot have any processes. So the more you read, the more information you feed, the more input you give it, the more it is able to discern God's will; that's the point. The renewing of this mind is key to discerning God's will.

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Now, let me work it out, practically for you then. You say, Pastor, okay, this is good theory, great stuff, but I'm still looking for spouse, how is this got to be applicable to me. I'm still deciding if I should quit my job, I'm still deciding about life's directions, what has this got to do? God has not told me my future yet. Let me show you the relevance, of this statement. This principle and the practical implications that come, and I'll use my flipchart or my board again, and demonstrate my tremendous artistic abilities, just kidding.

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Most Christians going to church today, when it come to this subject of discerning God's will, their philosophy and probably your idea of discerning God's will could be encapsulated by a picture of a crystal ball, right? If only God is to tell me what my future would be, I just want to see what I'll be like. I just want to see what my wife would look like, that's the idea. We just want to peek into the future, it's a crystal ball mindset. And in this crystal ball mindset, we're always asking this question, what's next, right, what's next. I want to know the future, I want to know what's next. This crystal ball mindset, is asking God to tell me, so we just want to ask God, please tell me what's next.

In other words, we just want revelation and we really want to know God's secret will. I mean, what your job will be, who your spouse will be is secret, nobody has it on any boards anywhere, not on Internet, not any forums, you won't know, it's secret. But most Christians' idea of seeking God's will, is this crystal ball formula, tell me what's next, I want your revelation about your secret will.

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Paul, however says, when it comes to knowing God's will, it is not about a crystal ball primarily, but it's about tada, what, is this? Not boxing gloves, let me the brain folds, hey you can clap, it's all right, (Laughter in the congregation). Okay, it is about the brain. The key to seeking God's will, discerning God's will, is in a renewed mind. Now the structure looks the same, but the operations inside are different. The computer hardware looks the same, but the operating system is now totally changed. The Spirit of God has given them, given us a new heart, a new mind. And as you input more and more biblical realities, this mind is renovated, it's upgraded, it's improved, and the better it is, the better it is to know God's will.

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The paradigm shift in going to this is, the renewed mind that thinks in a godly way, in a Christlike way, is focused not so much about what next, what's in the future, but is very focused about what is now. Lord, what is the will for me, now, what do you want me to do now, who do I ought to be, what kind of a person should I be now. It is a philosophy that doesn't say, tell me what's next, but says to God, grow me to be the person you want me to be.

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The renewed mind is not so concerned about the revelation about the secret will, but it's very concerned about obedience to the revealed will, you get that? Most of us, when we come to discerning God's will, is always saying, God, tell me what's next. I want to know Your secret will. But the biblical way of knowing God's will, more than the crystal ball approach, is the renewed mind approach.

Now, let me try to work this out with you in a practical example. Suppose you are now 30 years old, you are looking for a spouse and you know how it is right? looking for spouse, you're always wondering who is the next one, no, not next one, who is the one. (Laughter in the congregation). Huh, huh, after many failures, it become the next one aah. But, Lord who is the one and you pray that God will show you. So, so you stand in the mirror and you watched snow white right. So you thought, maybe this works, mirror, mirror on the wall, show me who is the fairest of them all. So you wish that somehow the picture will come the face, maybe the, Facebook profile picture, or account number, or her phone number or email, whatever lah. You are hoping that somehow, somewhere you will see the girl, but it never comes, you've tried that, those who are 30 years old, you might have tried that, God, show me. It doesn't come, so what do you do, you say, okay, next step is well, when I walk out of the house the first person, I see, the first girl, not first person, today, very dangerous. (Laughter in the congregation). The first girl I see will be my girlfriend, will be the one that You have chosen for me.

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So the next morning, you wake up, you, open the door, you walk out and you see that one aiyea cannot, no, no, no, you changed your mind. Now that kind of seeking God's will, is not consistent, isn't it? It's downright dangerous because God never said that, I'll show it to you in this way, but you have already decided that would be the way to seeking God's will, so, you are very obsessed and worried and anxious about your future.

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The better way, and the biblical way, is not the crystal ball approach, but the renewed mind approach where you say, Lord, tell me what kind of person should I be right now. Instead of asking who is the girl, you ask yourself, who am I today. Am I living in Your will, today, not ask God for His will for tomorrow, you ask God for God's will, today? Am I living it, today, am I obeying You today. The focus is totally different, instead of looking for the person, wondering who she is, your committed to becoming

the person that God wants you to be. And as you focus on His clear will for you today, He will lead you into tomorrow. It's a total paradigm shift and I tell you, it's a superior way to live, because this is what it means to trust God. You are not trying to play God, saying I just want to know Your will. And then I decide if I like her or not. But your concerned about who you ought to be, realizing that the revealed things are for us to obey and the secret things belong to the Lord, I can trust Him.

