

Sunday Celebration (1-30-05)

Romans 12:1-2

"Posturing Our Lives to Know the Will of God"

**INTRO**

— PREMISE: the Christian Life is about DISCOVERING. It is about POSTURING OURSELVES TO RECEIVE ... as opposed to Working Our Way into Motivating God to Be Gracious/Merciful toward us. — Very Important Distinction!

If I'm Not Experiencing the FAVOR of God (His kindness (Eph 2:7, His mercies (new every morning), His Blessings (the Beatitudes)— Is it Because I'm Not Living a Life Worthy of Them? — Or— Is it Because I'm Standing in the Wrong Place to Receive That Which is FREELY OFFERED?

*"We understand that our fight for joy does not coerce God to give the gift of joy, but puts us in the path where he has ordained the blessing to come. ... it is not a wage God must pay for our work or for our fighting. ... We are like farmers. They plow the field and plant the seed and cut away weeds and scare away crows, but they do not make the crop grow. God does. He sends rain and sunshine and brings to maturity the hidden life of the seed. We have our part. But it is not coercive or controlling."* John Piper, "When I Don't Desire God", p. 42

— IF we Understand the "MERCY of GOD" we understand it out of reference points like :

**Rom 3:9-12, 21-24 ... Rom 5:6-10** .... Our Condition of Depravity & Hostility— when Mercy Comes

**Rom 9:10-16 ... Rom 11:6** .... Grace is Rooted in GOD'S CHOICES Not Our Works

**Eph 2** .... "When you were dead in sin — GOD, made us alive— for by GRACE you have been saved

... THEREFORE, Discovering the Will of God is Not so much about Working to Get God to REWARD us With it's Disclosure, rather it is Posturing Our Lives to Encounter God's Merciful Desire to Reveal His Will to Us.

— What is Involved in "POSTURING OURSELVES" to Receive

**Rom 12:1-2**

- (1) SEE ("in view of the") and BE MOTIVATED BY ("by the") MERCIES OF GOD
- (2) PRESENT Yourself
- (3) Don't Be Conformed, but Be TRANSFORMED (by Renewing Your Mind)

THEN....

Rom 12:2 Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is NIV

Rom 12:2 Then you will know what God wants you to do NLT

Rom 12:2 so that you may prove what the will of God is NASU

Today, I want us to Learn How to Posture Ourselves to RECEIVE a Revelation of the Will of God

## (1) KNOW AND BE MOTIVATED BY THE MERCIES OF GOD

- My Accurate Knowledge of Who God Is Will Motivate Me to TRUST Him for My Future and Therefore be Open to His Will

— Knowing This About God and Knowing This About Myself, should inform me of WHO TO TRUST! Who to Pursue for Direction

Knowing God Means Knowing a God of WISDOM, POWER (Ability and "Exousia"- the right to use His power), and LOVE (Pure and Always Rightly Motivated)

- God Has Revealed His WISDOM (His Purpose in Election) That Guarantees Things Will Turn Out the Way He Has Promised!! ... **Rom 11:33-36**
- God Has Revealed His POWER .... **Rom 1:16, Rom 6:14, Rom 9:14-18**
- God Has Revealed His LOVE ... **Rom 8:33**

WHO WILL I TRUST? Do I Want to Know the Will of a God Like This?

## (2) PRESENT YOURSELVES .... (qualifier) "As Living Sacrifices"

- Here is a Key to Knowing and Walking in (proving) the Will of God— ALL That We Have, Hope to Be, and Desire Must Be Completely Surrendered to HIM!!

## THE PARADOX OF BIBLICAL LIFE

**Luke 9:23-24** And He was saying to them all, " If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. 24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

- **Jn 12** ... Unless a grain of wheat die — to become all you were designed to be, you have to die.
- **Php 3** ... "I count all things to be LOSS" Paul said he had suffered "the loss of all things". (This is a form of Sacrificial Death), but it was in hope of the LIFE THAT WOULD COME OUT OF THE DEATH — (v. 8 ... "I have suffered Loss — that I may GAIN). We are not embracing Death, we are "Passing Through Death" in order to POSSESS LIFE. .... God's "RESURRECTION WILL" is Often Preceded by a SACRIFICIAL DEATH
- **Gen 22** ... Abraham and Isaac  
... Before Abraham Could Know the Hope of Isaac Becoming a Nation, He had to have a Heart that Would Offer Him as a Sacrifice

When My Posture is as a LIVING SACRIFICE, then I am ABLE to hear God say (reveal) anything He wants to me. I'm able to Receive His Will. When I have Competing Ambitions and Idols in my heart, I become Hard of Hearing— and even if I continue to listen, it is very possible I'm NOT ABLE to hear what God wants for my life, due to the Competing STATIC of Other Desires in My Heart!!

### (3) BE TRANSFORMED BY RENEWING YOUR MIND

*“What is necessary is that we have a renewed mind, that is so shaped and so governed by the revealed will of God in the Bible, that we see and assess all relevant factors with the mind of Christ, and discern what God is calling us to do. ... There is a world of difference between praying and laboring for a renewed mind that discerns how to apply God’s Word, on the one hand, and the habit of asking God to give you new revelation of what to do, on the other hand. Divination does not require transformation. God’s aim is a new mind, a new way of thinking and judging, not just new information.”* John Piper, “What is the Will of God and How Do We Know It?”

*“In Rom 1:28 Paul has pointed out that people’s rejection of God has resulted in God’s giving them over to a ‘worthless’ mind: one that is unqualified in assessing the truth about God and the world he has made. Now, Paul asserts, the purpose of our being transformed by the renewing of the mind is that this state might be reversed; that we might be able to ‘approve’ the will of God. ‘Approving’ the will of God means to understand and agree with what God wants of us with a view of putting it into practice.”* Douglas Moo, “The Epistle to the Romans”, [TNICNT], p. 757

- If your mind doesn't get changed by the Word Then You'll Lack Both the INTEREST to See the Will of God and the ABILITY to See the Will of God

... You Won't Even be Facing in the Right Direction (in your quest to be blessed).  
You'll keep looking in the same categories and places you looked when you were dead to God and to His purposes

... You Won't Define Blessings as Blessings

— The Word Tells me that Suffering and Persevering are GOOD!!

**Rom 5:1-5** Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3 More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. RSV

**Matt 5:10-12** "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great;

**2 Cor 12:9-10** And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

**James 1:2-4** Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

– Only A Renewed Mind Can See Life This Way!! When our minds are renewed (informed and convinced by the Word) we can receive circumstances, people, seasons, etc. in a different way, “as the will of God”, rather than spending that season or circumstance being filled with Dismay, Complaining, Fear, etc.