

**Walking as Children of Light:  
Understanding the Will of the Lord  
(continued)**

**Ephesians 5:15-21**

**May 25, 2008**

# How do we Walk in the Light?

- (1) Look carefully how you walk, not as unwise but as wise (v. 15);
- (2) Make the best use of your time, because the days are evil (16);
- (3) Do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is (v. 17);
- (4) Do not be drunk with wine, but be filled with the Holy Spirit (v. 18).

# A Few Key Points...

1. There is a distinction between God's will of decree and God's will of command:
  - God's will of decree refers to his sovereign rule over all things and does imply that he wills things he abhors and condemns. Ephesians 1:11, God "works all things according to the counsel of his will.

# A Few Key Points...

1. There is a distinction between God's will of decree and God's will of command:
  - God's will of command refers to the moral or revealed will of God. It is the basis on which we should act and make decisions, and it is clearly defined for us in his Word.

## **A Few Key Points...**

2. God is not playing hide-and-go-seek with us: his will is discernable and comprehensible and doable.

# Deuteronomy 30:11-14

*“For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.”*

## **A Few Key Points...**

3. When we seek the will of God, we're not seeking data, but the heart of our Father.

- Ephesians 5:1-2: "Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

## **A Few Key Points...**

4. The word “understand” implies labor!

# How do we Discern the Will of God?

## *Romans 12:1-2*

*“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 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.”*

# Three Crucial Insights...

- (1) If we're to understand the will of God, we must not be conformed to this world;
- (2) If we're to understand the will of God, we must be transformed by the renewing of our minds;
- (3) If we're to understand the will of God, we must use our transformed minds to test all things.

# Do not be Conformed...

*The word “conformed” means “to fashion using a shaped container,” or “to pour into a mold.”*

# 1 Peter 1:13-16

*“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, **do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance**, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’”*

# Be Transformed by the Renewal...

*The word “transformed” means “to be radically changed or transformed” It is the word from which get our word “metamorphosis.”*

It's used four times in the Bible: Matthew 17:2, Mark 9:2, Romans 12:2, and 2 Corinthians 3:18.

# A Key Question...

*How do we behold the glory of God in the face of Christ?*

- Mainly, by the intake, contemplation, and application of the Word of God.
  - “Intake” means hearing and reading.
  - “Contemplation” means memorizing and thinking deeply about what you’ve heard and read.
  - “Application” means obedience and teaching others.

# Questions for Contemplation:

1. What did the passage I read today say about God?
2. What did it say about me?
3. What did it say about the world?
4. What did it say about the church?
5. What did it command me to do?
6. What did it command me to avoid?
7. What broader principles did it teach me?
8. Why was it laid out in the order it was laid out?
9. What was the main point, and why?
10. How should all I've learned lead me to thank and worship my heavenly Father?

# That by Testing...

*The word “testing” means “to weigh, examine, or prove.”*

Discerning the will of God is not about plugging variables into an equation, but rather rejecting the wisdom and ways of the world, submitting to the Word of God, and then using our transformed minds to discover our Father’s heart about a given situation.

## **Matthew 7:9-11**

*“Which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”*

## **Romans 12:2**

*“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.”*