It is the same with jobs, it is the same with ministry, is same with life's directions. Instead of being, now, get this right, I'm not saying that you don't plan, I am not saying that you don't think about the future, but this frees you from worrying about the future, being anxious about the future, being obsessed about the future, you live in the day that God has given to you, today. You plan, but your focus and priority is obedience to God today and trusting Him to lead you into tomorrow, do you get this? Now, let me try to define this further so that you can't even see it more clearly.

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There are a few statements I want to make with regards to the renewal of the mind being the key to discerning God's will, with some implications. The first implication is that if you really want to know God's will, don't go to your pastor's house, he doesn't have a crystal ball. If you really want to know God's will, you've got to work your mind, you have got to work your brains. As my parents used to tell me when I'm young, (uses Hokkien phrase meaning) use your brains. Don't you said that to your kids, use your brains. I think God has to say to the church today, use your brains. We lament before God, God, why don't You lead me. God says to you, why don't you use your brains, to be renewed, to know My Word. So instead of pointing to God, really, the question should be back directed back to us, My will is given in the Scriptures, but why wont you go and know it? Why wait for a voice when you already have a verse?, Jim Elliott asked.

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Today, people are always waiting for some sounds, voice, visions and dreams. Now, I, I'm not saying God can never give us a vision, a dream, a sound, a voice. No, I'm not saying that. But that certainly is not the consistent, reliable, general way by which God reviews His will to us, as given in the Scriptures. So there are those who will hanker for experiences and neglect the study of God's Word. Basically, we want to be lazy. We don't want to think so hard, we don't want to study God's Word, we don't to have a renewed mind, we just want God to drop the answer from the sky.

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No wonder Christians today really, really struggle. Chuck Swindoll says

"The better you get to know the Word of God, the less confusing is the will of God. Those who struggle the least with the will of God are those who know the Word of God best."

There is no mention of crystal ball, or the ability to hear visions or dreams. Some people, wah, I can hear this, I can hear that. Who did you hear, maybe it is your own tummy rumbling, how you know it's the voice of God. I had a dream and if we acted on all our dreams, it will be disasters isn't it. But what is really, really reliable, the more sure Word of prophecy, Scriptures, and when you know the Word of God, the will of God becomes less confusing.

Now, I want to caution you, when we talk about the Word of God, it is not just that I have a list of verses, memorized, I can throw it at anyone. No, no, this is not quite what it is. You read the Word of God, not just so that you've an arsenal of verses, you read the Word of God, so that the Spirit of God can use it to mold and shape your mind and this is given to us in this verse:

And to be renewed in the spirit of your minds.

Ephesians 4:23 ESV

Interesting, the same author, Paul adds in the phrase, spirit which means, the attitude, the outlook, the posture of your minds, it refers to the whole way of thinking. So you read the Scriptures, not just for information, not just for the facts, but that God will mold and shape your mind, so that it will think in a particular way. Let me give an example. There is this Bible seminary student, young man who fell in love over another lady, another girl, and for the longest time he has always wanted to just kiss her good night. I mean after the date, he would drop her at her house and he would want to kiss her, but this young man is a man of conviction and his conviction is that he will not do anything that is not found in the Bible, so he has not found a biblical verse that justifies kissing a girlfriend, good night. Now, there are people who said, there are verses, kiss and greet one another with a holy kiss, Romans 16, or Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. But this Bible seminary student is smarter than that, he knows these verses are not applicable, it's in the wrong context.

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Well anyway, one day, for the umpteenth time he sends her home and you know they have this (can't hear pastor), I want to leave, but I don't want to leave, that kind of a tango there. And finally, the girl could not take it anymore and so she grabbed him and kissed him for a long time and, and he was stunned, he was shocked, it was a long time, 10 seconds and after the 10 seconds was over, he was gasping for air and he was saying, aah huh, aah huh, Bible verse, Bible verse. (Laughter in the congregation).

The girl was frustrated and grabbed him again and kissed him and then, said to him, Do unto others what you want others to do unto you. ((Loud laughter in the congregation). Now, obviously, that's not what the verse meant, that's not the intent of what Jesus said in Matthew 7. I say this because we all are so prone to take the Word of God and use it to say whatever we want. That's not what Paul is talking about, the renewal of the mind, is the renewal of the way of thinking, so that it will conform to the way Jesus thinks. My point to you, at the end of the day is very simple. You read God's Word, so that your mind will be changed to think like Jesus thinks. You don't read God's Word, so that God will say what you have wanted to say, no, you read God's Word, so that the Spirit of God can make you, change you, help you be more Christlike in all your deliberations, spirit of your minds.

