

Fulfilling God's Will

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[0 : 00] Find that in your Bible, Exodus 34. We are really, really close to the end of this study.! We are really close to the end of all of this book.

But we've got more to cover. So we're in Exodus 34. I just want to remind you where we were last Sunday in the previous chapter, where Moses had that unusual request before God. He besought him that he would show him his glory.

And I told you that was an ambitious ask. That was something that had never been done before. I told you also that I was an ignorant inquiry, saying that Moses wasn't even able to behold the glory of God and live.

God said, I can't do that for you, Moses. No man shall see my face. But in the end, it was a rewarded request nonetheless. And we tried to learn some things about how we are to let our requests be made known unto God.

And the ideas were that we should stay within the parameters of the Scripture and not ask for something so ambitious that it's outside of the way God deals with man. With God, nothing is impossible.

[1 : 25] But it doesn't mean he's going to operate with you in your life just because you can conceive it in your head or just because some preacher or woman on TV is telling you, you should do this, God is big, and blah, blah, blah. So we stay with the Bible and stay with the way God operates in our lives.

We also learned and were reassured that we have an interceder on our behalf. When we ask in ignorance, like Moses did, we have somebody who knows the will of God.

When we don't know how we ought to pray, the Lord Jesus Christ is there making intercession for us according to the will of God. But the most important thing, lastly from last week, is we recognize the importance of asking for things that will bring us closer to God.

Things that will strengthen our relationship and bring us into a fuller and more intimate fellowship with the Lord because that's the kind of request that He will respond to.

He will reward. And so we move now into chapter 34. And following this occasion, it's spilled into chapter 34 where the Lord descended in verse 5 and He passed by Moses in verse 6 and proclaimed the name of the Lord.

[2 : 34] Moses bowed His head toward the earth and worshipped in verse 8. Following this occasion now is a conversation between God and Moses. And what we're about to read this morning is God renewing His commitment to His people.

He renews to them the covenant that He made with them and where they were enjoined to Him.

And it wasn't going well. They had just fallen off so quickly and worshipped a golden calf.

And God stood back and He said, I'm not sure what I want to do with you people. And He had an idea and then He decided, no, what, we're going to get back on board. And so He reaffirms some things in what we read and reminds them of some certain specific points of this covenant.

And let's just read it out together from chapter 34. We'll read from verses 9 to verse 27. So try to follow along. Beginning in verse 9, And He said, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us.

For it is a stiff-necked people. And pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Thine inheritance. And He said, Behold, I make a covenant. Before all Thy people, I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation.

[3 : 47] And all the people among which Thou art shall see the work of the Lord, for it is a terrible thing that I will do with Thee. Observe thou that which I command thee this day. Behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and

the Jebusite.

Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee. But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves, for thou shalt worship no other God.

For the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a-whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice.

And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a-whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a-whoring after their gods. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.

The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee in the time of the month Abib. For in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt, all that openeth the matrix is mine.

[5 : 01] And every firstling among the cattle, whether ox or sheep, that is male. But the firstling of the ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb, and if thou redeem him not, then thou shalt break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem, and none shall appear before me empty.

Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest. In earring time and in harvest thou shalt rest. And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, and the first fruits of the wheat harvest, of the feast of ingathering at the year's end.

Thrice in the year shall all your men, children, appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel. For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders. Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year.

Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven, neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover be left unto the morning. The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God.

Thou shalt not see the kid in his mother's milk. And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words. For after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.

[6 : 12] So everything's back on track now. It feels like the relationship has been restored. God appears that he's content to continue forward with his people, considering what they have just done, and he was about to dismiss, he was about to consume them.

Then he was about to send them forward without having anything to do with them. Now it's all back together. And he's making that covenant and reaffirming that covenant and his sights are set upon bringing them into the land.

So with that being the case, what could possibly interfere with God fulfilling his desired will with his people?

Can the Canaanites, can they hinder him from bringing them into the land and establishing them? Do they have anything to do, to say about it? The heathen, the kings and their armies, the Bible says they're but a drop in the bucket before the Lord.

I don't think they pose any threat at all. So what or who could hinder God from accomplishing his work in full with his people now that they're back together and restored?

[7 : 26] I think the only answer is the people themselves. Could hinder the work of God. They're the only ones that could interfere with God seeing his will and his desire and his plan be fulfilled through them.

The people. They could certainly mess this up again. And before we even get into the passage, as children of God, you and I sitting here today as born again, washed in the blood Christians, God forbid that we are the reason, that you are the reason, that God doesn't get what he paid for when he bought you with the blood of his son.

