

**Builder's Retreat  
September 5-6, 2008**

**Friday**

(eat dinner before you come)

7:00 -9:00 pm arrive, play games (beach volleyball, giant slip-and-slide, corn hole, board games, etc.)

9:00 pm Lesson by Kevin.

9:30 pm Campfire, singing (Kyle O on guitar?)

10:00 or later – tent camp or sleep in the Rummel's basement (people could go home but I'd encourage everyone to stick around if possible)

**Saturday**

9:00 am breakfast

10:00 Lesson by Kevin

11:00 Games

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Games

3:00 Lesson by Kevin

4:00 Go home

Andy & Emily Rummel

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Take SR 25 N out of Lafayette and go under I 65 and continue until you get to 450 N, sign will say Buck Creek. Turn right on 450 N and go 2 miles and we are the 3rd house after you pass 625 E. Name is on the mailbox and brick lights on either side of driveway.

## Following God's Will for Our Lives

- I. Introduction
  - a. Testimony
    - i. Paul introduces his letters with his credentials, so that we know he has authority to teach.
  - b. Pre-marriage counseling example
    - i. How do you know you should marry her?
  - c. Example of everyday decisions we make – good/bad
    - i. What would you like to learn about God's will this weekend?
  - d. Why should we desire to obey God's will in our lives?
    - i. Jesus has made us a part of his family by his work on the cross
      1. Mark 3:35 - 35 For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.
    - ii. We want to be saved from death
      1. 1 John 2:17 - 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.
  - e. Confusion about knowing God's will
    - i. The "dot" theory (sometimes called the "individual" will of God)
      1. This negates the freedom of choice that God has clearly given man
        - a. One of many examples in 1 Co 7:39 - 39 A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.
      2. Practically, where would you end it? Which cereal to eat in the morning, what color shirt to wear, which French fry to eat first?
      3. God is not going to abandon you the first time you have made a wrong decision – this idea denies his forgiveness and grace and mercy
        - a. Ex 34:6 - 6 The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,
        - b. God has already accounted for all of our mistakes in his plan
    - ii. Special revelation (not supported by the Bible, Matt 16:4)
      1. Fleece (Judges 6:36-40)
        - a. Gideon already knew God's will, he was trying to disobey
      2. Peace
        - a. Jonah was disobedient and at peace
        - b. Christ certainly didn't feel peaceful following God's will in the Garden of Gethsemane
        - c. We are not to trust our sinful heart
      3. Open/Closed Door
      4. Flip open the Bible
      5. These are often used as excuses to disobey God's will

- iii. God wants only to meet my “needs or desires”
  - 1. This takes God’s word out of context as we will see later
  - 2. Phil 2:3-4 = 3 Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.
- iv. God’s will is not joyful or successful
  - 1. Denies the goodness of God. Ps 34:8 - 8 Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!
  - 2. Implies that trials are bad. God has given trials for our benefit.
  - 3. Material success is never given as a measure of being in God’s will
- f. Assignment
  - i. Read and meditate over Romans 12. What is God telling you about his will?
  - ii. List 3 big decisions you expect to make in the next few years

- II. Review: Discuss learning from Romans 12
- III. What has God revealed about his will?
  - a. God's will can be described as two-fold – secret and revealed, sovereign and moral
    - i. Deut 29:29
      - 1. 29 “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.
    - ii. Sovereignty, Omniscience, Pre-ordained, Secret (what God plans)
      - 1. His will can not and will not be thwarted by the decisions we make
      - 2. He knows what we will choose, but we are not puppets
        - a. Is 46:8-11 = 8 “Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, 9 remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,’ 11 calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.
        - b. Rom 9:18 = 18 So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.
        - c. Eph 1:11-12 = 11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.
    - iii. Commands (what God expects from us and brings him pleasure)
      - 1. His desire is for us to be obedient to his truth, but we can (and often do) disobey
      - 2. Ps 40:8 = 8 I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”
      - 3. God can take our disobedience, and still work it out for good and his glory
        - a. Joseph's brothers Gen 50:20 = 20 As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.
        - b. This does not excuse our disobedience
  - b. God's will is best for us
    - i. Rom 8:28-30 = 28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And

those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

ii. Jer 29:11-14 = 11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. 13 You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

c. God desires for us to know his will

i. Ps 32:8-9 = 8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. 9 Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you.

IV. What is God's will for our lives? (What God commands of us and pleases him)

a. God's will is more about our relationship with him rather than a step-by-step map of our life's activities

b. God desires for us to be saved

i. 2 Pet 3:9 = 9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

c. God desires for us to be changed

i. Romans 12:2 = 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.