And so work your brains. If you want to know God's will, today, like I said, don't wait for a dream or vision or sign, or go to your pastor's house, work here (Pastor points to diagram of the brain). The Spirit of God has already done the most important work for you, given you a new operating system, OS you know that? A new heart, a new mind that can now know God. And He continues, He wants to continue to change and renovate your mind, upgrade your system, but you've got to come to God's Word. Read it, study it, I say to you, study, that's the right word. I know people say wah, so studious, wah, I already finished my O-level, A-levels, you still want me to study uh? Yes, because there is no shortcut.

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It is sad when people study the Bible, 5 minutes a day or 5 minutes a week. I won't even say that they studied, many of us, we simply just glance, read through and we don't get very much out of it, isn't it? Up till today have no clue what Malachi is about, no idea what Matthew is about, no idea what Hebrews is all about, for example. You will know only when the pulpit ministry covers it, but on your own, you can't quite make head or tail. Now, if you live in such a way, no wonder we're struggling with the will of God, no wonder, every day we are uncertain where to go.

No wonder we don't have the confidence and joy in the Lord, because this mind is not renewed sufficiently.

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I want to challenge you to study. Yes, study, study for hours, like how you studied trigonometry, rocks formation and history, and all the boring stuff. This is exciting stuff. This is stuff for life. This is stuff with God. Think about it folks, there is nothing more important in this life. Everything else pales in comparison to knowing God and His will, do you know that and yet we give 5 seconds, 5 minutes a day, you know all the major news events, wah this happened, I know, I know and but, do you know God's mind? You can have God's mind, it's right there on your phone, some of you, on your iPad, you can know God, you can ask the Spirit of God to take those things here and change you into Christ likeness. So would you do that, do yourself a favor, don't be confused in life, have razor sharp clarity because the Spirit of God can change you.

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I've laboured there long enough, let me move on to the second implication. The second exciting implication, is that this renewed mind approach to knowing God's will is applicable not just 5% of your life, but for all of your life. You see, this crystal ball approach works for the 5% of life's decisions. You say why, because you don't always asked for God's will for everything right, you only asked, you only, you don't everyday walk with a crystal ball mah, right, you watch the shows, the crystal ball only activated when serious things happen. Correct?, I mean, nobody carries a crystal ball, so if you want to know God's will using a crystal ball approach, you only ask God, maybe for the big decisions, spouse, marriage, jobs, life, career, stuff like that. But most of the time you don't ask. But the renewed mind approach works for hundred percent of the time and it is so important because, most of your life 95% of your life probably, operates on a level that you don't ask God for.

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For example, when you wake up in the morning, do you ask God, do I wake up on the right or left side, did you ask? Did you ask God, whether you should go to pee first, or brush your teeth first. Did you ask God, whether you should open the door with the right or left hand, did you ask God, what bus or what time you need to spend, did you ask God about what you need to buy at Meidi-Ya (Japanese supermarket) later. Okay, let me give you an example, let's say, you go to Meidi-Ya, you want to buy

orange juice, downstairs, right the supermart downstairs, you want to buy orange juice, you see so many brands, what do you do, you know what you should do? you should kneel (Laughter in the congregation) and say Lord God, I need a crystal ball of revelation, tell me, is it Sunkist or orange juice, aah, Orangina. Anyone does this? You are all not godly lah. You never asked enough for guidance. You see, nobody does this. You just buy based on some principles right. You look at pricing, you look at flavor, you look at, I don't know what else you look at, maybe the producer, stuff like that and you weigh those principles, because most of life you just act because that is who you are, it spontaneously flows out of who you are, many quick decisions, you don't take time out, to reflect and pray over a crystal ball.

When you talk with people you don't say, hey, wait, wait, let me, let me pray first, okay, okay, what were you saying? You don't do that, you response at wisely and as biblically as you can in every circumstance and that's why you need a renewed mind, not just for the 5% major decisions, but for the hundred percent, even the small decisions of your life, with that renewed mind you know God's will for every single event. Why, because God has already lead you as you read His Word and, as He shapes and moves you. That's why in the Epistles, you realize that the apostle does not just give people a list of commands to live because life is far more complex than a list of to do's, life is extremely complex right? Thousand and one things that are variable. So what does Paul pray for, Paul prays that they would have discernment.