God forbid that the plans that he has for your life, the desires that he has for you, that he paid for in full, God forbid that it's your attitude or that it's your weakness or that it's your lack of faith or that it's your sins that stand in the way of God getting what he deserves.

With all this in mind, let's consider some things from this passage that we read that I think will aid the people in not interfering with what God wants to accomplish and can very well apply to us.

Moses is going to give us some things that will assist us in following through and in fulfilling the will of God. These are very simple, but they're profound in their own way. Notice number one, God begins this passage I read around verses 10 and 11 saying, Behold, I make a covenant before all thy people I'll do marvels.

[9 : 03] And God tells them, I'm going to do a work. It's going to be a terrible thing that I do. And I am going to take those nations and drive them out of that land.

And I'm going to bring you into that land. And when you're in that land, I don't want you making any covenants with them. I don't want you worshiping their gods. I don't want you mixed marrying with other people.

You're going to be a holy people unto me. And then he goes back through. He read, he just starts throwing these feast days and these things. This is the will of God. This is him restating to them kind of in a very abbreviated form, his desire for them.

The first thing that's going to be helpful in fulfilling the will of God is understanding God's will. Is understanding. It might sound vague to you.

It might sound oversimplified, but it really is that simple. In order for you to fulfill God's will for your life, you had better have an understanding of what that is. God has to say this before it even happens.

[10 : 06] This is what I'm trying to do with you. So as it unfolds and as you understand, this is it. This is the thing which the Lord has said. And then they can just receive it and they can go forward with it and agree with it.

But when you don't understand what God wants you to do, what chance do you even have of even coming close? And so God expresses these points in this passage once again, a repeat, so that he can be certain that his people understand his will.

Let me give you an illustration of something from my life that just shows you a spot that I was put in, a setup for failure. When I was a teenager, the second job that I had when I got out of high school, the immediate summer job, I got at a Ford dealership.

And I was to be the lot boy. That's what they called it. That was the job description. Needed, lot boy. And what it was, was I needed to clean all the cars that were on the lot. They had two lots. One was trucks, one was cars.

And my job was the upper lot. Everything had to be vacuumed, clean, have enough gas in it to take it for test drives. And from time to time, they'd just, a salesman would come up, throw keys at me and say, get that ready.

[11 : 14] I need it in 10 minutes or 20 minutes. And so I had to give it a quick once over. And all day long, I was driving cars into a wash bay and spraying them down, washing them down, and soaked feet, soaked shoes every single day of my life and taking them back up and picking up the next one, getting the keys.

And one day, a salesman came up to me and he was the top salesman. Everybody knew him. He was, he had the cloud in the whole company. And he threw a set of keys to me and he says, I need that car detailed for a very special customer.

And they need, they're coming by to borrow it tonight to go out. And so I'm like, detailed. He just walked away. I know where the detail shop is, but I've never, I've never detailed a car.

I've never been trained on detailing a car. I know how to put the soap in the bucket and I know how to, to spray the car down and wash the wheels, but I don't know how to detail. And so, okay, I'll figure this out.

And so I drove down to the detail shop. There's a guy named Lee that ran the detail shop. A real beady eyed, skinny, short little guy that was just mean all the time. Mean to me. Because nobody, blankety blank, comes into my shop.

[12 : 24] That was just his attitude about it all. He had six guys that worked for him and they just, they did exactly what he said because these cars had to be perfect. And so I pulled in, or I had a car out there and I walked in and he greets me in his normal fashion of kind of a blankety blank, what are you doing here?

kind of idea in my shop. And I said, so and so, the big head guy wants this car detailed. And so he just looked at me and he's like, take bay three.

He just turned away, he just walked away. And I'm standing there like, I was kind of hoping you might just take the keys or that you just put one of your guys on it. But no, he told me to do it.

So I pulled the car in, I look at how the other guys had their cars parked and I pulled it into bay three. And they all had this set up everywhere around them, all these spray bottles, all these rags, all these different tools and different things sort of polishing and buffing and just the whole thing.

All the setup is there. And I saw one guy washing the windows and I thought, yeah, I can wash windows. and got the glass cleaner out, washed the windows and got inside the car, did a little vacuuming, did a little this and that.

[13:28] But the reality is, I didn't know what I was doing. And so I did my best. I didn't see like dirt anywhere. So I took the car back, gave him the keys. The next day, he comes back to me and cusses me out.

And he says, that was the worst detailing job I've ever seen. Well, I agree. It was terrible. But you know what? I didn't know what I was doing.

