

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPTS

Series: Deconstruction / Reconstruction of the Disciples' Life Part 9

Walk in WISDOM

Ephesians 5:15-17

Tim Armstrong, Senior Pastor

Weekend 03.13-14.10

Good morning Crossroads. Good to see you this morning. You lost that hour of sleep. Still made it. It's not the 9:30 service. This is the 11:00 service. Good to have you here. Alright. Ephesians chapter 5 – let's turn there. Ephesians 5, 15 through 17. When we turn the corner in chapter 5 a couple of weeks ago we learned a very simple, small commandment, that is, we are to be imitators of God. Mimetes. Mimics of God is what the word is really calling us to be and so what we're doing is we're learning how to do that. And all through chapter 5 we're learning about the walk – the believers walk to becoming imitators like our Father. And what did we learn a couple of weeks ago? That the first walk that we're supposed to be involved in is the walk of love. We are to walk as children of love. Not just like the world's love; not just some concept of love; not just some ethereal emotional sense of love but we have a concrete example of who is that? That's in Jesus Christ. We are to love as Christ loved. We talked about that. And then, last week we looked at the idea that we are to walk as children of light. Not children of darkness. That's our old life, but as children of light and that also has certain attributes to them.

Well, now, today we're looking at what the wisdom walk will look like. The wisdom walk. We're going to look at just three verses: 15, 16 and 17. We were going to make all the way through to verse 21 today but I got stuck in my study and you're going to see that and so we're going to end at verse 17. We're going to pick up at verse 18 and probably finish the series next week if the Lord wills. Well, let's read the text. Let's get an understanding of it and then we'll dissect it.

Paul says, look carefully then how you walk. Now if you stop there this is, remember, this is not the walk like you walk from point A to point B. It's not the physical walk. We're talking about the spiritual walk of the believer. We're talking the lifestyle, **para pa teo** is the idea, this idea in the Greek that this is who we are now as followers of Christ so he says, look carefully. Be careful how you walk, not as unwise but as wise making the best use of the time because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Now, what is it about this text that strikes you? What is it that stands out? For me it was that last phrase in verse 17 understand what the will of the Lord is or to understand or to know what the will of the Lord is for your life. I mean, this is probably the quintessential, the apex of the Christian life is saying God, what do you want me to do? And it's not just something that we can categorize into one aspect of life or one time of life. This is something, isn't it, that we're always asking Lord, Lord where do you want me to go? What do you want me to be? How do you want me to act? What is your will for my life? For many of us it started at a very young age. We were following the Lord, say, out of high school. And we say what's next Lord? What do you want me to do? Do you want me to go to college? Which college do you want me to go or do you want me to start a career? Alright, well what's that career? Do you want me to get involved in some kind of trade? Well, what trade is that? So we go through that phase of our life. And then we get into that phase and now we're saying, alright, what do

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you want to do? Do you want me to get married? Well, who should I marry? Should I marry that girl or that girl? Should I marry that guy or that guy? We have those questions that meet us. Some of you are there right now. You're thinking God, what do you want? Who am I to marry? Is this the right person? We get through that phase then we ask, should we have children? How many children should we have? Should we buy a house? We own a house so do we sell that house and buy another house? Should we buy a new car? Should we keep the car? Should we do this? Should we do that? It goes all the way through life. All the way through life we're asking questions. Exactly, what is it God that you want for me?

And then essentially asking the question well, what is the Lord's will? How do we know that? How do we know with specificity? How can we be sure God is involved in our life and directing our every steps? The scriptures tell us that we can know because obviously it says we are to understand. This word understand in the Greek literally means to be put together; put together the facts or comprehend or perceive or know. So, what we're going to do today is we're going to understand how to know God's will. But before we do that we're going to move through verses 15 and 16 so let's start there. Let's start with the command.

