

God's Will for us

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The Scriptures

While it may seem obvious, if we want to know God's will for our lives, we should start with reading the Scriptures to see what He has clearly communicated to us about His will for our lives. While Jesus summed up the Old Testament with: *"YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' This is the great and foremost commandment. And the second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'" (Matt. 22:37-39 LSB), the Scriptures flesh this out a lot more with specific examples and directions. When Jesus started His ministry, His message was "repent". Repenting means acknowledging the wrong direction you are going and turning from those evil ways. In Ephesians, Paul says: *"For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him."* (Eph. 1:4 CSB17) *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."* (Eph. 2:10 LSB) Jesus said: *"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."* (Matt. 5:48 LSB) This can surely be called the "Will of God". "*

Original purpose

- *"Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness, so that they will have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, *"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that creeps on the earth."* Then God said, *"Behold, I have given to you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has the fruit of the tree yielding seed; it shall be food for you;"* (Gen. 1:26-29 LSB)
- The first thing that we see is that mankind is to have dominion (rule over) over the all the creatures and the earth itself.
- Implications from this is that we need to evaluate situations and make decisions. God is not going to micro-manage us, though He does direct our paths.
- Second, work is involved in this process, both in the ruling and the gathering of the food. *"Then Yahweh God took the man and set him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it."* (Gen. 2:15 LSB)
- After the fall, this work would become more difficult and laborious. *"Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In pain you will eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face*

You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.”” (Gen. 3:17-19 LSB)

So, to summarize, the original purpose of mankind in Scripture was to subdue and rule the earth and the animals. This involved observation, critical and analytical thinking and work.

Other passages related to working

- *“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work,” (Ex. 20:8-9 LSB)*
- *“For we hear that some among you are walking in an unruly manner, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that working with quietness, they eat their own bread.” (2 Th. 3:11-12 LSB)*
- *“and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will walk properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.” (1 Th. 4:11-12 LSB)*
- *“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Tim. 5:8 LSB)*
- *“He who steals must steal no longer, but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.” (Eph. 4:28 LSB)*
- *“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. Serve the Lord Christ.” (Col. 3:23-24 LSB)*
- *“Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the integrity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, serving with good will as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.” (Eph. 6:5-8 LSB)*

To summarize this section; one large part of the will of God for us is to work and do it as though we are working for God and to help others.

Special Calls or Directions.

There are times when God specifically calls someone for a task, ministry or purpose. These tend to be the exception rather than the rule in Scripture. Some examples:

- Genesis 6 – 9 provides the account of Noah and his call to build the ark to save himself and his family from the flood.
- Genesis 12 records the call of Abraham to into the land of Canaan.
- Exodus 3 records the call of Moses.

- Joshua 1 – the call of Joshua.
- Judges 6 – the call of Gideon
- 1 Samuel 3 ff Samuel was called
- 1 Samuel 16 records the call of David to be king.
- Elijah and Elisha were both given commands to do certain things.
- Jeremiah was set apart to be a prophet (Jer 1:4ff)
- Ezekiel was given specific things to do.
- Amos was called to prophesy. (Amos 7:15)
- Jonah was called to go to Nineveh.
- The Gospels record Jesus calling the disciples.
- In Acts 9, Jesus calls Paul (Saul) for the ministry to the Gentiles.
- In Acts 13, the Holy Spirit called for Paul and Barnabas to go on a mission trip.
- There are more examples, but this gives an idea that there are times where God has called individuals for certain tasks, but we do see that this is not the norm for most people. Certainly, there are individuals who are called to be pastors or missionaries – a good model for this may be the call of Barnabas and Paul to go on a missionary trip where others are involved in the call. This is not to rule out God calling an individual like he did with Noah, Abraham or Paul.

Dangers of only using “spiritual” direction.

While God has used direct revelation for calling people to a certain task or ministry, there are dangers involved by using this as the only way or even the primary way to discern what God’s will is for our lives. Paul tells us that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (2 Cor 11:12). Satan is the great deceiver, he deceived Eve, he deceives the whole world (Rev 12:9, 20:3-10); he lies; that is his nature (Jn 8:44). We need to realize that we can be deceived and sometimes quite easily. We tend to be too proud to admit this or accept that we have been deceived. Direct, special revelation for God’s will in our lives will not contradict Scripture. It will also generally not contradict what mature Christians think about the direction that someone should go. Scripture has many examples of false teachers and people who have been deceived and likely think they are on the right track.

