

20250202_IWillNotLeaveThee

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Preacher: Roger Phipps

[0 : 00] Let's remind ourselves of where we've been, and are there any special requests?

Have you heard anything new about Brock? Brock is home and doing better, we're thankful for that. And there's Tanya, so he must be doing much better.

That's okay, I just want to announce who's coming in late. I wasn't late, I was helping the show.

Okay, so we're thankful for that.

Let's look to the Lord for his blessing on our time today. Roger, could you ask God's blessing on our day?

Father, we call again and do you thank the Lord for his hand? We have all the time to do. We have a special help in our home. Sometimes I try to imagine that it's going to be no good.

[1 : 01] I just say, thank you for the Lord. I'm going to encourage you to do this in the desert. That's the truth. We're going to make it. We're going to make it.

Amen. Okay, we're in Genesis.

We've, of course, we've come a long way through Genesis. What's the primary reason we study Old Testament? I mean, Jesus has not yet come, right?

As far as historically. We're way before the cross. Why do we study? For understanding of what? Understanding of God and his plan. In Romans chapter 1, Paul approaches.

[2 : 08] Why is man judged? Primarily because he refused to acknowledge God as God. And then he said, because something about God's eternity and his holiness, that is his utter separateness from creation, can be seen by what we see around us.

And so, because man, well, I don't want to get too far afield here, and I'm already gone.

I'm already gone. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. But mankind has a propensity, do we not? Always them, not me.

A propensity to refuse to acknowledge God. The old man is at war with God. We are reconciled to God through whom?

Through Jesus Christ. And then we are told, look, you study the scriptures for a few reasons. One, to learn about the nature and character of God.

[3 : 22] The whole Bible is God's book. It's God's word. I'm not the primary character.

I am not the protagonist in the scripture. God is, and the Lord Jesus Christ has God.

So, it's God's story. So, primarily, to honor God. Number two, and ancillary to that is the creator, the eternal, holy creator and sustainer of the universe is talking to me.

Maybe I ought to listen. That's pretty awesome. I cannot even, I can't get my small mind around the concept.

It's, hence David's comment. What is man that you or thou art mindful of him. I mean, what am I?

[4 : 33] And the creator of the universe talks to us. And in prayer, we can talk to him.

A conversation with the creator? That might impress me. So, man, though, tends to think it's all about me.

So, I need to study the scripture to remind myself, number one, that there is a God and it's not me. Then, Roger mentioned in prayer, our eternal salvation.

And Paul uses the scripture, the Old Testament scriptures, to say, these things are written so that you might have, well, yeah.

But these are written so that you can have hope. Right? I can have hope. So, I remind myself, by the way, I remind myself, by the way, that if I'm reading scripture and I'm getting nervous, I'm reading it wrong.

[5 : 57] That is, if I'm a Christian. If I'm not a Christian and I'm reading scripture and I'm not getting nervous, I'm reading it wrong. But the Christian, if I'm studying God's word and I'm not seeing hope,

I'm missing something.

And so, we can get, and I think of some folks, you don't know them, but I've met a couple who are all up about what's going on in the world.

And if I look at it from my perspective, my human perspective, I'm all up about it too. But, who's in control?

Who's in control ultimately? God. God. So, if it were, and I know it's not possible because he says it's not going to happen, but if it were possible that every human being turned against God, is God going to be unseated?

No. No. No. No. So, when I'm tempted to think, well, I don't believe that, what I'm really tempted to say is, I get to determine what God gets to say.

[7 : 29] Well, that's not true. No. No scripture is of any private interpretation, but holy men of God, rid as they were moved, right?

By the, by whom? The Holy Spirit, God. So, the scripture, okay, I'm getting way too far off.

Get back to Genesis. Sherry says, get back to Genesis. Okay, Genesis chapter 24. Now, we've just come through. Where are we?

We're at Sumer now. We're up in Mesopotamia, and I'm sitting with whom? See, we forgot already. Well, Abraham's in Canaan. How far back are we going here? Verse 15? Well, in chapter 24, we are with Abraham's steward.

