

## Faith that moves us from pride

*A few of you have noticed this box in the rafters, and you have been wondering – what is that box doing there? Look – see it now? It is a box of delicious cookies. Why is a box of delectable cookies up in the ceiling? Great question. They should be down here where you can get them and eat them. Ever felt like sometimes the things of God – specifically the will of God is like that box of cookies. You know its there – and there is a good belief that the will of God is good – even very good, but it seems impossibly out of your reach. Good news – (pull out the lower box). God has placed his will down here for us to know (take a bite). And today, I believe God wants simple clarity for his will for you and I.*

Instead of beginning with a big idea or truth – I want to begin with a big prayer or question for God that will run the course this message.

**God will show me: You have a will for me that is better than anything I can accomplish or imagine?**

Here are 3 questions that I believe God will use to help answer this prayer:

01. **What is God's simple and enduring will for our life?**

02. How and why do we stumble walking in His will?

03. What has God specifically given us to move us and empower us to walk in His will?

01. **What is God's simple and enduring will for our life?**

James 4:13-16 (ESV) 13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit" — 14 yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." 16 As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

*We see here a powerful and large image of what is not God's will for our life. He uses words like arrogance and boasting. The picture we are given is a life walking in pride a part from God. We will take a closer look at that in a minute. Right now – I want us to focus in on the small but grand picture of the will He has for us.*

*In v. 14 God says, "If the Lord wills, we will live." God says our life, your every breath is in His hands. 850 died on Missouri roads in car related accidents in 2015. This past week our body was touched by a young man who died near Cave Springs. You walk out your door every day and never know if this will be your last day. ps 139:16 (ESV) in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.*

*He goes on to say in vs 14, "If the Lord wills – we will live ... and do this or that."*

Yes, our breath in his hands **or His will**, but also every thing we do is from His will or it doesn't happen. What does this say about God's will for us? *That he holds our breath and every action – humbles us.*

**God's will is that we walk in humility with Him.**

*Walking humbly with God means - I live my life shaped by and dependent on the truth that God is the giver, sustainer, and redeemer of all of life – for now and eternity.*

• Walking humbly with God helps me see all of my life as part of God's grand redemptive plan. *Intro the rope*

• Walking humbly with God as His will for us is echoed throughout the scripture.

James 4:6 (ESV) God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Matthew 5:3 (ESV) "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

psalms 66:2 (ESV) But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit ...

Micah 6:8 (ESV) He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

• **To walk humbly with God means humility is something we are becoming not something we do.**

*Humility is not a tool to be mastered like a sculpter uses a chisel. It is not a tool to be used as a Christ follower. Rather, humility is who we become and it affects what we do. Control our tongue, speak the wisdom of God, & diffuse arguments – because of humility.*

**God's will is that our life is shaped and dependent on the one who gives, sustains and redeems life –and that we live every day a part of God's grand redemptive plan.**

But something happens to every Christ follower – and maybe you are in this place now. You may have never known this God’s will for your life. You are not off committing sins like murder, rape, or witchcraft. But instead of walking humbly with our God – you and I walk in a way that James says looks nothing like His humility.

## 02. How and why do we stumble walking in His will?

James 4:13-16 (ESV) 13 Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit” — 14 yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. ... 16 As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

How do we stumble? - **We begin walking in pride and we put God in a box.**

- When *WE* create any plan (*will*) for our life a part from who God is and what He is doing, we are walking in pride – *and putting God in a box.*

*We do this by saying – Jesus I like the way you love me – that awesome! That’s nice - good! But the way I spend my money – that’s my call. The way I will handle my kids – my call. If and when I chose to forgive, handle conflict – mine. The jobs I choose, the friends I run with, the things I put in front of my eyes, the way I spend my days and what I will let consume my heart and mind – ALL MINE. But I like the way you love you me.*

When we live like this – we have placed God in a tiny little box (love me) and in our pride or arrogance (as James says) we’ve created a will that we believe is good, wise, grand, and under our control.

In our pride, our plans seem grand to us.