I didn't understand what your will was in this situation. There's no way that I could have fulfilled it. It was impossible. I was set up for failure. And I think understanding the will of the Lord is far more important than having zeal inside, having desire, having commitment, all the commitment in the world.

If you don't know what you're doing, you're not going to succeed. How can you be successful if you don't even know what that success looks like? Keep your place and find Ephesians chapter 5.

Find Ephesians chapter 5. The first very crucial element to fulfilling the will of God is to understand God's will.

[14:50] Ephesians chapter 5. This is a command to Christians. So this is a command for you and me. Verse number 17.

517. Wherefore, be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Don't live your Christian life unwise. Don't live your Christian life not understanding what God expects from you. Flip over a few pages to Colossians chapter 1.

It is God's command for us to understand what His will is. Colossians chapter 1.

And look at verses 9 through 11 or so. Verse 9. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

[16:00] That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, and so forth.

The point I want you to see clearly is if you don't understand His will, you will not be able to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. You will not be filled with fruits of righteousness in your Christian life if you don't know what you're striving for.

If I hand you a bow and arrow and say stand here at the line and there's 15 targets out there and I'll say now go hit that bullseye and you, if I don't tell you which one you're supposed to be shooting at, how was the chance you're going to hit the right one?

You have to know what you're shooting for. You have to understand God's will. Let's just take one example. This is one out of a hundred. Everybody in the world in some way listens to music.

Does the music that you listen to, does it please the Lord? Would it be considered something that God would say, this is my will for your life is to listen and to enjoy this.

[17:16] The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 4 that this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from fornication. So if God's will is for me to live a life that abstains from fornication, for God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

And yet I listen to music where artists glorify and glamorize fornication or uncleanness or drunkenness or partying.

If they focus and just lift up these things that are contrary to the will of God, am I in the will of God when I'm listening to it?

When I'm enjoying it? When I'm singing it with my lips? When I'm reveling in it? How can I be in the will of God if I listen to music that just focuses on sorrow and pain and all the bad things of my life?

All the things I've lost and all the hurt inside. That's not the Christian life. Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say, rejoice. I'm just giving you one illustration here, one example of understanding God's will in the area of music as an example.

[18:32] Spiritual music that exalts the Son of God and the work of the Son of God in your life. Music that exalts godly, righteous characteristics and traits.

That would be helpful to the child of God. But we have to understand what God accepts. It's the same with your words. It's the same with your dress. It's the same with your relationships with your friends.

Are they pleasing to the Lord? It's going to help for you and I to understand where God sets the bar. Where the standard God expects us to be at is.

But if we don't understand that at all and just think anything goes, we're never going to live in the will of God. So in order to fulfill His will, in order to not interfere or hinder His working, we need to understand His will.

And so back in Exodus 34, that's what God does. He lays that out again. This is my intentions for you. This is my will and this is what I'm going to do. There's another thing I see in this passage and begins in verse number 12.

[19 : 41] The first four words God says to His people, take heed to thyself lest thou make a covenant. Take heed to thyself.

It might seem obvious to you why God has to say this because of, probably because of what they just did in fashioning and worshipping a golden calf.

And God says, you better take heed to yourself. And what is He saying here? I want to say secondly, in order to fulfill the will of God, you're going to have to identify your weaknesses. Take heed to thyself, folks.

And guess what He follows this up with? If you make a covenant with the people in that land, God wants to drive them out, but if you shake hands with them and invite them into your lives, you're going to have a problem.

It's going to be a snare to you. Moreover, you're going to find yourself staring down some of their images. You think you're ready to stand in front of some images and not fall down and bow down to them like they do?

[20 : 49] Once you become friends with them, once you start to hang out with them and do things and spend time with them, weeks become months become years and now they're inviting you to come and celebrate with them and worship their images and their gods?

The Lord says, before they ever get in there, take heed to thyself. He tells them to identify your weaknesses, understand what you're prone to, understand what you allow in your life, things that God would have taken out of your life.

You let them in, it's going to be a snare. And when you're conquering, you're going to find yourself with an opportunity right at your fingertips. Beware.

Prepare for the time ahead when temptation comes. This is a good, I think this is incredible advice from the Lord that we can apply because your Christian life is not just put one foot in front of the other today, just got to keep away from sin today, but part of your Christmas, Christian life is removing things today that are going to be a snare tomorrow.

You might say, but I can handle it. Yeah, well maybe your kids can't handle it. So why should it ever be close to you or in your home? You think, well, it's not a big deal.

[22 : 05] Well maybe today it's not a big deal, but all it takes is a phone call. All it takes is a circumstance to set you back a little bit and now that thing in your life that you thought wasn't a big deal can become a snare.

