

Week 08
047/318

Transforming Daily
“... God willing ...”
Acts 18:21

One of the two subjects that has consumed much of my time in ministry is “knowing the will of God.” There are those who say that you can know the will of God for every decision of your life without question. I disagree. The only way one can know the will of God absolutely without question is if it is written in Scripture. Outside of Scripture, knowing the will of God is left to speculation (tradition), conjecture (reason), and feeling (personal experience).

For many years there have been claims by “spiritual leaders” that all one needed was faith in order to determine the will of the Lord for any given circumstance. If one prayed hard enough, fasted long enough, and gave (whatever man deemed acceptable) enough, then your problems would be over. All would be revealed. That is not biblical faith! That isn’t even what faith is about.

In this text, and in other texts throughout Scripture, Paul, and others like him, yields to the will of God, whatever it was. Paul shares his desire here to return back to them “God willing.” He doesn’t say that God told him that he would return to them. He doesn’t say that he knows that it is God’s will for him to return to them. He says he would return “God willing.” Now, having said that, there are times when people heard or received a direct word from God, even Paul (most notably on the day of his conversion Acts 9). But that is not the norm and it was for a specific time, a specific place, to a specific person, and recorded in Scripture. To say that God directly speaks to an individual (this is not about whether or not God still speaks audibly. He’s God, He can do anything He wants. It is about content and integrity. If He does speak to anyone audibly, it will only be that which He has already said in Scripture or in the spirit of that which He has already said in Scripture), anything other than what is already written, or in the spirit of what is already written, in the Bible, is to raise that persons experience to an extra biblical level. The believer has the full counsel of God in the Scriptures.

I believe that it is a matter of control for those who want to claim that they have had a “word” from God (outside of Scripture). The simple retort by them is, “Prove that I didn’t have a word from God.” The more simple truth is, I don’t have to prove it, and neither do you. All you and I need to know is that there are times in life that we are not going to know the will of God for a specific matter. For instance, “What college should I attend?” “How do I know that I’m in love with that person?” “How do I know who it is I’m to marry?” “What vocation should I pursue?” “Should I move to this place or that, or should I stay put?” “How should I discipline my child over a certain matter?” Etc. Genuine faith leads the believer through what he or she can’t see or doesn’t know with certainty. That’s why it is called faith (Hebrews 11:1).

Are you trusting God? Do you trust Him for everything? Do you need some tangible evidence on any given matter before you trust Him? No this, everything will come to pass God willing.