

# Lessons On Finding God's Will For Your Life

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you'll be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Alright, take your Bibles if you want to go with me to Numbers. And we're in chapter 22, Numbers chapter 22.

And we're in for that wild story that I'm sure you've heard of Balaam and his donkey. How many of you have heard that story? Say amen. And aren't you glad you don't have an animal that talks to you?

That would be shocking to have your donkey tell you what are you doing hitting me when I've been a good donkey. I think that's the wildest story in the Bible. It's at least one of them anyway.

So read with me if you would Numbers chapter 22. And we're going to learn a little bit about finding God's will for your life. Now before you read the story, can I just remind you that often you are obstinate about wanting something.

And you kind of try to put God in a corner. And you kind of try to say to God, this is what I want. And no matter what you do, no matter what you say, I'm going for it. That's old Balaam's story.

[ 1 : 0 0 ] Because in all honesty, Balaam is going to do everything in his power to go curse the nation. He's going to do everything in his power because he wants the honor and he wants the money that he'll be able to get.

And so he is a hireling. He is a guy who looks for the money. And so you often do that. So as you read the story, you've got to put yourself in the story again. You've got to realize how many times you know what God really wants, but you try to twist the situation.

So let's read the chapter or scan the chapter and then we'll work our way through it. The Bible says in verse 1, So he's a king.

He's a smart king. He's looking around and he realizes, man, we're in trouble. This great and powerful nation is coming against us. In verse 3, he is sore afraid and he is distressed. In verse 4, he said, this company, they lick up all around them and they're going to come in here and they're going to wipe us out.

So in verse 5, he sent messengers unto Balaam, the son of Baor. And he said, I need you in verse 6 to come over here and pray for thee. And I pray you, I beg in you, curse me, this people.

[ 2 : 2 2 ] They are too mighty for me. He said, I need help. And he said, I know something about you. I've learned, Balaam. In verse 6, he said, I've heard that whoever you bless gets blessed and whoever you curse gets cursed.

So I need you to come over here. So he sends some elders and he sends some money and they go to see Balaam in verse 7. And they got to Balaam and they spake unto him the words of Balak. And in verse 8, he says, lodge here and I will bring you word as the Lord shall speak to me.

He says, you hang around. Let me go find out what God wants. Verse 9. Now here is the end of the story. You're about to read the end of the story way before we get to the end of it. This is where the story should have ended.

He said, and God came unto Balaam and said, who are these guys down there talking to you? Look at the verse. Underline it. What men are these with you? What are these guys doing here?

Balaam, you know who this is? I am the God of Israel. They've come to ask you to curse Israel. Who are these guys? Balaam should have gone. You're right, Lord. I know who they are. I know they're wrong.

[ 3 : 26 ] I'm sending them packing. He should have. Because that's the will of God. That's what God's want. The whole story is it should have ended in verse 9. But in verse 12, God said unto Balaam, thou shalt not go with them.

Underline that in your Bible. Thou shalt not go with them. You will not curse these people. They are blessed. Okay, if you can get past 9, you ought to stop in 12.

If you can get past 9, you ought to stop in 12. If you're hard-headed and you say, God, I mean, do you need your wife to say it really clear? Like when your wife comes in, you know, a bunch of people are there at suppertime and she says, honey, come here.

Who are all these people? It's suppertime. I mean, that's kind of a hint, isn't it? It's like it's suppertime and a heap of folks showed up. What are we going to do? And, you know, my mama would just say, we're going to pour more water in the soup and see how much we can stretch it.

But city girls, my wife's mother, whenever she wanted to have company over, she needed a six-month notice so she could be ready. And so the Lord said, who are these people?

[ 4 : 34 ] Okay, well, maybe you're slow. Maybe you read the Bible. Maybe you understand everything. And you don't catch it. And so then God says, no, don't go.

I don't want you to do that. My people are blessed people. You're not to curse them. Verse 13. Balaam rose up in the morning. He said to the prince of Balak, go on back home. The Lord refuses to give me leave to go with you.

I'm sorry. I've really tried to talk him into it. He won't let me go. Okay, stop the story in verse 13. But in verse 14, the princes go back to Balak and they say to Balak, they say, Balaam refused to come with us.

And so Balaam says, no problem. Get bigger money, more money and get more fancy men, more honorable men and send them there and say to him, let nothing.