The command in the text is straight forward, isn't it? He says look carefully. In other words, tread with insight is the idea. Be careful with what? With your walk. He says I don't want you to walk as the unwise. That's easy. That's just following the course of this world. That's just following and being involved in whatever is the aspect of the culture and of the age in which we live in. He says I don't want you to do that. That's simple. I want you to be a person who walks wisely. You are to walk wise as children of God. Well, how do you do that? Well, to do that you have to understand what the bible means by wisdom; what the bible means when it says you are to walk wisely. Wisdom in the scriptures are understood in two ways – as a combined two aspects meeting together. There's the knowledge aspect of wisdom and then there's the behavioral aspect of wisdom. Both of them join together. You can't have one without the other. So, first it starts with knowledge. Where does wise knowledge come from? Look at Proverbs. Proverbs 3:7 says be not wise in your own eyes. Fear the Lord. Paul says something similar in chapter 12 of Romans. He says don't be conceived about life. Don't act like you know all you need about life. Don't be wise in your own eyes. Fear the Lord. Where does the fear of the Lord come from for the believer? Where does knowledge come from about how we should live our life? Right here. This is where it comes from – from the Word of God. This is what we've been talking about the idea that you need to be infusing this book into your mind because it's easy to be a part of the culture and the cultural philosophies of the day. It's easy to be spiritual but it's not necessarily easy to understand the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God comes from His Word.

That's why I was saying last week that you need to get involved in a reading plan. You need to get involved in where day after day you're infusing God's wisdom into your life because listen. If this is your only diet of spiritual food once a week that you come here. That is not enough. You are undernourished as a believer. You ought to be doing this every day and then

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when you come here this is the great celebration of what you've been learning all week long. This is the gathering of the saints to give glory to their God. This is really the capstone of your week and so every day you ought to be involved in feeding from the Word of God. You say, well, I can't get into it. I don't really understand it. Keep reading because scripture will help you understand scripture. You just have to keep at it. There has to be a discipline aspect of reading and you know what's happening is every day you're just laying down another laying; another precept upon precept and after a period of time goes by you're building up that wise knowledge in your mind so that when you come to a crossroads in your life and you have to make a decision on how you're going to act, behavior you will have a foundation of biblical wisdom to help you make the right choice. Psalm 19:7 says the testimony of the Lord, which is just another name for scripture, the testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple. This book will make you wise but you have to understand it and once you understand it, it will direct what? You're behavior. Do you see how they're connected? Biblical behavior is connected to biblical knowledge.

Well, what does wise behavior look like at least in our text? In our text Paul gives two very practical examples. It's not exhaustive – just practical examples. Verse 16 he says this is how you behave wisely. First you make the best use of your time, verse 16. Secondly, you understand what the will of the Lord is. Let's look at verse 16. What does the text mean by making the best use of your time? The word time in the English language can have many different meanings. We can talk about clock time, like the time it is right now. We can talk about the epic of time or the epoch of time – kind of the whole lifespan of time. Or historic time where we talk about the ages of time but when we come to scripture, when we come to the Greek language it's much more descriptive with it's use of words. There are a number of different words that represent time. For example Paul could have used here *hēmera* which means day, *hōra* which means hour, *chronos* which time like clock time, *aiōn* which means age but he chose to use the word *kairos* which means seasons, which means epoch, which means the flow of time, which means your life basically.

Look at verse 16. It says making the best use of your life is what he's talking about here and that concept of making the best or maximizing the use of what God has given you is this word *exagorazō* which means to buy; which means literally in the Greek idiom is to redeem the time; redeem your life; buy your life's time. Why? Because one of the most unwise things that you could do is to walk foolishly through your life. Why is that? Because scripture says you don't have a lot of life. It's here today and gone tomorrow. It's like a mist.

If you want to see that that's in James, James chapter 4. James uses this almost like a parable. He says think about it this way – we say today or tomorrow we'll go to such and such a town. We'll spend a year there. We'll trade. We'll do business. We'll make money. There will be a profit. Everything will be good and we start planning out our lives. Then verse 14 is the kicker and he says, yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life, James asks? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. The idea here is that

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you cannot take it for granted that you have one more day left. And that's true. We think, we have this idyllic concept that we're all going to live somewhere around 80 – 85 and then we're going to die in our sleep. I mean, that's like the perfect scenario for life, right? We're going to live as much life, as much life span and then we're just going to drift away in our sleep and be with the Lord. That's not reality. A very small minority of people experience that kind of death.

