

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." - Matthew 7:21

Of Course I'm Doing The Will of God

The thinking of many believers today is, "If I do good things, then I am doing the will of God...because the will of God is for me to do good things - right?!"

We trust that the good works that we do as Christians are and must be the will of God. We say, "I have faith that I am doing what God wants me to do." And if we're not doing "bad" things then we are also doing God's will. As Christians, we can think the "calling of God" is somehow inherent or naturally "built in" to whatever we do for Him or do "in His name." It is very hard to see how this type of thinking is carnal (or proceeds from being carnally minded.)

Nevertheless, the truth remains that you and I need to know the will of God if we are to do the will of God. This will never happen when we are carnally minded.

The Renewing of Our Minds

In Romans 12:2, the Scripture reads, "...be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Do you really want to know the will of God? Then the renewing of your mind becomes necessary, according to the Word of God. You also must be transformed so that you might "prove" what is the will of God - the good, acceptable, perfect will of God.

So our minds need to be "renewed" it says. But **by what** exactly? And **how (or by what means)** exactly?

Faith Cometh by Hearing & Hearing by the Word of God

In Romans 10:17, the Scripture reads, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

According to the Scriptures, faith involves hearing. It comes by hearing, it says. In fact, the word "hearing" is mentioned twice in this single defining verse...because it is that important. Hearing is absolutely necessary. "...and hearing by the word of God." Jesus said in Matthew 4:4, "**It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**" Hearing the word of God involves "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" to you! Whether it be by the written Word, by the

Scriptures or by the Word spoken, it must proceed out of the mouth of God and be given to you by hearing. It says in Hebrews 12:2 that it is Jesus that "authors" faith. It does not proceed from ourselves...it is authored in us by Christ and comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

So our minds must be renewed. By what? "By hearing"! How, or by what means? "By the Word of God"!

The Subtle Substitution

If we cannot hear the voice of God ("My sheep hear my voice..." - John 10:27), then we are not truly "in the faith" (because "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." - Romans 10:17). Then, it really does not matter what or how many "good" things we do...we will never be able to please God (because "without faith it is impossible to please him..." - Hebrews 11:6). Faith without hearing is not faith at all.

The word "faith" is being misused by both the world and the church as a synonym or substitute for "trust" or "belief". This cheapened definition and usage has no basis in the hearing of God or of God speaking - which is essential. In other words, one can have trust and believe something until the cows come home but if God is not speaking, it cannot be true faith.

Sadly, this false form of faith most often has every appearance of true faith. It looks, sounds and behaves real enough (and even feels good), but it lacks something described as "substance" and "evidence" in Hebrews 11:1 (a "substance" and an "evidence" that we in our carnal minds cannot even perceive). Being deceived in our carnal minds, we will follow after the false form of faith and the works associated with it.

Jesus said in Luke 18:8, "...Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" True faith is so rare today simply because so few are hearing, and hearing by the word of God. This substitution of doing good things in place of the hearing of faith is so widespread and commonplace today, and tragically is accepted and embraced by God's people. The substitution of good works for the hearing of God (i.e., faith) has become the wide gate and the broad way of "Christian works" today because it is just way easier to do good deeds and to get others involved than it is to walk after the hearing of faith ("...and few there be that find it," Jesus says in Matthew 7:14).

The Good, Acceptable, Perfect Will of God

The Lord's will for you and me is not to focus on doing "good" things or to avoid doing "bad" things (even unbelievers, moral or otherwise, do this). The

Lord's will for you and me is to obey His voice, to walk humbly with him. If you hear and humbly obey the voice of God, you will do good things...but only as a fruit of God speaking, of hearing and walking humbly in obedience.

Give Him that place, let Him decide, let Him judge what you should be the doer of. Don't draw back (see Hebrews 10:8) even if it is your knee-jerk response; rather, labor to follow through (see James 1:23). **You cannot truly be a servant of Jesus Christ if He truly isn't your Master.**

One can always work up his or her own will to do good deeds (unbelievers do this prolifically), but it takes a work of grace to die to one's own will to do the will of the Father. The former involves no grace, no true faith and no true cross of Christ; the latter takes a power of God beyond yourself. The former knows nothing of discipline (discipleship) of the Holy Spirit; the latter comes into a knowledge of God's enabling grace and what it means to be a partaker of both the sufferings and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The former is "iniquity"; the latter is "life everlasting".

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." - Matthew 7:22-23