

Knowing God's Will (No. 2)

How to know God's will in daily conduct?

Throughout the history of the church there have been debates and division as to what Christian can do or not do.

Some issues are:

- Smoking cigarettes, pipes or cigars
- Gambling, Going to the movies
- Drinking alcohol, Eating various meats
- Eating or drinking blood
- Wearing jewelry
- Wearing miniskirts
- For men to wear earrings
- Length of hair, Wearing hats in church
- Paying a bribe
- Mixed swimming
- Listening to various kinds of music

One thing is clear in the Bible. All these issues are not part of the Gospel! It is very clear that the pure Gospel is the news of the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We confront non-believers with the Gospel only and not with all these issues of conduct.

In 1 Corinthians 2:14 we read:

“The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually concerned.”

Let us consider some considerations from the Bible in making decisions conduct and behavior:

1. Obedience to the commands of Christ is our top priority as believers.

Mathew 28:20: “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me”.

John 14:15: “If you love me you will obey what I command”.

John 14:23: “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will Love Him, and we will come to him and make our home with him”.

V. 24: He does not love me will not obey my teaching”.

John 15: 10: “If you obey my commands you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in His love.

John 15:14: “You are my friends if you do what I command”.

Acts 5:29: “Peter and the other apostles replied: ‘we must obey God rather than men!

Acts 5:32: “We are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him”.

Romans 16:26: “The proclamation of Jesus Christ according to the Revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, But now revealed and made known through the prophetic Writing by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey Him.”

2. In the Bible there are listed some questions to ask ourselves on issues which are not clear in the Word of God.

- 1 Corinthians 10:23 Is it beneficial? Do I benefit by doing it?
Is it constructive? Am I built up spiritually, or mentally, or physically?
- v. 24. Is it for the good of others? As believers we are not selfish but pay attention to the needs of others. We are givers not takers.
- v. 28 What is the reaction or comment of some one else?
- v. 31 Am I glorifying God when I do it?
- v. 32 Am I causing some one to stumble?

Also read 1 Corinthians 8:9-13: “Be careful however that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol’s temple, won’t he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols? So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will not never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.”

As a personal illustration, I have decided not to eat pork while living in Indonesia because the majority of the population considers pork defiled food.

3. Some general statements in the Bible to consider.

- (1) 1 Corinthians 8:8 “Food does not bring us near to God, we are no worse if we do eat and no better if we do”.

- (2) “Eat whatever is set before you.” 1 Corinthians 10: 27

- (3) 1 Corinthians 9:19 I “have become all things to all men, so that by all possible means I might save some”.
Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to every one, to win as many a possible.
To the Jews I became like a Jew to win the Jews
To those under the law I became as one under the law, even though I myself am not under the law so as to win those under the law.
To those not having the law I became like one not having the law so as to win those not having the law.
To the weak I became weak, to win the weak.

- (4) Do all for the glory of God 1 Corinthians 10:31
“So whatever you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God.

- (5) “Try to please every one in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many so that they may be saved.” 1 Corinthians 10:33

We must give top priority to the salvation of others, our friends and neighbors. We want to win friends and influence people for the sake of the Gospel.