I've been here fourteen years. I've done funerals every year since I've been here and to be honest with you I've not done a lot of eight-year old funerals. I mean look around – there's not a lot of eighty-year olds among us. I mean, there's a few. We love you. I wish all of you could get there but the reality is you're not. That's just the cold stone reality. Just this week, one of my best friends from elementary school died. He was about a year or two years older than me. Last week an infant in our congregation died. A couple years ago I did a very moving funeral for a twenty-eight year old who had died on a motorcycle. The whole point is we don't know what tomorrow will bring. It's likely some of you will not be here the same time next year, not because you've moved or gone to another church but because you won't be alive. Our prayer really needs to be what the psalmist says – oh Lord make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am. Behold, you have made my days a few handbreaths and my lifetime is as nothing before. Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath. We stand as a mere breath before God and so what does Paul say? He says make the best use of your life. Don't waste it. Be wise in how you walk.

Well, how do we do that? If we don't understand how to do that, if we're not quite sure – what does that mean? How do I live a wise life? We should ask God. He makes us a promise. Same book – James, chapter 1, verse 5. If any of you lacks wisdom let him ask God who gives generously to all without reproach and it will be given to him. This is a promise. God says if you don't know where to go in your life, if you don't know what to do and you want wisdom – ask me and I will tell you. Have you done that? Have you asked God for that help? Why are we to do this? Well, because what does Paul say? Because the days are evil. Another way to understand that is that we live in a society that is in darkness. We are children of light. Those evil days will not last forever. He's given us a warning. He says the days are numbered. They're not going to last forever so be ready. Walk in wisdom.

Now, one of the things that we do with walking in wisdom is understanding how God wants to order our steps, order our life and so we come to verse 17. The second way we walk in wisdom is in our behavior of understanding the Lord's will. Is it possible, can we really know the specifics that God wants for us in our individual lives? Is it possible that God has planned out your life to such a degree that He has something specifically attached with your name, for your life and your life span? I think it is. I think it's clear in scripture that God tells us that He's designed us specifically for purposes that He's called us to live out. That's the Lord's will. That's the meaning of Lord's will. Now, to understand the Lord's will I want to start with just a couple of assumptions before we get into the details.

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Let me just help you with just a few assumptions that I'm starting with. Number one, first assumption: God has a will for our lives. It's not nebulous. It's not just out there. It's not just a possibility. It's true. Scripture gives us that clarity. Number two, second assumption that is that's true God wants us to know it. The text here proves that. He says don't be foolish. Understand what the will of the Lord is. This word – foolish, if you want to just really define it carefully in the Greek it means don't be stupid.

Now, I'm not allowed to say that word in my house. If I said that word in my house I'd have a little five year old from behind the coach and say you're not allowed to say that word. He would correct me. So I don't like to say the word but it's scriptural. Do you understand? In other words, don't be unwise, don't be foolish. Understand – know what the will of the Lord is.

Third assumption, if God has a will for our life, if He wants us to know it He would communicate it to use clearly. He wouldn't make it something that is hidden in the dark. Have you ever heard someone say, I don't know what I'm doing. I'm just looking for God's will as if God's hidden it from them. Like God's the Easter bunny and you have to go find his will. That's not how it is. God has a will for your life. He wants you to know it. He's going to communicate it clearly. What is the most obvious place He would communicate it in? The Word of God – scripture. And so we need to go back to the Word. You say, wait. That's not going to give me specifics. Really? It will give you clear specifics about your life.