This is verse 16. Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder you from coming to me. Don't you let anything else hold you up. I need you to get over here. Verse 17. An insult to God.

[ 5 : 36 ] Verse 17. I will promote you and I will give you great honor and I will do whatsoever you're saying to me. So I need you to come curse these people. He put a star there and see what's going on.

You see, Balaam says, I know God don't want me to do it. I told you, go on home. They come back and the guy says, I can bless you. I can promote you and I can honor you.

Verse 18. Balaam talks like a good Christian. He talks like he should. He says in verse 18, if he were to give me a house full of gold and silver, I couldn't go because I ain't going to do what God don't tell me to do.

You're like, okay. Oh, Balaam finally sounds like he's doing good. Right? In verse 19. Now, therefore, I pray you, Terry, here while this night that I may know what the will of the Lord is.

What's he going to say? All right. I already know what God wants. You can offer me all the money in the world and I won't go. But since you're here and since you're offering a higher amount of money and since you're giving me more honor, let me go ask him one more time.

[ 6 : 38 ] Now, how many of y'all think he's changed his mind? He hasn't changed his mind. And so, in verse 20, God said unto Balaam at night, if the men come to call thee, rise up and go with them.

But yet the word which I shall say unto thee, thou shalt do it. Now, actually, the verse says if they come see you, you can go. But verse 21, Balaam got up. He didn't come.

It just mentions Balaam getting up. Verse 22, God got mad. Look at verse 22. So God's anger was kindled because he went. And the angel of the Lord stood in the way as an enemy to him, an adversary to him.

In verse 23, the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way and he had his sword out. So the donkey turned out and went out into a field. And so Balaam strikes his donkey. And then verse 24, the angel of the Lord stood in the path.

So he gets it back on the road and the angel stands there and blocks it again. And the donkey sees the Lord and so he crushes his foot up against the rock wall beside him. And he mashes his foot.

[ 7 : 40 ] And so he strikes him again in verse 25. And in verse 26, the angel of the Lord goes a little bit further down to a place where he can't go anywhere. No way to the right, no way to the left. And he ain't going to let him go forward.

And he stands in a narrow place in verse 26. In verse 27, the donkey saw the angel of the Lord and he just fell down. The donkey's like, okay, can't go right, can't go left, can't go forward. I ain't backing up.

Just falls on the ground. And so Balaam gets mad as all get out and he strikes his donkey again with his staff in verse 27. And so the Lord said, this has got to be one dumb Baptist preacher.

And so he says, he opened the mouth of the donkey and the donkey said, what have I done to you that you beat me three times now? And Balaam said to the donkey, that's even crazier, isn't it?

Donkey talks to you is one thing. The donkey talks to you is one thing. You talk back to the donkey, I don't know what's going on. And he said, because you made fun of me. You've been mocking me. And if I had a sword right here with me, I'd just kill you.

[ 8 : 43 ] And in verse 30, the donkey said, wait a minute, ain't I your donkey? Don't you ride on me all the time? Haven't you been riding on me since the first day you got me? Have I ever done anything like this to you?

And Balaam said, no, you really hadn't. They've got a conversation going. I mean, Dr. Phil needs this guy on a TV show. Verse 31, then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way and his sword drawn in his hand and he bowed down his head and fell flat on his face.

Now he sees the angel, boy, he's on his face. And the angel said, why are you beating on your donkey? I went out to withstand thee because what you do. Now look at verse 32, your way is perverse.

Have you caught it yet? Who are these guys with you? Don't go with them. You're not cursing my blessed people. I got an angel blocking your way. Your way is perverse to me. But this guy is a member of vision.

That's supposed to be funny. Thank you, Jeff. Jeff gave me a courtesy laugh. And the donkey saw me and he turned from me three times unless she had turned from me. Surely now also I'd slain thee and saved her alive.

[ 9 : 47 ] I would have let the donkey live and killed you if she hadn't helped you. And Balaam said, I've sinned. And then he makes this really bright saying. Would you look at that verse of 34 of me?

Now, Lord, if it's not what you want me to do, I'll go back home. I mean, Lord, I mean, this is news to me. I'm trying to figure this out. I mean, I asked you.

You said I could come. And now if you're upset, I mean, if it's displeasing you, I'll go home. Verse 35. And the angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, go on and go with them.