[8 : 33] Okay? And we are up in Haran, and what are we doing there? Yeah, we're getting, we know, I really want to comment, but I'm going to.

I think my reaction's enough. Okay, no, good idea. But, now, a couple of, a couple of you, or at least one of you discussed this.

Imagine this now. You're the woman. You're, what's her name? Rebecca. Rebecca. Okay?

Now, what's the steward going to ask? Well, he's going to ask for water for himself and the camels, and what's she going to do?

You must be kidding. No, she's going to say yes, and then he's going to say, you're the woman. You're the woman not for me.

[9 : 47] You're the woman for some guy hundreds of miles away from here that you've never seen. Now, I know there are cultural differences, but just, that's something, isn't it?

Yeah, I can't imagine, can't, not me. Okay, and I'm not recommending that in this kind of a culture either. Either, but, what I'm saying is, that's our setting.

That's our setting. So, back to the real point here. What does, what does the steward do? He sits down and he prays.

What's he pray? You don't have to quote it right now. Okay, he prays for a, he prays for a sign.

See, he's not just looking for a type of woman. He doesn't want her to be, he's not asking, send me the prettiest girl in Mesopotamia.

[10 : 57] He's not saying, send me, send me the strongest woman because she needs to fetch a lot of water.

No, he's saying, he's praying for a sign. So, when the women come to draw water, he prays, let this be the woman that you have chosen for whom?

For Isaac. We're, we're in the early, the first 14 verses right now of chapter 10.

That's where our answers should be coming from. 20, or 24, yeah. First 14 verses of 24, I'm sorry.

So, he prays for a sign. Now, now comes to me. Should the Christian be asking for signs?

[12 : 03] That was my question that we left with, remember? Well, most of you weren't, only a few of you were here. Okay, so now I'm asking for an answer.

Should the Christian ask for a sign? Why do you say that? You knew I was going to ask, didn't you? Okay, walk by faith, not by sight. What does that mean? Study the Bible. So, I asked this question, and Nathan was open about it.

I said, don't respond, but he responded anyway. Has anyone ever, finish the word, put out a, see, we knew it, didn't we?

Has anyone ever put out a fleece? I'm not asking for a response. I don't need to know this answer. But you know someone who does talk that way.

[13 : 14] I put out a fleece. Or you might have heard somebody say, I have a piece about this.

I talked to you after. My friend in college in 1971, he told me this. Roger, God has told me that Carolyn's supposed to marry me.

You see, the problem was, Dave, God didn't tell Carolyn that. So, and that's an oversimplification. But what he was saying was, because I emotionally feel this way, it must be the will of the Lord, because it sure seems right to me. You've heard this somewhere in some fashion.

Now, let's take it a step further, because I have encountered this by professing Christians.

[14:25] He said, after an affair with his secretary, I married the wrong woman.

I didn't marry within God's will. I married the wrong woman. I'm going to correct that. Now, you've heard that too, or something very, very close to that.

So, what we know for certain, as we read God's word, is that is a lie. That is not true.

The apostle Paul told the Corinthians what? If you are married, number one, when you get married, he gives some instruction about that.

But, if you are married, if a woman is married to an unbelieving husband, is she to leave her husband? No.

[15:31] Now, is there any nuance in that, that I need to figure out? Is that metaphorical? No, it's fairly plain, isn't it?

If he's willing to live with you, what? Yeah, I do want to respond. If he's willing to live with you, what? Stay.

Stay. And that's for those who are married, and then she becomes a Christian. Same thing goes for the husband, right? Now, does that say, well, let me back up, because I'm going too much.

Let me ask you this. Where does the thinking come from where I can make an excuse like, I did something wrong. I'm out of God's will. There's one.

See, I equate my happiness with God's will. Are they equivalent? Now, God does not tell us to be unhappy.

[16:45] He just says, Roger, your happiness is not the ultimate goal. What he tells me is, Roger, no matter whatever comes into your life, know this, that I will work all things, Romans 8, what?

To the good. Now, Isabella never thought this.

But when Isabella was a toddler, she may not have thought that what Jamie fed her made her happy.