I figured this our back in the eighties, back in the late eighties. Some of you weren't even born in the eighties. That's interesting. But, back in the eighties I was trying to figure our stuff in my life and I was looking for a book. There was a plethora of books on the market about God's will. Everybody was writing about God's will. Some of them were like thesis statements, like phone books, like three inches thick, three-hundred pages long. And I was thinking I don't have time to read that. I just want to know what God's will is and so I kept looking and I found this little pamphlet written by John MacArthur. The pamphlet is called *Found: God's Will* and I knew since I mentioned this you would want it so we ordered a whole box of these pamphlets. They're going to be here. You can get them out at the Resource Center next week. Great little pamphlet. Just cuts right to the issue. What I'm going to do is I'm going to take what I've learned in the pamphlet and I'm going to kind of bring it together as a compendium and help you understand it. And I'm going to throw a few things of my own in here but I want you to understand how simple it really is to understand God's specific will for our lives.

What it's going to take is you're going to have to dig around in scripture with me so if you don't have a bible open yet pull one out of the chair back in front of you and turn to 1 Timothy, chapter 2, verse 3 and 4. We want to know what God's will says and we're going to look for it in scripture. Now, if you don't know how to navigate through the scriptures, that's

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alright. We're going to have page numbers for you on the side screens. Just follow the page numbers. 1 Timothy, chapter 2, verses 3 and 4. Listen to what the text says. This is good and it's pleasing in the sight of God our Savior who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. This is good and is pleasing in the sight of our Savior who desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. First point. God's will for you is to be saved. God's will is for you is to come to Him in faith and be saved. God does not lead those whom He does not know. He will not lead those He does not know. So it starts with salvation. It's like the dichotomy we talked about last week. The world can be divided very simply. It was children of darkness / children of light. God does not lead children of darkness. He leads His own in children of light. That's why Jesus says in John 10:4 the sheep follow Him for they know His voice. We know the voice of our savior, why? Because we're connected to Him and so we can hear Him. We understand when He's calling us, when He's directing us. If we're not a part of Him we can't hear Him. We don't have any sense of direction from the Lord.

You don't have to turn there, 2 Peter, 3:9 says the Lord is not slow to fulfill His promises as some count slowness, but is patient towards you, listen not wishing that any should perish but that all should reach repentance. Do you hear what the scriptures are saying to you? That if you have not come to Christ by faith, as an act of grace, this faith a gift from God, if you've not embraced Christ, committed your life to Christ – God has been very patient with you and He continues to be patient with you; waiting for you to come to repentance. So, He's calling you to salvation.

By the way, in scripture salvation is never presented as an invitation, kind of wooing of people. It's a command. It's an outright command. Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. Believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead and you will be saved. It's a command. It's a call on your life. If you want to understand God's will it starts with salvation. It starts by becoming His child. How do you do that? You believe by faith. You don't get everything right in your life. It's not this scale of good and evil. You have to make sure that you have more good than more bad. Then you're going to be ok. I slipped into heaven that way. It's not doing the right thing – no. It's having faith. Faith and the work of Christ on the cross on your behalf. It's a substitutionary faith. You are replacing your life for His life. He's giving His righteousness. You're giving Him your sin. There is a trade. He nails that to the cross. You are redeemed by faith. That's what it means and God's will for you is to be saved. So it starts by committing your life.

The second is found back in Ephesians chapter 5 so turn back there. Ephesians 5, verse 18. I didn't mention this a moment ago because it seems to go in order. First we are to be saved. Second, God's will for us to be Spirit filled. Verse 18 helps us see that. Now, remember, we're looking at verse 17 that tells us that we should understand what the will of the Lord is. Then, verse 18 says and, which is a connecting phrase. This and, conjunction – do not get drunk with wine for that is debauchery but filled with the Spirit. So, what he's saying is you

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need to understand what the will of the Lord is. But the will of the Lord is not to get drunk with wine. That's debauchery. The will of the Lord is to be filled with the Spirit. So God's will for you is to be saved. God's will is for you to be Spirit filled.