But you're only going to speak what I say. And so Balak heard that Balaam was come. Stop just a second. You ought to notice here that God lets you do it if you keep pushing, but he don't want you doing it.

And I'm going to prove that to you in the Bible. And I've gotten myself in trouble many times by pushing for what I wanted when God didn't really open a door. And sometimes we shove the door open.

[ 10 : 47 ] We shove the door open, and then we blame God for opening the door. In fact, as a good Baptist prayer is, if God don't want me to have it, he won't let me have it. You ever prayed that? Well, we're trying to get that loan for \$2 million to buy a house.

I know I can't make payments, but on \$200,000, I want that house. God's in it. He'll let me have it. I'm going to try my best. Well, the guy giving you the loans, all four of you get it. Amen? He gets a commission. And the guy selling the house gets a commission.

The guy selling the house is glad to get it. And the devil's like, I think I can help them work the details out in this. And then when they go bankrupt, they can all blame it on God. This will work good. Sorry.

I guess that didn't work. So he says, go with him. He said, Balaam heard it. Balaam heard it. Balaam got there. Verse 37, he said, didn't I tell you to come? Didn't I tell you that I can promote you to honor?

And verse 38, he said, do not I have the power? But have I now any power at all to say anything? That's what Balaam says. Balaam said to Balak, have I now any power at all to say anything?

[ 11 : 49 ] The word that God puts in my mouth, that's what I'm going to speak. Verse 41, this is just ridiculous. This guy supposedly is going to speak for the God of heaven. And in verse 39 and 40, they go make an offering to Baal, the arch enemy of God.

Look at the verse. Verse 40, Balak offered oxen and sheep and sent to Balaam and to the priests that were there. Up in verse 39, Balaam went with Balaak and they came to Kureth, whatever that is.

And in verse 41, it came to pass on the morrow that Balak took Balaam and brought him up into the high places, to the worship places of Baal. That hence he might see the utmost part of the people.

So here we come quickly with some ideas about the story of Balaam and how it helps me learn how God works in my life. Point number one, we are in a spiritual warfare.

We're in a spiritual warfare. God is working in our lives, but the devil is attacking us and would get us off track. Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 12.

[ 13 : 00 ] You should mark that down at the beginning of this chapter. I think it really works there. The Bible says we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of darkness in this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

So what Balak doesn't understand, or what Balak does understand and Balaam doesn't seem to get, is there is a battle between these two. And Balak knows, I cannot beat Israel.

The only way I'm going to be able to beat Israel is if I can get somebody to come curse them. I need a curse from God on these people or I'm not going to be able to win the battle. So he understands.

It's a spiritual war. We don't understand that. That's why we get messed up. We don't realize that we're in a spiritual battle. And then it says, if you would, in 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 8, it says, Be sober, be vigilant.

Your adversary, the devil, is a roaring lion, walks about seeking whom he may devour. In this chapter, the enemy of God's people will not attack like he usually does. He will seek spiritual help. He goes to see if he can't figure out a way to whip him.

[ 14 : 00 ] I want you to look. I want you to know God is working in your life, but there is a devil, and he is working, and he would destroy you if he could. 1 Peter 5, 8.

But look at 1 Peter 5, 9. 1 Peter 5, 9.

The key person in the story is Balaam. He's a prophet, a soothsayer. He's not an Israelite. Yet he seemed to realize that God is supreme. Remember, everyone believes that each nation has their own God or gods.

He's famous for his ability to find out things from the gods and cause things to happen. He's obviously a prophet for hire. He's a pastor waiting for a love offering to do whatever you want him to do.

And Balak knows, I need help. He has seen how bad everything is. He is sore afraid in verse 3. He's distressed in verse 3. In verse 4, he knows they're going to come lick him up.

[ 15 : 19 ] He's going to be whipped, and it's over for him. He knows that. So he sends in verse 5 for Balaam. He says, come curse these people. Because he said, I know you can curse, and you make a difference.

So we find the enemies of God's people try in any way possible to get a curse put on them so they will lose. Big lesson. You are not in a physical fight.

You are not in a physical fight. There is a spiritual war going on around you all the time, whether you're aware of it or not. There's a spiritual warfare. Are you aware of the thoughts and ideas that come to you that are not pleasing to God?