Now, I know she wouldn't think that. No. What would make them happy? Well, candy and cookies. What makes me happy? Candy and cookies. Is it good for me? And ice cream. Is it good for me?

Well, it's not harmful in moderation.

[18:02] But, you know, the metaphor breaks down. I get it. But, the point of it is, that's a constant diet of that isn't good for me.

Now, you have either mentored someone or pastored someone in some fashion who has said something along the line or thinks something along the line of, well, I'm not really getting what I, what really helps me in church.

You know, I'm not really, I'm not really getting what I, what I, and I usually phrase it like what I need. Now, does God tell me that I know what I need?

Well, if I listen to him, he does. But, what he says, Roger, is your old nature, the spirit, what?

Your spirit, the flesh, lusteth against God's spirit, right? And the spirit against the? He says, you have a fight going on.

[19:31] And if you're listening to your flesh, Roger, you really don't know what's good for you. He says, I've given you my word.

This is what you need. Now, but I say, along with Bertrand Russell, you didn't give me enough information. I know I paraphrased that.

Bertrand Russell said, you didn't give me enough evidence. He knows now, doesn't he? See, I was thinking about this in talking last week to some folks.

I did not get into the argument. I withheld. But the idea was, well, who interprets and, you know, who's to say which is the literal, literalist, blah, blah, blah.

You've heard variations of it. And I got, and I was pondering this this weekend. You know, all roads do actually lead to God.

[20:48] But only one leads to eternity in glory with God. All the others lead to God's judgment. So, you can believe what you wish to believe.

I can go according to the flesh and believe that my happiness is what's all important. But that's going to be the wrong road.

And for the Christian, even when I start to stray over into that path, the path's going to be rocky.

Now, I did not, that's what, I apologize for the long rambling.

I was, I will give you a hint for what I hope to accomplish or present. I don't have enough time to present it today.

Who here, this is an aside, this is a great parenthesis. Who here has heard about radio Bible class? Okay.

[21 : 54] They call themselves now RBC Ministries. Or, there's a pamphlet out here, The Daily Bread. The Daily Bread, it was originally started in earlier days of radio by a man named M.R. Dahan.

M.R., not only did he do the radio Bible class, of course he was a pastor, but he also did many Bible conferences.

Back when Bible conferences were actually attended. You know, when people would have long conferences and big. But, anyway, back to the point.

Mark Dahan was his, is his grandson. Is still alive and running, I think it's Our Daily Bread Ministries. Or, oh, it's something else.

It's the radio broadcast. End of it. Anyway, 15, 20 years ago, they had a roundtable discussion called, and I didn't write it down.

[23 : 13] I forgot what they called it. Well, drive time was a part of it. But, they held a roundtable discussion. It was Mark Dahan, Alice Matthews, and Haddon Robinson.

Haddon Robinson was a Bible teacher. And, they would address subjects that were of interest to Christians.

And, they'd address them very, very openly and plainly. And, in kind of a relaxed atmosphere. As though you were around a table. So, that you got in on their discussion. They had a discussion. This is in the days of cassette tapes.

They had that kind of tape. Yeah, what's that? What's a cassette tape? So, ask the guy that remembers reel to reel.

[24 : 16] Well, Ron may remember wires. But, anyway, they had a discussion about, God helped me make good decisions.

And, it had to do with that. And, that's why I edited it. And, drew some out. So, God willing, next week, I'm going to play that for you.

But, we're going to attend it. So, back to my question. I don't know that it's Eleazar. So, if I say it's Eleazar, bear with me.

Abraham Stewart. Abraham Stewart prays for a sign. Does God give him that sign? Yes. So, what happens?

Let's go ahead and look at it. What happens? What happens? Rebecca comes to the well. Okay.

[25 : 25] Rebecca comes to the well. She draws her water. And, the steward asks her a question. What's the question?

Would you give me a drink, please? And, what's her response? Yes. And, your camels. Now, how many camels remember he has?

He has ten camels. I would have said no. No. No to the camel.

You can have the drink. The camels, you're on your own there, bud. Now. So, she draws for the camels.

