**ROAD TRIP! Wk 1: THE MAP: Knowing God’s Will**

**God’s Will - How To Find It and Follow It. God’s will covers a lot of issues. I want to narrow it down to making decisions. Where and what should I do?**

**If you’re new to Jesus – your confronted with culture vs God’s will. If you are a seasoned follower – there is a tendency to blend into fall back into culture & move away from God’s will.**

**A lot of diff ideas of God’s Will – a detailed plan / a treasure hunt hidden (you’re getting warmer) / It’s all God’s will – why do anything / A mission impossible assignment – a little truth and error in each.**

**The Big Idea is this – Do you have the faith to trust God enough to do what he said?**

**Let’s start here - Colossians 1:9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God (to be healed / wealthy / have nice things / have good days…no) to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, (to know God’s will) 10 so that (4 things happen when you do) you may**

**(1) live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way:(how we are to live)**

**(2) bearing fruit in every good work, (how we walk out our faith)**

**(3) growing in the knowledge of God, (how we grow in understanding of God)**

**(4) 11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, 12 and giving joyful thanks to the Father, (how we respond to life & trials)**

**who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**

**A simple prayer – I pray you know God’s Will – if you can get this – everything else falls into place.**

**Three Things You Need To Know About God’s Will**

1. **God’s will is more like a GAME PLAN than a BLUE PRINT**

**What’s the difference? Blue prints are details that must be followed. Game plan has lots of freedom & options within the rules of the game.**

**Blue prints for our new space are filled with details that have to be followed – exactly. You don’t mess with it or it won’t pass inspection.**

**God help me buy a car - what make/ color/ dealer/ 4-wheel/ features? Somehow God has a detailed plan. We do same in marriage, school, major, career, specific one God has picked. Worried we’ll pick wrong. God’s will is not a Blue Print.**

**Q - If God has one mate for everyone and we marry the wrong person, do you realize what happens to the universe? What God gives instead are guidelines for choices - ie. in marriage**

**The problem with blueprint mentality is – when life / job / marriage is not working – I must have messed up the blueprint and start over.**

**God will is more like – a game plan – with lots of freedom & options within the rules of the game. Here’s the plan – run! But there are still rules to the game. Same with God’s house rules…**

**We see this in (Paul’s game plan) Acts 13:** **1 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.**

**On Cyprus 4 The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit…**

**The flexibility of the plan – Praying were to go next they heard this…. (nothing) Acts 16:** **6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. 8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. (finally, this) 9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. (So they adjusted and moved in that direction)**

**Look at this one / personal part - 1 Cor 16:5 After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you—for I will be going through Macedonia. 6 Perhaps I will stay with you for a while, or even spend the winter, (I don’t know) so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go. 7 For I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. 8 But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 because a great door for effective work has opened to me, (God is giving him favor – however) and there are many who oppose me. (do you catch the uncertainty of an apostle? What’s the game plan – I don’t know… we will see.)**

**This is important – so many think God has a hyper detailed plan – and if things don’t go well, we think we missed the plan and get worried and stressed – when God says, “don’t sweat it”**

**Because there is bigger issue – when it comes to God’s plan…**

1. **HOW we live is far more important than WHERE we live.**

**So many of our pray requests are about decisions… job, move, etc.**

**What God really cares about is who you are becoming in that place. Live wherever you want – for his glory in obedience to him.**

**Do you send your kids into the back yard to play with a detailed itinerary? Tag - 35 min / chalk - 7 min. 30 sec. / take a drink / 2 grapes / climb a tree - 15 min. (Do you do that? If you do you need counseling)**

**No we give guidelines – stay out of the street / stay in the yard / don’t kill each other… have fun. They invent games, and create activities – we intervene to solve conflict and release.**

**Two things about how to live God’s will**

* **Learn and follow the “House Rules”**

**God’s house rules are often opposite of what we think.**

**How do we know them – through God’s word (the Bible)**

**Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.**

**Purpose of the bible is not a verse a day keeps the devil away.**

**So, you can Instagram filter your bible time. It is there to learn and to give you light for your path – God’s will. To learn obedience.**

**Camping with a flashlight that’s out – stumble holes – slow – lost. What I needed was not a high-powered flashlight – a dinky little pocket would have worked. That’s how the Bible works – even a little can get you going. The more you have, the you can light the way for others.**

**He did not give it to us to make us scholars – but to make us obedient.**

**2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Pet 1:5-9, Prov 12:15**

* **Do your Best, then take a Nap (Larry Osborn)**

**Not be perfect – but use the light you have and relax. Even if you pick the wrong one, God can use you still.**

**Proverbs 16:** **All a person’s ways seem pure to them, (meaning we tend to make decisions based on what we think is right – even going against all advice or what God says…) but motives are weighed by the Lord. (are you doing your best to follow God’s will) 3 Commit (lit. role it over) to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. With-in the house rules – seek to honor God and do his will and do it)**