Second thing, I want you to look at verse 6. The wicked king needs help to defeat God's people. The wicked king needs help. He's prayed. He's asked him to come. He said, come help me defeat him.

The king wants to destroy Israel before he gets destroyed. He knows they're way too successful. He's looking for a way to win without just fighting. Balaam needs the devil's help, and Balaam is in touch with the devil.

[ 16 : 21 ] Balaam uses the honorary dignitaries to impress Balaam and offer money. Look, if you would, at 2 Peter 2.15. You write this down by that Bible verse. Preachers that are hung up on money, which we all have a tendency for.

I'll say that so it's clear. Here's what he says. Balaam says, which have forsaken the right way and are going astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bozor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.

I'd just like to get paid. Balaam's got a lot of money. I don't mind taking some of it. And Satan is at work in your life. Messing with you in the same way he does old Balaam.

Or Balaam. In 2 Corinthians 2 and verse 11, you need to be aware of how Satan works. Look at what the Bible says. Lest Satan should get advantage of us, for we're not ignorant of his devices.

So, Balaam is being used to attack, trying to use him. Balak wants help doing it. Balaam should have figured out what's going on.

[ 17 : 26 ] You should figure out what's going on. Verses 7 and 8. And I'm going to flip through them really quick. But I want you to, you can read them later. Balaam answers right. There's some measure of fake in all of us.

You ever done that? I think Facebook brings it out more than anything. I mean, everybody's so spiritual on Facebook. Say amen. They ain't never going to church. But man, they're putting up pictures of all these Bible verses.

They're putting up all these wonderful sins. And I'm like, you know, that'd be great. You're a member of Israel. I ain't seen you in a long time. And that's what's going on. Balaam's like, hey, I only say what God wants me to say.

And God told me not to go, and I'm not going. Okay, but you let me talk to him again. I'll find out if I can go. Quit playing spiritual games. Quit playing spiritual games.

Balaam sounds so spiritual. But all the way through the story, he's a snake in the grass. From the beginning of the story to the end of the story, all he wants is money. He would do anything for money.

[ 18 : 38 ] Pretty obvious by the answer that God gives him that he's not pleased. Balaam knew that the God of heaven was not going to curse his people. He knew that. But he keeps trying.

Balaam even explains to God in verses 10 and 11, he tells God, God, in case you don't know who these guys are, I don't know why you asked that question. But these guys, they come from Balak, and they come over to get me to curse them.

And let me explain that all to you. Like as though God doesn't know. When God asks the question, who are these guys? He didn't want to know who they were. He knew who they were. He's God. Amen? Amen? And God gives Balaam strict, straight instructions not to go.

In verse 12, God said to Balaam, thou shalt not go with him. What can you not understand in that verse? You will not curse these people. They are blessed. That's not happening.

But Balaam tells the men that God told him he can't go. And really, Balaam's kind of like the guy we just read about in Matthew, remember? They honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

[ 19 : 38 ] Oh, Balaam knows the talk. Balaam knows how to carry the Bible right, sing the song, say amen, and do all the right stuff, post all the right stuff on Facebook. But it's not real. It's not genuine.

Are you playing spiritual games? Are you deceiving your own self into believing that you're really seeking God? Because that's really kind of like the story here, isn't it? It's almost, I mean, when you, honestly, as a preacher, I read that story about Balaam, and I'm like, well, God did give him permission.

God did let him go. Maybe it's okay. Look, if you went at verse 14. Balak says, I'm going to convince you to go.

And so they come back to Balak and said, Balaam refuses to come. And in verse 15, Balak sends more princes with greater honor and more money. And he shows him the big mistake he's making.

Can I just say something to you? Whenever you're trying to find God's will, the devil's always playing a game with you. This house is exactly what you need. This car is exactly what you need.

[ 20 : 43 ] This new job is exactly what you need. The answer to your problems. Don't seek God. Don't even worry about that. Every good gift comes from God. So it must be a good gift. And so he says to him in verse 16, don't let anything hinder you.

Come on down here. You'll make a big mistake if you don't come. Balak's going to make a big man out of Balaam. You know, that's been the devil's game all along, isn't it?

The devil's like, I can make a big man out of you. I can do big stuff with you. I can honor you. I can promote you. Balaam basically lets him know that he's interested, but he has to get God in on it.