God honored that. Let's go back to the putting out of a fleece. Give me the scenario.

[26 : 27] Quickly. For Gideon. Okay. God has come to Gideon. What's Gideon doing when God comes to him? He's threshing wheat.

Where? In a wine press, for crying out loud. Why? He's hiding it from the Midianites.

Because, the Midianites were raiders. This is a raiding culture of the Midianites. They're raiders. And, they come through. And, they just grab everything they can grab. So, in order to protect it, he's threshing.

There. Okay. Now. When God talks to him, God. Anybody remember how God hails him? Yeah. I'm hiding in a wine press, God. Incidentally. Have I ever read anything in scripture?

[27 : 30] I know I'm supposed to do it. And, I say, God, you must have made a mistake. That can't be for me. My situation's unique.

Anyway. God addresses him. Mighty man of valor. You're going to deliver Israel from the Midianites. Okay. So, Gideon. Says what?

Hey, Lord. I heard you, but I'm not sure I heard you. I'm not sure I heard you right. So, if this is really you telling me to do this, what?

Show me a sign. What's the sign? And, I don't care what order. I didn't look them up. I don't remember the order, actually. But, what's the sign?

We know the signs. Get the fleece out. Get the fleece out. That's where we get the term. There are people that don't know much about the scripture, and they know scriptural phrasings.

[28 : 42] And, you'll hear non-Christians who've never been exposed to the word of God say something about putting out a fleece. They don't know what they're saying, maybe. But, anyway. You pick out a fleece, and it's better. Make sure it's, you know, let the ground wet, but the fleece dry. Okay. And, so, what happens? The next morning, the ground's wet, and the fleece is dry. Okay. What is good enough for him? And, so, God says, do not test the Lord your God. Nope, that comes in the law. Well, actually, it comes after leaving Egypt. But, let's go back to that. God does it. So, what's different? I mean, he's the same yesterday, today, and forever. You've never heard that one. See, this is why it's important to rightly divide, isn't it?

[29 : 53] We better be careful. Because, if I pick and choose, then I start getting confused. Okay.

Okay. God, is God the same yesterday, today, and forever? Yes. And, that's why we read the scripture, because we know we're saved because of what he did with Abraham.

I know I'm going to belabor it, but I'm going to ask again. Back in chapter 15, when Abraham cut that covenant and laid it open, he was asking, Lord, how will I know?

Now, God has already told him the promise. I'm going to make of you a great nation, and by your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Okay. How will I know that this is going to happen? I don't have any children. Eleazar is my heir. And God says, cut a covenant.

[31 : 05] So, he lays those halves across. And Abraham and the Lord go through, right? No. Who goes through?

The Lord alone. Now, I read that as a Christian, and I look in Romans, and I come to chapter 4. And God says, through the apostle Paul, to the church, look what I did with Abraham. The promise is certain.

And Paul uses that to give us certainty in our salvation. He said, God said it. He will do it. We have a pretty good gospel song.

It comes from, I think it comes from Timothy, doesn't it? Where Paul says, I am persuaded that, I'm going to paraphrase it.

[32 : 21] I am persuaded that God, who promised, is going to fulfill. So, I can, he will keep that which I have committed unto him.

That is my soul, my spirit, my eternal destiny. He will keep what I've committed to him against that day. That's a wonderful promise.

And that stems from what we're reading in Genesis, where God says, I'm going to do this. And we read the history of Israel, how God brought it about.

And then the apostle Paul is going to come back, and he's going to say, you can rest assured, because look what he's done. This is positive.

I find great comfort in that. Because there are going to be days, not for me, but for you. There are going to be days you get up, and you look in the mirror, and you say, I don't feel so Christian-like today.

[33 : 34] There are going to be days even when, now, is the Holy Spirit going to say, are you sure you're a Christian? Or is that Satan saying, are you sure you're a Christian?

And even John, in John 1, says, even if my heart condemns me, there is one who is greater than my heart.

Even if my conscience ridicules me. Now, I am not. Now, let me ask you this.

Does that mean, Roger, go out and be frivolous? Go live a dissipated life.