Paul describes people falling away as they pay attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. (1 Tim 4:1) We know that it will not be an actual demon standing at the pulpit, but rather the person will have been deceived by the evil spirit and will teach the doctrines of the demon which are contrary to God. The first example of having been deceived is Eve, when she was tempted by Satan. John tells us to test the Spirits. (1 Jn 4:1) In this case it had to do with false prophets. When we think that we have heard something from God, we should check it against Scripture first and then also have other mature believers test it. Paul gives this principle in 1 Corinthians. *“And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.”* (1 Cor. 14:29 LSB). Peter says *“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will*

also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.” (2 Pet. 2:1 LSB).

Jeremiah says: *“For thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to your dreams which you dream.” (Jer. 29:8 LSB)*

Jesus says: *““Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.” (Matt. 7:15 LSB)*

God’s commands in Scripture as His Will for our lives.

Call to a specific ministry

In the Gospels, we have Jesus calling the 12 disciples and also the 72 and giving them specific instructions. We will acknowledge those, but pass over them for the purposes of this study other than to mention the command they were given at the end: *““Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to keep all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”” (Matt. 28:19-20 LSB).* Instead, we will focus on the scriptures that show how leaders were chosen and how people received specific, individual instructions.

- In Acts 6:1 ff, we have the “deacons” selected by the congregation based on certain criteria:
 - Good reputation
 - Full of the Spirit
 - Full of wisdom
- The leaders (in this case the apostles) installed them to the ministry
- In Acts 8:26 ff, Philip is called by the Lord to witness to a certain man from Ethiopia.
- Jesus appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus. Acts 9:1 ff. Ananias was called to talk to Paul and declare God’s purpose for his life.
- In Acts 10:1 ff, Cornelius, a Roman centurion, was directed by God to send for Peter. Peter was given a vision and told to go to Cornelius.
- In Acts 11:19 ff, Barnabas was sent to Antioch by the church in Jerusalem. He in turn searched for Paul and brought him to Antioch where they taught.
- In Acts 13:1 ff, the Holy Spirit told the leaders to set apart Paul and Barnabas for the mission God had for them. They in turn took Mark (John) to help them in this ministry.
- Paul chose Silas to accompany him on his second missionary journey. (Acts 15:40)
- At Lystra, Paul chose Timothy to accompany him. (Acts 16:1 ff)
- In Acts 16:6-7 we have a somewhat strange occurrence. The Holy Spirit did not allow them to go into Asia or Bithynia.

- Right after that, Paul received the “Macedonian” call in Acts 16:9-10. Here Paul was given a specific place to go to. So, it would appear that for the most part, Paul was deciding where he wanted to go, but in this case, God had a specific place He wanted him to go.
- New or immature believers should not be in leadership positions: *“and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation of the devil.”* (1 Tim. 3:6 LSB)

God’s will for those that do not have a specific call to ministry.

Let’s read Ephesians 5:1-20:

- *“Be imitators of God, therefore, as beloved children, and walk in love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant sacrificial offering to God. But among you, as is proper among the saints, there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk, or crude joking, which are out of character, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure, or greedy person (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. Test and prove what pleases the Lord. Have no fellowship with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that is illuminated becomes a light itself. So it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to reckless indiscretion. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”* (Eph. 5:1-21 BEREAN)

Now let’s read Romans 12:1-2

- *“Therefore I exhort you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice—living, holy, and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may approve what the will of God is, that which is good and pleasing and perfect.”* (Rom. 12:1-2 LSB)

Ephesians 2:8-10:

- *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.” (Eph. 2:8-10 LSB)*

Proverbs says:

- *“The heart of man plans his way, But Yahweh directs his steps.” (Prov. 16:9 LSB)*

Micah says”

- *“He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does Yahweh require of you But to do justice, to love lovingkindness, And to walk humbly with your God?” (Mic. 6:8 LSB)*

The writer to the Hebrews says:

- *“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern both good and evil.” (Heb. 5:12-14 LSB)*

Isaiah says:

- *“Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made.” (Is. 43:7 LSB)*

Paul says:

- *“Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.” (1 Cor. 10:31-11:1 LSB)*

I think we can see that God’s will for our lives includes studying His Word so that we know what He wants us to do. For the most part, we are not going to get some great spiritual message in the sky telling us what to do next.