Is that how we work? Is it how we work in verse 18 and down verse 19? Is that how you and I work? Is it like we know what God thinks, but we say the right thing so it sounds real good, but we know we don't want to do what God wants because what God wants to do what we want.

We'd like to do this. You ever play those games? That's where old Balaam is. Satan, sin, and self want to convince you to do what you know doesn't please God. Everything in me wants that.

[ 21 : 50 ] Can I tell you, man, I have, I got lust problems. I want stuff. Do you? No, I know you don't. I want stuff. I want popularity.

I'd like to have more money. Most of us deal with that, the honest ones of us. The rest of us ain't too honest. We deal with that junk. And Satan's playing that game with him.

You actually want to be convinced. It makes it easier to feel okay about doing what God's will isn't if you can kind of think it is. That's why God's will is so often used to excuse whatever we do.

In all my years in the ministry, divorces have been God's will. People have murdered for God's will. People have left church, quit on God, don't serve God.

And when they do, it's almost always the same thing. We just feel like God's moving us. Really. God moved you out of church. Just trying to find out.

[ 22 : 48 ] You're saying God doesn't like you going to church anymore. Okay. Don't sound like what he wrote in the Bible. In Hebrews. But anyway, that's what they say. So God finally gives him permission to go.

But he has to obey in verse 20. He has to obey. I want you to know that God will allow you to do what he doesn't want you to do. I want you to take that home tonight.

Look if you would in Psalm 106.15. Write it in the margin of your Bible. Psalm 106.15. The Bible says, And he gave them their request, but he sent leanness unto their soul.

The nation of Israel was eating manna. But they got tired of manna. They've been eating manna for years. Every morning and every night. I'm sure they whipped up every way to fix that manna you can imagine.

They slopped it with butter. They dipped it in milk. They made buttermilk and had buttermilk and manna. They did everything they could. And finally one day they're like, We're tired of manna. We want some meat.

[ 23 : 46 ] God said, Okay. You keep pushing me. I'll let you have the meat. But if you remember the story, he made it really deep, really stinky, coming out their nose before it was over. And some of them died.

And he sent leanness to their soul. When I get what I want, sometimes, that job, that promotion, that place, I really lose my walk with the Lord if I'm not careful.

I've got to make sure God wants that. It's not just what I want. How many times does everything offer you everything, but you've got to kind of put God on hold?

You can't do ministry because all this stuff is so important. I'm not talking about missing a church every now and then. This is not one of those messages. But I've watched people walk away from money. That's what's going on here. I've watched people walk away from God.

He gave them what they wanted, but it came with consequences. Psalm 78, 29. Look at your Bible. So they did eat and were filled. He gave them their own desire. See, God will give you what you want.

[ 24 : 49 ] You've got to be careful. God will give you what He wants. It came with consequences. You remember the consequences. He sent leanness to their soul. He piled the meat up all around them.

It came out their noses. Praying for God not to give you something is a foolish way to pray. God, I'm going to jump off this building and if you don't want me to die, you make sure I don't. That'd be stupid.

You know that. But we play those other games all the time. Some young guy's going to marry a girl who's not saved and he's going to marry her because he thinks she's pretty and he thinks she's the girl and he says, it must be God's will he let me do it.

No, God's will was written in the book. You could find God's will. It was a very obvious one. You could have found God's will. When you know it's something you can have, then ask. But always know the Bible says it.

1 John 5, 14. This is the confidence that we have in Him that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions we desired of Him.

[ 25 : 49 ] I can ask God if I know it's His will. I need to know it's God's will. How do you know it's God's will? You don't pray about it. You search about it.

You get this book and you say, what's the book say about it? What's God say about it? Because I can convince my heart of anything. On Balaam's side, you know, Balaam, I'm sure that by the end of chapter 22, if we talked to old Balaam, he'd say, wait a minute, wait a minute, he told me to come.

He told me to come. But Balaam, he told you, he asked you, who are these guys? He told you not to come. He told you not to curse. He's told you that over and over. He's even sent his angel.

And he said, well, I did tell him if he didn't really want me to do it, he needed to say something. That's in the story, isn't it? It's a foolish thing to say. In James 4, 2, you lust and have not.