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And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,

(Philippians 1:9-10 ESV)

Hey, that you would have God's mind to be able to discern, don't just follow a list of to do's, the list of to do's are important, but life is more than that, you need wisdom to apply the list of to do's and that comes with a renewed mind.

Same also for Colossians 1, that we may be able to understand and walk in a manner that is worthy of the Lord, whether it is in your office or your home or in your places of recreation.

...asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

(Colossians 1:9-10 ESV)

Ephesians 5 (pastor says 1) tells us as well.

try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

(Ephesians 5:10 ESV)

The need to discern, this is what Paul writes to them about. This is what Paul prays to the church Colossae, Philippi and Ephesus about.

So it's really, really important for us to have a renewed mind, it works for every circumstance of life, it's necessary for every circumstance of life.

Over here (crystal ball), what we want is information, but over here (brain), what God wants to give you is transformation. He doesn't just want to give you answers to some exam questions, He wants to prepare you for life. This is to me far more exciting, don't you think, the supreme will of God. So often we just want Him to dole out answers, no. He wants you to be trained, just like a good parent. A good parent or a good teacher is not satisfied with the child being able to answer exam questions, a good parent is- or just giving them, spoon feeding them the answers. No, a good parent, a good teacher, makes sure they understand and is able to answer the questions from that understanding and even beyond. That's what God wants to do for you, if you were to study His Word in dependence on His Spirit.

Well, a third implication, I want to share, is this reality that obedience today is the best guarantee for guidance tomorrow. Think about it, how can I know God's guidance for my life, I tell you how, obey God today. Very simple, what's the best, what's the most important way to know God's will, obey Him, His revealed will today. Obedience today is the best guarantee for guidance tomorrow. The, issue with us is that we like to switch this around, do you realize that, we like to turn this around, by saying guidance today, so that I can decide if I will obey tomorrow. Agree?

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Aiyah, I'm not willing to give up my life and serve God, because he may send me to Africa, so God, you show me my future first, then I decide whether I want to obey You. That's how we, God show me who my future spouse is, because if I don't like, I can siam (colloquial for avoid) that's how we are. But the biblical way is obeying today and trusting Him for His guidance tomorrow.

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I've already alluded to Deuteronomy 29:29,

where it says the secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us.

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

(Deuteronomy 29:29 ESV)

You know, there are two departments, there is a department of secret things and there is a department of revealed things. God is in charge of the department of secret things and we are responsible to execute the department of revealed things, so I'm should be working in office of revealed will, Lord, what do you want me to do, I'll do it, that's what I'm doing, that's what I'm supposed to do. But Christians today don't like to stay in the revealed will box. We like to go to God's office and say, knock, knock, knock, knock, knock, knock, God, excuse me uh? Can you show me your secret will, for my spouse, God never shows, okay, nevermind, I'm still not going to do my job. The next day, I still knock, knock, knock, eh, show me who, tell me who it is, God doesn't show and you still don't do your revealed will and the next day, you say, knock, knock God should answer. So after a while you say to people, God doesn't lead me my life.

Hey! The revealed things belong to you, to do what? That we may do all the words of this law.

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

(Deuteronomy 29:29 ESV)

This is your department. And when you do your department well, your work there well, He will do His work, revealing, directing you to His secret will. So don't jump all over the place. Obedience today is the best guarantee for guidance tomorrow.

Alan Redpath says

"Don't expect God to reveal his will for you next week until you practice it for today."

That's extremely practical. I'm saying actually, to all of us, don't point our fingers at God and say, God doesn't lead. He leads, but we don't listen, and we don't follow. That's our problem. And then again, Martin Luther King tells us,

"Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase."

We like to say, God (knock, knock, knock, knock) show me the whole staircase, then I'll decide whether I want to take first step. God says take the first step, obey today and I will lead you in the subsequent steps.

So the best way to know God's will is to say, 'I will' to God. Will you say I will to God today, will you trust him sufficiently to say, I will even though it's tough, even though loving my wife, submitting to my husband, giving, serving, so difficult, but I will trust You, I will obey what You already said in the Bible, I will do what Your Word directs me, because that's the way Jesus would have done it, and then I will trust You for my future guidance.

Finally, treasure God above all, I just want to add this in because I just want to warn against the subtle idolatry of valuing guidance above God. You know, we just want the answers. But we do not want God, we want the plan, but we do not want the Person of God. I am saying to you, the key to knowing God's will, is not treating God like a vending machine, coming to God, God show me Your will, press the button and if the good comes out, you forget about the vending machine. No, God's will is to be reviewed in deep communion with Him, as you walk with Him daily, as you treasure God, as you love Him, He reveals Himself to you.