Lists of Commandments

There is a list of 613 commands given in the Old Testament, some of which directly apply to Israel, while others are universal.

There is also a list of 1050 commands from Dake’s study notes.

The take away from this is that God has very specifically told us what His will is for us, we just need to read His Word and apply what He has told us to do, after all, the whole definition of “God’s Will” for us is to do what He wants us to do. So, we can break this down into categories.

These are some example categories. As we read the Scriptures, we should look for God's Will for our lives in the text itself. Here are some ways that we can categorize items in a list form.

- Things to abstain from:
- Things to be:
- Things to be not:
- Things to be aware of:
- Things to flee from:
- Things to do:
- Things not to do:
- Giving:
- Things to put away:
- Who, what to love or not love:
- Things to put on:
- Rejoice:

Psalms 119 is a good one to go through.

*"[ALEPH] How blessed are those whose way is blameless,
Who walk in the law of Yahweh.
How blessed are those who observe His testimonies,
They seek Him with all their heart.
They also do not work unrighteousness;
They walk in His ways." (Psa. 119:1-3 LSB)*

"But become doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves." (James 1:22 LSB)

Others to look up. Ps 1:1-2, 112:1, 128:1, Jam 1:25, Ezek 11:19-21,

To be clear, Salvation is by faith alone (Gal 2:16, Ro 3:28, Eph 2:8-9). Faith without works though is dead. (Jam 2:14 ff)

Spiritual Gifts

Another aspect to consider when looking at God's will for our lives is to consider the gifts that He has given us. Other Christians, especially mature Christians could help with identifying these gifts. The following passages describe some of the gifts that God provides:

Rom 12:3-13

- Prophecy

- Service/ministry
- Teaching
- Exhortation (some translate encourage)
- Generosity
- Leading
- Mercy

1 Cor 12:4-13, 27-31

- Word of wisdom
- Knowledge
- Faith
- Healing
- Miracles
- Prophecy
- Distinguishing spirits
- Tongues
- Translation of tongues
- Apostles
- Prophets
- Teachers
- Helps
- Administration

Eph 4:11-16

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Evangelists
- Pastors (shepherd)
- Teachers

1 Pet 4:7-11

- Be hospitable
- Serve one another with whatever gift you have

Circumstances

There seems to be times when God uses circumstances to direct our ways. One example of this is when Abraham's servant went to get a bride for Isaac. (Gen 24:10 ff). God worked it out that Rebekah would be at the place where the servant arrived.

We also have the account of Joseph being sold into slavery and rising to be second in command of Egypt. (Gen 37 ff). Moses just “happened” to be found by Pharaoh’s daughter in the Nile.

There is the account of Ruth working in Boaz’s field and ending up in the lineage of David and Jesus. Another example is Esther, as she becomes queen and is able to foil the plans of Haman to destroy the Israelite people.

There is also the account of the Ethiopian eunuch who is seeking God and Philip is brought to him. (Acts 8:26 ff). I suspect that if we were to look back at our lives, we can see how God has arranged our paths.

*“The heart of man plans his way,
But Yahweh directs his steps.”* (Prov. 16:9 LSB)

Jesus and the Beatitudes

One of Jesus’ first major sermons was “The Sermon on the Mount”. (Matt 5:1-7:28). Here, Jesus gives us lots of instructions about what the will of God is for us.

A study in the Book of Ephesians

- *“Therefore look carefully how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. On account of this, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”* (Eph. 5:15-17 LSB)
- A good place to look is the book of Ephesians. This verse is one of the key verses in the book and relates to our study. So, what can we learn from this book about the will of God for us?

Background

While Paul did not establish this church, he was there for three years teaching them. This letter was likely written towards the end of Paul’s life when he was in prison. The will of God is mentioned directly or indirectly a number of times. Paul is an apostle by the “will of God”. Any time that we see a command or direction, we need to see that as God’s will for our lives.