d. God desires for us to please him through our obedience

i. Col 1:9-10 = 9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

e. God desires for us to lead Spirit-filled lives

i. Joyful, Thankful attitude in constant prayer

1. 1 Thess 5:16-18 = 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

ii. Wise and sober

1. Eph 5:17-18 = 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

f. God's will concerns our character

i. Servants' hearts

1. Eph 6:6-8 = 6 not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.
- ii. Submissive to God and authorities God has placed in our lives
  1. 1 Jn 2:3 = 3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.
  2. 1 Pet 2:13-15 = 13 Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, 14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.
- iii. Purity
  1. 1 Thess 4:3 = 3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, 5 not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6 that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. 7 For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness.
  2. Heb 13:4 = 4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.
  3. Ps 101:3 = 3 I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me.
- g. God's will concerns his glory
  - i. We may be required to suffer for doing good
    1. 1 Peter 3:17 = 17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. (also see 4:19)
  - ii. Surrendering to God's will
    1. Moses
      - a. Deut 3:23-26 = 23 "And I pleaded with the Lord at that time, saying, 24 'O Lord God, you have only begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as yours? 25 Please let me go over and see the good land beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon.' 26 But the Lord was angry with me because of you and would not listen to me. And the Lord said to me, 'Enough from you; do not speak to me of this matter again.
    2. Paul

- a. Rom 1:9-13 = 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you 10 always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God's will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— 12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. 13 I want you to know, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented), in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the Gentiles.
  - b. 2 Cor 12:7-10 = 7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.
3. Jesus
- a. Matt 26:39, 42 39 And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." 42 Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done."

V. Assignment: Consider Romans 12 again in light of our discussion. In what ways do you need to come into obedience to God's word so that you can make the big decisions facing you in the future?

- VI. Review: What is God revealing to us from Romans 12 that will help us to discern his will?
- VII. How do we make God-honoring decisions?
  - a. Foundational requirements for making godly decisions
    - i. OBEY: Am I walking rightly with God?
      - 1. Eph 5:15-17 = 15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
      - 2. Ps 25:12 = 12 Who is the man who fears the Lord? Him will he instruct in the way that he should choose.
      - 3. Pr 3:5-6 = 5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.
      - 4. God reveals his will to those in a right relationship with him.
        - a. Ezek 14:3 = 3 “Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I indeed let myself be consulted by them?
    - ii. PRAY: Have I prayed, asking God for wisdom?
      - 1. James 1:5-8 = 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.
      - 2. 1 John 5:14 - 14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.
      - 3. Prayer is about conforming my desires to God’s will, not the other way around.
    - iii. STUDY: Which choices are biblical?
      - 1. Know your Bible and eliminate unbiblical choices
        - a. Be careful not to take verses out of context, or extract a promise that does not apply
        - b. (Ps 119:105) 105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
      - 2. Direct commands
        - a. Is there evil or immorality involved?
          - i. Dishonesty
          - ii. Stealing
          - iii. Sexual Temptation
        - b. Can it cause another to stumble?
        - c. Does it place an idol in my heart?
        - d. Example: You have an opportunity to work on a project in your job that will lead to growth in your company and provide jobs in

your community, but it requires you to withhold some minor information in reporting financial results.

3. Apply biblical principles
  - a. Does this bring me closer to Christ or closer to the world? (1 John 2:6, Rom 12:2)
  - b. Does it involve doing good works for those in need?
  - c. Will my choice glorify God?
  - d. Are my motives pure and unselfish?
  - e. Will it prevent me from serving God in any way?
  - f. Example: You have been asked to support a charity that supplies support for the homeless. What questions might you ask before making your decision?
- b. Other considerations for making godly decisions (be more careful with these)
  - i. Is the Holy Spirit leading me in a direction?
    1. Do not confuse this with our feelings.
    2. The Holy Spirit will never violate biblical principles and will not be fickle
    3. 1 Co 9:16 = 16 For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!
  - ii. Have I listened to Godly counsel?
    1. Remember that human counsel is not infallible
    2. However, God does use his people to help us see his wisdom
    3. Prov 19:20 = 20 Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future.
  - iii. Is God leading a certain direction (providence, circumstances)?
    1. Not all closed doors are against God's will, nor all open doors within God's will
      - a. 2 Co 2:12-13 = 12 When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, 13 my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia.
    2. We can trust that God will enable us to follow his will.
  - iv. What does common sense or experience tell me to do?
    1. Proverbs deals with practical "everyday" wisdom such as how to handle money, relationships, business
    2. Pr 1:1-6 = 1 The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: 2 To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, 3 to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; 4 to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth— 5 Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, 6 to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles.

- v. What is my desire? What do I want to do? If I am following God, I can trust my desires because I will want what God wants.
  - 1. It's an unbiblical view of God to assume that God wants unpleasant things for our lives
  - 2. Ps 37:4-5 = 4 Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.
- c. Trust in God's sovereignty and choose
  - i. Jas 4:13-17 = 13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit" — 14 yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." 16 As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. 17 So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.
  - ii. Avoid following feelings or peace. God promises wisdom.
  - iii. Don't look back (except to ask forgiveness if it was wrong) – guilt over forgiven sin is not from God

#### VIII. Application

- a. Are there areas of your life where this study has revealed that you are outside of God's will? If so, repent, and commit to following God's will
- b. Are you doing the must-do's to be inside God's will now? Commit to obeying God, praying to God, and reading and meditating on God's word constantly so that you will be prepared to make godly decisions.
- c. Consider your three big decisions. What have you learned that will help you to please God with your choice?