Now, we're going to spend all kinds of time on verse 18 next week so let me just generalize it. I know you have questions but let me just generalize it. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? It means to be controlled by the Spirit of God. It means you're entire life is controlled by the Spirit of God, not any other force. By the way, this passage is not necessarily talking about alcohol. It's not saying you should not drink alcohol. It's saying you shouldn't let anything like alcohol control your life. You shouldn't let anything be in a controlling element or factor in your life except as a child of God – the Spirit of God. And so you are to be filled with the Spirit allowing Him to control your life. In other words, God says you know what? I'm not really interested in compartmentalized believers. I don't want you to say well, you can have this part of my life. I'm going to keep a part or this part I'm going to keep over here. He's not into that. He says, no. I want all of you, why? Because when He calls you to salvation He calls you to follow Him as what? Lord. And what does a Lord, what does a king want? He wants to reign over all. It's not just this partial segment. You see when we say you know what God? I'll give you this part of my life but I won't give you that part we're basically setting ourselves up as the Lord. We're saying alright. I know better than you know. I'm going to be the Lord. I'm going to take care of these parts of my life. You take care of that part of my life. God says it doesn't work that way. You take all of me. You come and submit all of you or it doesn't work. My will for you, number one is to be saved. Secondly, my will for you is to be Spirit filled allowing me to control all of your life.

Third, God's will for you is to be sanctified. Sanctified. I found that in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4. 1 Thessalonians 4. I don't hear your bibles turning. You need to move there. You want to see it, you have to dig for it, right? 1 Thessalonians 4, 3 through 5. This is just so plain. Verse 3 says this is the will of God. Look, when you come across a statement like that in scripture God's telling you what exactly what He wants out of your life. He's saying this is my will for you. It's black and white. It can't get any clearer than that. He says this is the will of God your sanctification. Now what does that mean? What does sanctification mean? Sanctification simply means spiritual growth. That you ought to be involved in your own spiritual development. You partner with God, synergistic in sanctification. You partner with God in your spiritual development. How do you do that? Well, it's just like I was saying a moment ago. You get involved in understanding the Word of God, in infusing the Word of God into your life and there's just a number of ways that can happen. You do it through your own personal study. Not only that, you do it through some type of accountability; the idea of finding someone else who knows more than you; who's been through life further than you and you buddy up with them and you say teach me – disciple me. Help me to understand God's Word. Or you get involved in a small group and you do it as a community as believers. Very biblical approach. Acts 2 approach. You're not going through life solo as a maverick. You're actually going through life with people who love you. That's why small groups are so

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essential. It helps develop your sanctification. You can get involved in a class, a University Class. Take it to the next level. The issue is, is God's will for you is not to be sitting idly by. It's not, ok I got Jesus. I've got that all done. Now I'm good. That's not it at all. It starts with faith It continues with being Spirit filled and then God's will for you is to be sanctified.

Now, he continues and he gives us an example of this. He says here, this is God's will for your sanctification that you abstain from sexual immorality and that each one of you, here's the key, how to control his own body in holiness and honor. Some of your translations might be vessel. That's the idea of your life. Just as in Ephesians where alcohol was the illustration of the Spirit filled life so sexual immorality is the example of someone who knows how to control their vessel their life. So, it's not just in this area of sexual immorality. It includes sexual immorality but it's more than just sexual immorality. He's saying sanctification means you know how to control the desires of your fallen flesh. You know how to operate in a dark world as a child of light. That you understand what it means because you're growing in the knowledge of the Word of God how to behave as a follower of Christ. That's the sense here. What is God's will for you? God's will is for you to be sanctified. Are you doing that? Is that true in your life? Don't miss this. You can not expect God to be specific in your life, leading specifically, giving you a sense of direction if you're not doing what He's already prescribed for us to do in His Word. Don't expect God is going to give you clarity in your life if you're ignoring and you're disobedient to the Word of God. It starts here.

God's will is for you to be saved, Spirit filled, sanctified. Number four God's will is for you to be submissive. Submissive. Now, I'm turning to 1 Peter, chapter 2. You need to see this text. I'll tell you why. Because all of us live under some type of submission. We all live in submission. I live in submission to God, the trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit but then I also live in submission to our Elders here at the church. After that I live in submission to Michelle like every good husband is supposed to do. We all submit to somebody, right? Well, here he talks about being subject or submissive to human institutions and he's talking about the government. So listen carefully. Verse 13 of chapter 2, 1 Peter. Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution whether it be to the emperor as supreme or to the governor. For this is the will of God that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Now, let me just traverse into dangerous water.