Is that what that means? But I'm secure. What that means is, look, you're secure.

[34 : 42] You can have hope. You can put it in the bank. Now, hope is firm confidence. It's not, oftentimes when I say hope, like today, well, I hope it doesn't rain this afternoon.

What I'm saying is, I wish it won't. Right? I wish it doesn't rain this afternoon. But when the Word of God says, you have hope, he's saying, you have a firm confidence.

It's anchored. And who's it anchored in? Christ and his work. That's why the whole scripture is all about God.

Salvation is all about God. And it's for his glory. I can't get around what I read there to the churches when Paul says, the church, as it were, is going to be led as though it's a procession of glory for God.

And we're going to be displayed before angels and powers. Because of what Christ did.

[35 : 55] What an amazing gift. What an amazing gift. Anyway, back, sorry for the digression, but it, that is why I read it, isn't it?

So, why should the, why should the Christian then not expect God to give him signs? Okay, let me back up.

For what do I usually ask for signs? I want to know God's will. Is it wrong for me to want to know God's will? No.

In fact, I'm told to know God's will. You will, your mind is churning for a verse and you're going to come up with Romans chapter 12.

But, I jump ahead. I didn't mean to get that, I shouldn't have given that away. But, it's right to know God's will.

[37 : 04] For what do I want to know God's will? Well, let me give you an example. Our car, our aging car, got to be to a point where we were kicking around.

Is it worth putting a lot more money into it to keep it going? Now, God says, make all your requests be made known unto him and he'll give you an answer.

Now, we made the requests be made known unto God. God, give us wisdom on this. Help us to know what to do. Now, what I really, well, what Sherry really wanted wasn't wisdom.

She wanted a sign. Sorry, dear. No. No. You know, my tendency, isn't it?

My tendency, I want to know God's will, but I want a sign. Now, all these things you're going to roll around in your minds because we're going to run out of time and we're not going to get to all the answers.

[38 : 30] In fact, we won't get to very many of them, probably. But, so it's not wrong to know God's will or wish to know God's will. What kinds of questions do I usually want to know God's will on?

Who do I marry? Where do I go to school?

Should I go to school? You know, back to do I know what's good for me? You know, when I was seven years old, I didn't need school.

And when I was 15, I knew that I knew more than anybody else. When I was 30, I realized I was really stupid. No, I, but, okay, marriage.

Careers. Careers. And we want to be in God's will, don't we? So, think about God's will.

[39 : 42] And think about searching for God's will. And think about, okay, the desire for a sign is a good desire.

Careers. In that it stems from a good reason. I don't want to be out of God's will. But I need to be careful with it.

Because. Two minutes. Why do I need to be careful with it? I already gave you one example.

Maybe two. What about that man that said. That's God's will. But I missed it the first time.

So, I'm going to. Correct it. And so, he lies. To himself. To his wife.

[40 : 45] And before God. Because he made vows. He said, before God and these witnesses. You're the only one until I die.

But as soon as his emotions and his hormones got the better of him. What? That went out the window. Now. Now.

And boy, I wanted to finish on a positive note. That was wrong. So, we're going to take just a couple more minutes to correct my. So.

I need to be careful with what I can. What I know about God's will. Where am I going to find out about God's will? By his word. And I'm going to leave you with this.

Romans chapter 12. Specifically verse 2. Go 1 and 2. Someone. Someone.

[41 : 53] Read that out to us. Some of you have it memorized. And if you do, go ahead and quote it.

We'll start. Be not conformed to this world. But be ye transformed.

Don't be conformed. Be transformed. To what? To the pattern of this world.
Now. Does that mean to the cosmos or to the age? The present evil age. So. Don't think like the multitude of the world thinks.
But. But instead. Be transformed. How? By the. By the renewing of your mind. Keep going.
[43 : 02] So. What will prove out. By God's word. The good. And acceptable. And perfect. Will.
Of God. Where do I find out God's will? In his word. Now. Next week. God willing. We'll. We'll talk about. You may know somebody like this.
Man. I need an answer to this. This. Have a wonderful day.
God bless you all. Have a great day. God bless you all.