You know, there's a, I hate to tell myself so much, but my grandparents used to keep alcohol in the house and you know, they were just unsaved Catholics.

That was just normal. They had hard liquor and wine everywhere and it wasn't a thing to them. But we went over to their house and visited all the time in the summers and in the Christmas times and there was a time in my life where that became attractive to me.

And a shame of it is is that when they weren't around and others weren't around I helped myself to some things I never should have touched. And the truth is the case with, with you think you could keep some things in your home and it's not a big deal to you, wait till your grandkids come around and you're not there and you don't know anything about it.

My grandparents went to their grave not knowing that I was pouring myself some of their booze. They would have had a fit. My mom and dad would have had a fit if they knew what I was doing behind their backs. You don't know what your kids are up to or what your grandkids are going to help themselves to.

[23 : 17] You know what you ought to do? Keep it out. Get it out for your own testimony's sake for your sake and others. The Lord knows what he's talking about when he says I'm going to drive them out you be careful you take heed that you don't shake hands with something that I want out because it'll be a snare.

That's real good advice from the Lord. The Apostle Paul said I say to every man that is among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. Do us good to identify our weaknesses. He says take heed to thyself. It's good instruction to thyself. Personal. Individual. Instruction. Not like you like to do take heed to the church.

Take heed to your neighbors. Take heed to your coworkers. No. Take heed to thyself. Look in the mirror and identify the person that is going to keep you from fulfilling God's will for your life. If this is too much for you it's you. It's you. So take heed to thyself. Identify where that person in the mirror is weak.

[24 : 29] Identify and remember where that person in the mirror has fallen before. And he'll fall again if I give him the option. Understand this about yourself.

God is not the reason you fall into sin. This wicked world is not the thing that's making you live wickedly. And it's definitely not the devil that makes you do it. It's you.

It's me. So take heed to thyself. It's good advice for everyone here this morning. Identify where you're weak. Identify where you've fallen in the past.

Learn from it. Get your guard up. Don't put yourself in the same place where you'll fall again or you will. If you want to fulfill the will of God for your life you better identify where you're weak.

Back in our chapter in chapter 34 after we got through that section of take heed to thyself and he talks about his jealousy and make no molten gods.

[25 : 28] That's a real thing that he had to put in front of them because they just committed that sin. He carries on with the rest of what we read in verses 18 to 27 talking about some commands that he's already given to his people.

These are things back in chapter 13 with the feast of unleavened bread and verse 19 all that openeth the matrix is mine. The first thing redeeming them that's all from chapter 13.

Of course the Sabbath day that one's pretty obvious. That's been mentioned more than once already. These feasts they were mentioned in chapter 23 he's already gone through these feasts where he expects them to appear before him three times in the year.

This is not at all a full on review of the law but there are certainly bullet points that God's bringing back up again and they're crucial to him.

There's some highlights if you will of these chapters that he's already expressed. They're all peculiar. Every one of these that he mentions they're all peculiar to Israel.

[26 : 39] They're all significant ordinances that are to be ingrained within their culture to be preserved to be perpetuated for generations to come and in verse 27 the Lord said unto Moses write thou these words for after the tenor of these words I've made a covenant with thee.

It might sound really really simple here but it really becomes everything to the Christian life is to do what God's telling his people to observe God's words the words that have been written down.

He tells him in verse 11 observe thou that which I command thee this day. Again in verse 22 thou shalt observe the feast of weeks the first fruits and so forth.

All that I've written I expect you to observe to closely to carefully and to intentionally obey. obey. Obey my words.

The covenant that God is making with this people is completely dependent upon their compliance to his words to what he commands them.

[27 : 58] The only way that God can fulfill his will to see to recognize and realize what he desires for his people is if they obey his words.

The significance of this is displayed and when Moses rehearses this a generation later I want to show that to you flip over to Deuteronomy chapter 4 Deuteronomy 4 if it's not coming through strong enough in what we just read when Moses has a whole other generation in front of them he wears them out by telling them you better obey the words obey the words obey the words of God.