It doesn't matter if you are a Republican or a Democrat or an Independent or a green or a pink or whatever you are. It doesn't matter. You are called as a Christ follower first to be obedient to the government that you are under whether that be in the United States or any other government, why? Because your King is not the president. Your King is Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ has told you how to act while you live here on earth. He says one of the things you're called to be is to be obedient. If that means pay your taxes – pay your taxes. If that means fill out the census – fill out the census. If that means obey the laws of the land – obey the laws of the land clearly, concisely, perfectly, why? Because that's your call as one in submission to Jesus Christ. That's the point.

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Now, the thing is you might all be a little bit uneasy. You may be mad, kind of hacked off. I can't believe he's talking about that kind of stuff here. Could you imagine what the people of that day would have been thinking because remember Peter is writing during a day when the government was the largest sustained government that has ever existed on planet earth – the Roman Empire. It lasted fifteen hundred years; covered two-thirds of the globe and at this particular time Nero was lighting up Christians like flashlights in coliseums burning them at the stake. He was feeding them to the lions and using them as his own personal sport and Peter comes along and says obey Nero; obey Caesar; obey the government. They would have said what? Are you kidding me? No. Why? Because you are first and foremost a subject of King Jesus and that's how He wants you to live your life because when you do it silences the ignorance of foolish people. They look at us and they cannot understand why would act in such clear ways of obedience even if we might disagree. In fact, the only time you ever disobey your government is when it goes contrary, goes across the Word of God and then you're free to disobey. Up to that point you're called to obey. Unless you are doing this you are out of God's will because God's will for you is to be saved, Spirit filled, sanctified and submissive.

If I had time I'd take you to Hebrews 13:17 and I'd show you that all of us as a community of believers sit under the submission of the Elders that govern us here at the church; that there is another level of submission that is to those men that we have called to govern us because Hebrews says they are watch carers. They watch over our souls on our behalf. So, we're to be people who are submissive.

The next is that we are to be people who are sharing. Saved, Spirit filled, sanctified, submissive and sharing. For this I'm going to 2 Corinthians, chapter 8 and just so there's no misunderstanding what I'm talking about here when I say sharing is not just to be nice and have others play with your toys. I'm talking about giving. I'm talking about the tithe. We're talking about the tithe and offering – giving of your money is God's will. Paul begins this conversation in chapter 8 of 2 Corinthians. It goes all the way through chapter 9. He's teaching being generous, giving generously, why? For the proclamation of the Gospel. So that the Gospel might move forth. That's why you give by the way. We give so that the Gospel might go forward. That's what he's talking about here.

He begins in verse 1 of chapter 8. He says we want you to know brothers about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part; for they give according to their means as I can testify and beyond their means of their own free will begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints. In this, not as we expected but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God. He drops down in verse 7 and he says see that you excel in this act, this act of giving yourself. See that you excel in this act of grace also. Then he goes over into chapter 9

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and he makes it clear. He gives us very clear instructions on why we should give and he says God loves a cheerful giver. So, what do we say? We say God's will for you is to give. Now, if you're not doing this you're not doing God's will. I don't know how much clearer I can give it to you. That's the Word of God.

I know what's going on in your mind. You know, the economy's so bad. I tell you, I'm nervous. I don't know if we're going to have the money. I don't know if I'm going to have a job. I don't know if I'm going to be able to retire. I don't know if I'm going to be able to stay retired. I just don't know. God says it's not yours in the first place. I gave you that money. Now, be obedient to me and give it back how I've instructed you. Give because it's my will for your life because it's not about the money. It's about control. You see when we're standing over there wringing our hands, worrying about it do you know what we're doing? We're saying I'm going to take control God. I don't trust you in this area so I'm going to decide what I will and will not do. I will take control. God says it's not about the money. It's about control. I am your King. Follow my will. So we compromise. We get right up to the edge and we say you know what God? I don't know if I'm going to do that with my money. I'll give you my time. I'll volunteer. I'll volunteer here at the church. I'll go all in. I'll give you all that I have of my time. God says I didn't ask for that. That's another aspect of spiritual growth. I'm talking about giving of your finances. This is God's will, why? Because it's an issue of control.