**I look back in the rear view mirror – and think how did I get here. I was doing my best to follow Jesus – and God would help me get where I needed to be. I now know I can step out in faith – and rest in God to take care of me.**

**Here is God’s plan for you - Matthew 22:37 “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”**

**Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.**

**Do your best – be thankful - and take a nap!**

1. **God’s will is often like an old-school POLAROID picture.**

**Noels – polaroid. Take a pic, wave it (not sure if it worked – what is it?) but then over time you see it. It becomes clear.**

**Proverbs 4:18 The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining brighter and brighter till the full light of day. (starts dark and gets brighter and brighter for the one who is walking in the path of righteousness)**

**We are want to go on mission – let’s go to Asia minor– send letters out (no) okay, we’re going to Bithynia (didn’t work out) Okay, let’s try Macedonia - that worked out - except for getting beat up & put in prison**

**It became clear as they took a best planned step that is flexible**

**It is very rare – that God will is unfolded all at once.**

**The Q to ask for God’s will is are we obedient - not is this working?**

**That is why trust and obedience are so pleasing to God = faith**

**Understanding the Polaroid – If God’s will slowly becomes clear…**

* **If we follow Today’s Instructions, we’ll get Tomorrow’s Instructions**

**If you want to know God’s will – stop what you know you should stop and start what you know you should start.**

**Do what you know you should do today and you’ll get tomorrow assignment.**

**John 14:21 - Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them." (Proverbs 8:17, John 14:23, Genesis 12:1-25:8)**

**Confused about who to be with (when you don’t date as he says)**

**God fix my money (if you don’t use money the way God says)**

**I don’t want to be alone (don’t treat others…) live in purity –**

**We miss God’s will because we don’t live out His will we know already.**

**God’s will is not found in a series of perfect decisions – it is found in a pattern of obedience (the heart and the pattern of obedience)**

* **God’s will has both a What and a When.**

**Acts 7:20-36 (Life team) Moses had the what – but not the when. He tried to deliver them himself (he killed a man) But that was not the how or when. It was 40 years later that God had the when.**

**Sometimes the skill, heart and passion are there – we think the time is now. But sometimes God says – hold on. Not yet.**

**If we are impatient we might end up like Moses doing the right thing at the wrong time. (Proverbs 19:3)**

**We’ve been in theater for 11 yrs. But, in 2009 I was impressed by God - the VIVE (explain) But it was not the time. We embraced the theater… until the when. I talked about it, but never pursued it. Until a year ago.**

**My number one calling is to be a husband and a dad – not a pastor. But right now. My kids are at a diff place in their life – God knew what he was doing.**

**A few tale tale signs – it’s not the right time**

* **IF you have to do something wrong to do something right – it’s not the right time. (we saw this with Moses – he killed a guy)**
* **If it hurts my spouse or kids – it’s not the right time. We are not to fulfill our potential, but our calling.**

**#1 calling your family. If my dream hurts them – it may not mean the dream is wrong – but the time might be wrong.**

* **If it ignores God’s word- it will never be the right time. God will never contradict the Bible - never. Even if our heart says so.**
* **If it ignores godly wise counsel – it may not be the right time. Sometimes God is so clear you might need to step out beyond godly counsel – those moments are rare. But it does happen.**

**Last thing – When God’s will is slowly becoming clear - Remember**

* **A Valley doesn’t mean a Wrong Turn**

**Exodus 14:1-31, 4:21, 2 Cor 7:5-7, Judges 1:19, Ps 34:19, 2 Tim 4:16-18**

**Sometimes poor choices can cause us to end up in a valley – but if you obeyed God and end up in a valley – it’s the best place to be**

**Paul speaking to Tim when he ended up in prison following God - 2 Timothy 4:16 At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. (ever been there?) May it not be held against them. 17 But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion’s mouth. 18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

**For Paul – the valley was part of God’s plan to spread the gospel to the world – to officers and to people in authority.**

**The entire OT and NT is about men and women who followed the will of God and they often ended up in a valley – but in that valley. God was glorified, they experienced the power of God and were matured.**

**Psalm 23: The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3 he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

**This is about God being a shepherd. As food is eaten the shepherd must led them to other mt.s for nourishment – where did he have to lead them - thru valleys. That is part of the plan. The valley.**

**But - I won’t fear – because the shepherd is with me and up ahead – I can see it (sort of) a lush pasture is coming!**

**God’s will is not hard – Follow His leading - obey what you know to do – enjoy the adventure – see God use you in ways unexpected – and then… take a nap.**