I have a very profound statement; rather confusing, I think. But it works like this, I hope you understand

"The key to knowing God's will is not knowing God's will."

Wah, you say, what is this man. The key to knowing God's will is not knowing God's will, but it's true, it's knowing God.

If you just come to God to know His will, but you do not want to know Him. Sorry, nothing for you. But if you come to know Him as you hide in the shadow of His wings, as you dwell in the secret place of the most high, He reveals His will to you as you obey. That's why we sing those songs 'all the way, my Savior leads me'. God doesn't just throw you a map, doesn't just throw you a path and say, here you go, all the way, all the best. No, the songwriters says, all the way, my Savior leads me.

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God's guidance and leadership is found as you trust and obey every day, all the way, my Savior leads me. The renewal of the mind is key to discerning God's will. Gospeliters, work your brains, study the Scriptures, soaked yourself in His Word. Gospeliters, I say to you, this is exciting because you will have God's guidance, not just for the major decisions, but, for even everything of your life, you can have the confidence that God by His Spirit has renewed you. Now you continue to be humble, you continue to pray, to read the Scriptures to grow, but that's the way God is going to lead me. The way I think is not going to bypass my mind, I can't be lazy about this, but the exciting thing is that He is effecting not just information but transformation. I say to you, don't play games with God and say, show me first before I will obey but trust Him by obeying Him today. He will guarantee, He leads you into the next steps tomorrow. And finally, treasure God above all, be sure today, He is the treasure. Be careful of idolatry. I pray this is- I hope this is useful to you. This is a huge paradigm shift. I'm swimming, we are swimming against the tide of, I think most of the literature today about seeking God's will, it's always about some special encounters. I'm saying God's will is sometimes found in the still small voice in God's Word in a very mundane but very powerful way, because it is life changing. May this be true for each one of you.

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Let's bow for a word of prayer together. Discerning God's will is not a mystical, weird, esoteric experience. It is to be the constant, consistent experience for the Christian. My friends, today, you might have come in with this thinking that ohh, there must be some new approach to God. I say there's no new approach to God. It is the timeless principle of knowing God's will, from knowing God's Word. Yes, it's boring, in a sense, yes it's old-fashioned in a sense, yes, it's time-tested in a sense, but at the end

of the day, it is this, it is the God given way. I pray this morning, God will effect a paradigm shift in your heart. Is God saying to you something in your life? Have you been sloppy and lazy, in not reading His Word, not studying His Word and maybe today is a day for you to be reminded, God has a purpose for you this morning, He is drawing you to a firm conviction to soaking in the Scriptures. Right after today, right after the sermon, you might have to make some changes in your life. Get serious in the Word of God, get serious in the renovation of your mind, so that you'll not be thinking like the world thinks, but you'll be allowing the Spirit of God to take the Word of God to change you into Christ likeness. Maybe today, you are really struggling with some decisions, you are, may be, it is about a career, life. I say to you, trust God for tomorrow, obey Him for today. My friends, this is what it means to trust God isn't it? If you already know your future, why do you trust God, trust Him, as you obey Him today.

If you're here today for the first time, you do not know Jesus. You say, what is God's will for me? Let me tell you what God's Word says, is God's will for you. He says to you, repent and believe in My Son. I say there is no more important thing in life than that, that you will repent of your sins and believe in Jesus Christ. Why, because you are a sinner. According to the Bible, you have sin against God and you're heading for hell but God is merciful and he has great news for you today, He sent His Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross and His will for you this morning, you say, is for you to repent and believe in Jesus. Let us pray in our hearts, the prayer that Paul makes for the church in Philippi, in Colossae and Ephesus, that we will be able to discern the excellent will of God in our lives.

Father we thank You this morning, You want to guide us and You've given us tremendous tools for guidance, we thank You today for the Word of God. Oh, what a powerful Word it is, that Your Spirit can take, to renovate and to renew our minds. Father, we pray today, You will truly shape and mold us. Shape our minds, so that it will be like the mind of Christ, whether it is career, or spouse or even going to the supermarket, decisions made will flow out of that renewed mind, making decisions as Christ Himself as it were, would make. I pray today that Your church will constantly crave Your Word, not just to get verses for us to quote, but verses that would change our lives. So speak, O Lord, daily to Your people. We thank you, we pray all this now in Jesus Name.