You kill and desire to have and you cannot have. You cannot obtain. You fight and war. You have not because you ask not. But, verse 3 is just as strong as verse 2. A charismatic church might tell you, verse 2, you can have anything you want, just ask what verse 3 says, but you ask and receive not because you ask to consume it.

[ 27 : 01 ] You ask a miss. That you may consume it upon your desires. God didn't want him to go. That was clear all through the story. We're going to be with old Balaam for the next couple of service, but it's clear he's not supposed to go.

How much of this, how much does this make you think of you really trying to find God's will and not imposing your own? You may talk God into it, but in the end, you'll be sorry.

God was angry. God sent his angel to stand in the way. And Balaam is blinded and he can't see the angel of the Lord and he can't see it. The sword's sticking out. He's messed up.

The donkey tries to get off the path. You heard the whole story. The animal speaks to him. The animal speaks to him. He's hit the animal three times and the animal finally speaks to him. Don't forget, the animal can see what Balaam can't see.

The animal's smarter than Balaam right now. The animal wants to know why he's being punished. He reminds him he's been a good animal. He hasn't done anything wrong. And God tells him, that animal saved your life, buddy.

[ 28 : 01 ] I'd have killed you if that animal hadn't saved your life. Balaam finally recognizes his sin, but he persists. I still want to go with Balak.

Even after the angel stood in his way, verse 34, he still wants to go with Balak. Well, God, if you don't really like it, I won't go. Let's think about that.



If you don't really like it, I told you who are these people. I said I don't want you to go and curse them. And you're still going? Yeah, I'm going to go. If you were really upset about it, I guess you'd tell me.

He wants to go because he's going to get honor and he's going to get money and he's going to do good in his life. Go with me. Let me just kind of sum up some things I think might help us.

Here's some great lessons about this from here. We are constantly in a state of war with sin and Satan. And the problem with being a good Christian is, you know, there's these crisis moments when we first get saved.

[ 28 : 57 ] And we kind of get some things figured out, but then time goes on and lots of time goes on. And I'm way back here and I'm a long ways from all these decisions here of getting right with God and I forget I'm in a battle and I forget what my past was and I forget where God's brought me from.

And the devil's working in my head. He's working in my mind. He's playing with my mind. He's telling me stuff that's not true. I need to recognize when Satan tries to bring wrong feelings and thoughts.

I need to learn to control my thoughts. Philippians chapter 4 verse 8. Think on these things. Control your thoughts. Read and memorize the Word of God. Don't miss church where you can learn more about God's Word.

Know that Satan offers honor and money over God and spiritual things. Be aware of his devices. Satan always is going to offer all the good things, all the beautiful things.

Satan's going to say, here's the great thing. And there's nothing wrong with us having some good stuff as long as we get it when God gives it to us. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and He'll add all that stuff to you. Don't seek that stuff.

[ 30 : 01 ] We would never do it wrongly. None of us in this room would say, I'm looking for bad stuff. I just want to get rich. I don't care about God. You'd never say that. You'd play Balaam's game.

You'd play Balaam's game. It'd be like, I just want to do what God wants me to do. I'm only going to say what God wants me to say. I'm only going to do what God says to you. But I sure need that money. I sure need that prestige.

I sure need that honor. That's what's going on. We've got to be careful to realize Satan's at work. Don't play spiritual games. Don't play spiritual games.

We talk spiritual, but we don't live spiritual. We act like we love God. You ever notice how spiritual Facebook is?

I mean, the crowd I run with on Facebook, they're all real spiritual. They might not go to church, but they're spiritual. They might not give anything to the work of God. They might serve God at all, but they're all real spiritual.

[ 31 : 02 ] Let's be careful we don't play that game. That's Balaam's game. Balaam's game is, God ain't going to do what you owe me to, but hey, I'm going to do whatever God wants me to do. God, I mean, you're going to have to kick me. You're going to have to put a donkey talking to me before this game's over because I'm going to do what I want to do.

You understand, God? No, none of that happens. Even in his heart's been blinded. He doesn't realize it. Don't talk like you're seeking God's will if you're not seeking it.

Don't talk like you're seeking God's will. Balaam's whole story is, man, I really want to do what God wants me to do. But it was clear from the very beginning, like verse 9, don't, don't, don't. And Balaam says, I just want God's will here.