Who do you really want? Do you want God's will or do you want your will because God's will is for you to be saved, Spirit filled, sanctified, submissive and sharing and then the last one to be showing gratitude. God's will is for you to be people who are constantly and continually being thankful and showing gratitude. I'm going to go back over to 1 Thessalonians. 1 Thessalonians, last chapter of the book – chapter 5. Verse 18 but I'm actually going to start in verse 16. Paul says, rejoice always, pray without ceasing, by the way these are issues of command, all in the imperative, rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. God's will is for you to be thankful.

Now, I had to teach my five year old this just the other day. Just yesterday because he wasn't being thankful. He wasn't showing any kind of gratitude and sometimes we can act like five year olds, can't we and we need the Word of God to tell us don't forget to live a life of gratitude, to wake up every morning and realize that every thing that's going on in our life, including the circumstances that irk you and bring you into a sense of panic and fear we ought to thank God for that, why? Because God's doing something through that circumstance in our life. This is God's will for your life. That you're saved, Spirit filled, sanctified, submissive, sharing and showing gratitude. This is God's will.

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPTS

Series: Deconstruction / Reconstruction of the Disciples' Life Part 9

Walk in WISDOM

Ephesians 5:15-17

Tim Armstrong, Senior Pastor

Weekend 03.13-14.10

You say, wait a minute. You didn't give me any specifics. How does this help? You didn't tell me how to go to the right or the left or to say yes or say not or to do this or do that. You didn't give me the specifics that you said that the Word of God would give.

Alright, you ready? One more passage and then we're done. Turn to Psalm 37:4. Psalm 37:4. Go ahead and turn there. I want you to see it. This is one of the few passages in my personal bible that I've highlighted. I take notes. I underline. I scribble around the margins. I hardly every highlight but I highlighted this passage and I'll tell you why. Because it speaks so clearly to what God wants in our lives; what God is doing for us in our lives. The Psalmist says this: Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. How do you delight yourself in the Lord? Well, you do God's will. You're saved, Spirit filled, sanctified, submissive, sharing and showing gratitude. That's how you delight yourself in the Lord. If you do that it says He will give you the desires of your heart. Now, this is not saying that He will give you what you want. Hear me clearly. It means He will make me want what He wants for me. Did you get that? It means He will make me want what He wants for me. He will fill my heart with His desires. So, if you're saved, Spirit filled, sanctified, submissive, sharing and showing gratitude you will be delighting in the Lord. That means you are listen, living God's will for your life. That means you're there. You are in God' will. If you can say I'm saved, Spirit filled, sanctified, submissive, sharing and showing gratitude, this makes up the aspects of my life then you are in God's will.

You say, alright. Then how do I make decisions? How do I know when I come to that crossroads in my life? Are you ready for this? Do what ever you want. Do whatever you want because if you're saved, Spirit filled, sanctified, submissive, sharing and showing gratitude you're wants are His wants. Who's controlling your wants? He is. He's actually giving you your wants. Now I'm not saying you can go off and just blow off and reek havoc and enjoy a life of sin. No. Then you wouldn't be sanctified. Then you wouldn't be Spirit filled. You have to put this in the same context. If you're saved, Spirit filled, sanctified, submissive, sharing and showing gratitude, if that's your life do whatever you want. You can not make a wrong decision because you're already living God's will.

So, it circles back to wisdom. Starts with knowledge – the Word of God. Knowledge moves to the type of life you're going to live – behavior. Now you're walking the wise walk. So, what's Paul's admonishment to you? Walk wisely. Let's pray.