Deuteronomy chapter 4 I'm going to just skim through a few of these chapters together with you look at verse 1 Now therefore hearken O Israel unto the statutes and unto the judgments which I teach you for to do them that ye may live and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you ye shall not add unto the word which I command you neither shall ye diminish aught from it that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you and I don't have time to go through all of this but skip ahead to chapter 5 skip ahead chapter 5 verse 1 Moses called all Israel and said unto them hear O Israel the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day that ye may learn them and keep and do them for the Lord our God

made a covenant with us in Horeb he's going to go on and tell them those ten commandments and rehearse them before their ears look at verse number 29 oh that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always that it might be well with them and with their children forever verse 32 he says ye shall observe to do therefore as the

Lord your God hath commanded you ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you in chapter 6 now these are the commandments and statutes and judgments which the Lord your God commanded to teach you that you might do them in the land whither you go to possess it and it's repetitive but it's over and over he's just driving this into these people he tells them in verse 6 these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart in verse 7 teach them diligently unto thy children talk of them when thou sittest in the house walkest by the way when thou liest down when thou risest thou bind them for a sign write them upon the post of thy doors!

32 46 and he said unto them set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day which ye shall command your children to observe to do all the words of this law for it's not a vain thing for you because it is your life you look at the word of God the same way do you understand what God wants for you in this life he's written it down it's in the language you speak and read and write observe God's words I don't believe I don't think I could ever in all of my lifetime tenfold I don't think I could ever overstate the importance of reading and studying and believing and learning the words of God

[32 : 19] I can never overstate how important that is but on top of all of that obeying what the scripture says you know John Wayne he famously stated something it's gone all over the world he said it ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me it's the parts that I do understand amen because they're the ones that you find yourself wrestling with and your flesh doesn't want to observe but that flesh needs to be put down why so that God can get what he desires to get out of your life you're the one that stands in the way observe his will it's impossible for any Christian here to experience the life that God has designed for you to live if you don't get your nose in that book and start observing what it says for you to do with your whole heart it is your life one last verse about the

Bible and we'll be dismissed We'll hit the road here first find Titus please find Titus chapter 2 and I'm going to close in here! Titus chapter 2 we're talking this morning about God fulfilling his will in your life about him getting what he desires out of your life I'm not talking about what country am I supposed to go to God I'm not talking about some big thing that's separate that's when God calls a servant to serve him with their life and to surrender that's something else this is what God wants of his children of all of us collectively individually even he gave his son to redeem us from all iniquity so what does he want look at Titus chapter 2 and verse number 14 who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works so the

Lord Jesus Christ gave himself for you so that he could redeem you from all of your sin he paid for it all in full and he wants to get you out of that and have you stand over here with him so that you can now be different peculiar and that this new creature that he created in Christ would be zealous of good works this is what he wants in your life not to blend in with the world matter of fact the opposite he wants you to be peculiar to the world if you don't look odd to your co-workers you're not doing your job or you're not allowing God to do his job through you you're supposed to be different peculiar and zealous of good works God's plan for your life will only be realized if number one you understand what he's trying to do you understand what his will is it's up here and you strive toward it you'll only get there if you identify where you're weak where you're going to mess it up and where you're going to fall and then if you'll observe the words of almighty

God he has given them to you they're in your lap you cannot say God I didn't know you can't stay you you will be without excuse without excuse God wants to fulfill something he paid for you your life is not your own and he deserves it of you he's worthy of it he's worthy of it so the way to get there the way to give him what he wants is found back there in Exodus 34 as he's reuniting with his people after a great sin and he's letting them know this is my will for you you're the one that's going to mess up so get in my words let my words do the cleaning let my words do the strengthening you should know some Bible verses you should have some of this book plugged away into your mind these are the very things that will come up and help you when you struggle when you doubt when you're afraid when you don't think you can do it the word if you put it in your heart if you read it if you

get in it the word of

God will it will arrest your attention and you'll underline something and you'll read it again and again and it will strengthen you and it will help you then to fulfill the will of God in your life let's bow our heads and we're going to leave father it's my request that you'll take these truths and apply them all across this place into the minds and hearts of your people Lord I believe it I'm the one that gets in the way!

[38 : 13] we are definitely the problem whenever there's a problem God it's my desire that you'll minister to us that you'll strengthen us and may we desire the words of God and see how important these words are to living a Christian life and to pleasing you may we not neglect the book may we find help in it may you strengthen us through it and may the Lord Jesus Christ get something out of our lives something that he deserves that he gave his own blood for God if there's folks here that are struggling with sins they're struggling with weaknesses remind them your will remind them what your word says I pray that each one of us could accomplish something for you that you'll be pleased to guide us forward in this life

Lord help our foolish hearts we want a covenant with the world we want a covenant with sin and keep it around give us boldness courage to eliminate those threats may they not be a snare to us anymore give us strength I pray in the name of Jesus Christ and through the power of the word of God and the Holy Spirit of God and the new man that you put in us give us strength we pray in his name amen amen all right well we're going to drop it right there because of the plans we have so I hope that through Exodus