I just want God's will. The whole story is, I just want God's will. But he never wanted God's will. Have you ever fallen into that trap? I have. Don't draw close to God with your mouth while your heart is far away.

Don't draw close to God with your mouth, with your lips, while your heart is far away. Once you know what God wants from his word, just obey. Now here's a couple of Bible truths that we all know, and it fits the story.

[ 32 : 08 ] Obedience is better than sacrifice. And we can sing the best worship songs, we can sing special music, we can give big offerings, we can do anything we want to do, but God prefers obedience.

And here's a simple fact. The simple fact is, we know what's right because he wrote it in his book. It's not a feeling I get. I'm just going to pray until God kind of tells me.

God ain't telling you that way. God tells you through his Bible. If you understand that, say amen. Okay, I think I'll date a lost woman. I think it's okay. God told me it's okay. No, it's not.

He said it wasn't okay. Say amen. So I don't need to pray about it. I'm not sure I should get baptized. Let me pray about that. Really? He said get baptized.

You got to pray about it? Well, I'm not sure I ought to give. Let me pray about it. He said give. You know what? I'm not sure I ought to go to church or not, but he said don't, not, not, not forsaking the assembly.

[ 33 : 08 ] He said don't forsake the assembly. Oh, but I think I will. Be careful. Obedience is better than sacrifice. There's no need to pray when the scriptures tell you clearly what to do.

No need to pray when the Bible tells you clearly what to do. Don't go back and keep insisting to get what you want once God has spoken. God gave us manna because he wanted us to have manna.

He could give us meat, but he don't want to give us meat. If he gives us meat, we're going to get hurt. He don't want you to go for Balak. If you go for Balak, you're going to get hurt. Your donkey's going to talk to you and there are people going to be making fun of you forever.

The guy that had a conversation with a donkey in the Bible. So they're going to be meeting on December the 14th, 2014 and envisioned and talking about how stupid you were.

Don't do it. Don't do it. Don't keep going back and insisting to get what God has spoken about. Know that Satan knows how to make everything look spiritual and appealing.

[ 34 : 07 ] I think that's probably one of the biggest things that go on. You know, my bad attitude, my bitterness, my anger, my frustration, my desire to die, kill myself.

The devil can help make all that look good, can't he? My divorce, my disobedience, whatever it is. But that's usually appealing to your ego, your pride, and your comfort.

Blunt truth. Satan doesn't talk to us about dying to self or bearing a cross or sacrifice. So most of the time, the devil's saying, I got a lot of comfort for you.

And Jesus is saying, well, I got a cross. The devil's saying, find your life. And Jesus is saying, lose your life. The devil's saying, I can give you great life.

And Jesus is saying, take up your cross and follow me. It's a different way of thinking. I got to be careful. There's characteristics about how the two of them talk.

[ 35 : 14 ] Don't make God and His will an excuse for what you're doing. Don't make God and His will for an excuse. Here you are gossiping because God wants you to.

Here you are bitter and hating because God wants you to. Not true. Not true. Remember that you can get God to allow you to do things that He knows will hurt you. That's a major truth.

You can talk God into allowing you to do things that He knows will hurt you. Balaam does that. Balaam does that. The nation of Israel does that.

You can talk God into it. God will not force you to obey. God won't force you to obey. You know, I know this isn't a popular message, but I'm just going to say it anyway.

This thing where you pray, God don't let me do things unless it's your will, there's no Bible basis for that at all. I know what you hear, well, God will close the door.

[ 36 : 13 ] No, He won't. He may close it by saying what He thinks, but He'll let you go through it. Be careful with that theology. Balaam would have said to you, God didn't close the door.

Remember the story? Who are those guys you got there, Balaam? Oh, Father, you don't understand. They've come down, they want me to go over and curse Jews, that's what they want. I don't want you to. Okay, well, you really don't want me to.

You sure? Okay, you sure? Okay, I can't go. I'll give you more money. Excuse me. They're going to give me more money. And they're going to give me honor. I'm going to get to wear this necklace.

It's got a big old medallion on it. Everybody's going to bow down when I'm around. How about it? Can I go? I don't want you to go. What are we going to do, God?

I mean, they want me to go. It looks good to me. Finally, the Lord says, they're my people. You don't curse them. Okay, I won't do anything you don't want me to do.