Key concepts and verses related to our topic

- *“just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him in love,”* (Eph. 1:4 LSB)
- *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”* (Eph. 2:10 LSB)
- *“Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, exhort you to walk worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one*

another in love, being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Eph. 4:1-3 LSB)

- *“And it was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for works of ministry and to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, as we mature to the full measure of the stature of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed about by the waves and carried around by every wind of teaching and by the clever cunning of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ Himself, who is the head. From Him the whole body, fitted and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love through the work of each individual part.” (Eph. 4:11-16 BEREAN)*
- *“So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardness of their hearts. Having lost all sense of shame, they have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity, with a craving for more. But this is not the way you came to know Christ. Surely you heard of Him and were taught in Him— in keeping with the truth that is in Jesus— to put off your former way of life, your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be renewed in the spirit of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one another. “Be angry, yet do not sin.” Do not let the sun set upon your anger, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing good with his own hands, that he may have something to share with the one in need. Let no unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building up the one in need and bringing grace to those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, outcry and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and tenderhearted to one another, forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Eph. 4:17-32 BEREAN)*
- *“But among you, as is proper among the saints, there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk, or crude joking, which are out of character, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure, or greedy person (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” (Eph. 5:3-5 BEREAN)*
- *“Therefore look carefully how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. On account of this, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the*

name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and being subject to one another in the fear of Christ.” (Eph. 5:15-21 LSB)

- *“Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” (Eph. 5:22 LSB)*
- *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,” (Eph. 5:25 LSB)*
- *“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.” (Eph. 6:1 LSB)*
- *“Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath; instead, bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:4 BEREAN)*
- *“Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear and sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. And do this not only to please them while they are watching, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.” (Eph. 6:5-6 BEREAN)*
- *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can make your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this world’s darkness, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore take up the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you will be able to stand your ground, and having done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness arrayed, and with your feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times, with every kind of prayer and petition. To this end, stay alert with all perseverance in your prayers for all the saints.” (Eph. 6:10-18 BEREAN)*

In his letter to the Thessalonians, Paul kind of summarizes it.

“Finally then, brothers, we ask and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more. For you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. For God did not call us to impurity, but in sanctification. Consequently, he who sets this aside is not setting aside man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.” (1 Th. 4:1-8 LSB)

Ask about every detail?

Another aspect to look at, but which may not be as clear, has to do with asking God about every thing we do. Do we ask him what colour of outfit to wear today? Do we only ask about big details; buying a house, who to marry, what career to pursue?

- David asked God a few times when he was going into battle what he should do. (1 Sam 23:1ff, 30:8, 2 Sam2:1, 5:19, 23)
- In Psalm 25:4-5 David asks God to make His ways known and to teach God's path. This seems to refer more to living uprightly than it does for specific direction.
- Abraham's servant asks God regarding the wife for Isaac. (Gen 24:10 ff)

Likely the way to look at this is that we can ask God for direction about everything, but he may not answer directly, but use circumstances or other people to answer us.

Conclusion

Essentially, God's will for our lives is to work, live holy lives and continue to grow in Him. Much of this happens by reading the Scriptures and applying it to our lives. As Jesus summed it up: *"And He said to him, 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' This is the great and foremost commandment. And the second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'"* (Matt. 22:37-39 LSB)

And

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to keep all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:19-20 LSB)

In order to make disciples, we need to mature ourselves, study Scripture and be involved in not just evangelism, but teaching those that come to Christ. Paul and the writer of Hebrews call us to press on – this is not just a gliding along as the writer of Hebrews warned against.

"Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brothers, I do not consider myself as having laid hold of it yet, but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, think this way; and if in anything you think differently, God will reveal that also to you. However, let us keep walking in step with the same standard to which we have attained." (Phil. 3:12-16 LSB)

"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not

solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern both good and evil.” (Heb. 5:12-14 LSB)

Hosea says:

“So let us know, let us pursue to know Yahweh.

His going forth is established as the dawn;

And He will come to us like the rain,

Like the late rain watering the earth.”” (Hos. 6:3 LSB)

So, let us follow Paul’s direction: *“So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;” (Phil. 2:12 LSB)*