[ 37 : 11 ] No, you won't, Lord. Then the donkey, three times, and then the Lord says, your way's perverse to me. And he said, well, Lord, if you don't want me to go, just say so.

Can't you see how foolish that is? I mean, Lord, I mean, I know you've been saying, no, no, no, no, but if you really don't want me to go, close the door. Do you not see how we make a big mistake with that?

If God wants me, if God doesn't want me to do it, he'll close the door. Don't use that, please. Learn to wait on God. Don't move until you're supposed to move. Don't get in the trap of saying that God won't let me.

Don't persist when you know what God wants. You're only hurting yourself. And your loved ones. I don't know if you have any idea of what it's like to think about.

We've been in the book of numbers. They get to the promised land and they say, we're not going in. And God says, my plan is for you to go in. And they say, we're not going in. They get mad at Moses.

[ 38 : 10 ] They get mad at Aaron. They get mad at Miriam. And they won't go in. And then when God gets really angry, they say, okay, we'll go. But he said too late now, but their kids will suffer for 40 years because of their stupidity.

Please be careful. Trust God to provide for you what you have need of and what he wants you to have. Get into the Bible. So, you know, God's will and don't trust your emotions, your desires, your friends, your logic.

Trust the word of God. Last thing to sum it up. And you might write Matthew 6, 33 in there. In Matthew 6, starting in about verse 24, God says, there's only, you can only have one of two masters, God or money.

God or things. God or mammon. What's your Bible says? But that's money or material things. You only have one of those as your master. You'll have to hate one and love the other. You'll have to despise one or despise the other.

You can't have them both. You've got to choose one. I want you to choose me. And I don't want you worrying about what food you're going to eat. And I don't want you worrying about what clothes you're going to wear. And I don't want you worrying about your future.

[ 39 : 17 ] I don't want you worrying about any of that. I know what you have need of. Look for me. Search me. Seek me out. Make me number one. I ought to be the first thing on your mind in the morning.

I ought to be the last thing on your mind all day long. Every decision ought to be what God wants. And he said, I know what you need. Gentiles need it. Lost people need it. Pagans need it. You need it. I know you need it.

But seek me first. And I'll take care of all those things you need. But here's what God was saying. Don't seek the toys. Seek me. Don't seek the stuff.

Seek me. Nothing wrong with us having stuff. Some of you are thinking, Boy, he's against us having stuff. Not at all. If God gives it to you, I think that's wonderful. He gives it richly to enjoy. You heard that in the offering devotional this morning.

He gives it richly to enjoy. But it ought to be God who gave it to you. Not you that sought it out. Seek him first. What's Balaam's problem? Balak says, I can honor you and I can promote you and I can make somebody big out of you.

[ 40 : 15 ] And Balaam believes that. Balaam believes that when the God of heaven could have promoted him. So from now on, from this chapter forward, Balaam's name will be a bad name.

A bad reputation. A messed up life. Because he tried to play spiritual games without really loving God and doing what God wanted him to. So how do I know God's will for my life?

Seek him first. Obey. Don't sacrifice. Seek him first. Obey. Don't sacrifice. Don't. What I mean by that. I mean, church games don't work.

Playing church games doesn't work. Seek God. Honor God. Do what God wants you to do. That's the Bible teaching. That's the Bible lesson. Honor the Lord.

Seek him. Don't seek the stuff. Seek him. Don't play spiritual games. Don't try to blame everything on God. How many times have we blamed everything on God? In fact, it's when we're in a big pickle and our whole life's a mess.

[ 41 : 18 ] Well, it's God that brought me here. And God would say to us, no, no, no, no, no. If you'd have just obeyed me, you wouldn't be in any of this place. So right now, go back to him. And say, God, I haven't been seeking you.

I've been seeking my own will and my own things. I've been following worldly wisdom. And what men want me to do. And not what you want me to do. But tonight, I seek God. Tonight, I seek God.

And I put him first. That's the big lesson. Seek ye first the kingdom of God. And all these things will be added to you. Father in heaven, I love you. And I pray that you'd bless tonight.

I pray your name would be honored and glorified. I pray, God, that our people would learn to be careful about playing with your will and playing with your word. And taking flippantly and lightly what you're doing.

And I'll give you praise and honor for all you do. I love you. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com), where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.