*Truth: God reveals that **our plans are very finite and small.***

13 ... “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit” 14 yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes

**In our plans – we fail to join God in His grand redemptive plans he has for us and others through us.**

16 As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

*Our plans – made in our wisdom – boast about our ultimate control whether we walk around beating our chest or writing blogs or books about our great achievements. Our plans that declare our control – also arrogantly deny God’s control over our life and all of life.*

In our pride, we seem to be in control of our plans.

*Truth: God reveals that we are never in control of anything in this life – including our plans.*

***Rope – Illustration – This red tape is our life. The rest is eternity. We focus on this red part and reality we focus on one tiny sliver of the red part right here – getting that degree, getting married, this one vacation, retirement. And, we plan and scheme and say on such and such a day we will...***

Ultimately, we create a scheme, a will for our life a part from God – not only are we denying God is any part of it, we are placing Almighty, Holy, All-Powerful God – in a box.

***Our enormous pride is plain and painful to see in this light. But do you see the danger of this and why God is so strongly warning us not to do this? 16 ... All such boasting is evil. Do you?***

Why do we stumble?

- We stumble because we have *forgotten God* – that is we are seeking to *replace God*.

*This is the sin of PRIDE. The reason pride is on the top of all God’s lists of most deadly sins – is because it is the root of all sin. It began in when God created man and woman. Their first initial rebellion – wasn’t murder, rape, or abuse. Their first sin was PRIDE. They said we can be like God.*

**Listen – you and I are prideful people who make grand plans that are actually tiny schemes. We make these plans a part from God and all He is doing. That we are prideful I believe is apparent to your eyes. But there is more our pride says – can you see it???**

***When you walk in pride – you have forgotten God and have sought to replace Him because -***

## **He is not enough.**

*Oh, you don't actually forget him, he is still in that box. But forgetting means – you have forgot His place as LORD over all of LIFE, giver, sustainer, redeemer, restorer and that He is working a grand redemptive plan he has invited you into with Him. When we forget God – we forget this, but greater – we are saying – **I want to replace you – you are not enough!***

*Is this you? Have you forgotten God? If so, don't despair. Look with me and see what God has given us to move us and empower us to walk in His will.*

### 03. What has God specifically given us to move us and empower us to walk in His will?

*There are two word picture in the Hebrew language (of the OT) that are sometimes used for humility and pride. The picture for the word humility is that of a man on his knees serving another. The picture for pride is of a man standing over another saying, "server me."*

God uses two things all throughout His word to transform prideful people into humble servants. Remember, he is not just showing us humility to learn like a tool. He is transforming us into men and women, boys and girls who can walk in humility with our God in His grand redemption plan. What are those two things:

- **Seeing our brokenness** – I am prideful and I create a will for my life a part from God and even more – I seek to replace Him. For in my pride, I don't believe He is enough!

For sure this humbles us. When we see and are broken by our great sin – we are humbled before God. But seeing our own brokenness **ALONE** does not move us to become humble servants who walk in humility with God. Seeing our brokenness alone – just creates broken, despairing people. The beauty and power of the gospel is that it is really good news. What moves us to our knees to be worshipers, who want to love and serve God as we walk in humility with Him is seeing our brokenness and Seeing the Brokenness of Christ.

- **Seeing Christ's brokenness** From birth to death – broken. Here is the apex of Christ's brokenness.

Mark 14:32-36 (ESV) 32 And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."  
33 And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled.  
34 And he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch."

*He walked in a plan his whole life – the will of God - knowing what would come because He was a part of the God-head and because of this He knew the plan before time began. And yet, at this point in his walk on earth as all God and all man – his humanity was being broken right before our very eyes.*

*He cries out – "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death." Do you see him being broken by our sin – your sin? Why did he fall on his knees praying that this hour – his death might pass from him? Yes, the suffering would be immense, and yes the One who had only known life would die – but there was more.*

35 And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.  
36 And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

*Listen to his plea, "Abba, Father." Daddy – Father. He pleads to the most intimate name of God – Daddy. The word says he was in such agony he sweated drops of blood.*

Luke 22:44 (ESV) 44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

*Hematosis is a condition where some of your capillaries can rupture under great stress and the blood will literally come out your sweat glands. It looks like you are sweating blood.*

*What brought Jesus to this point of brokenness in his body? Listen to his next to last statement.*

*"Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me." The cup was always a picture of God's wrath - his holy Judgment on rebellious sin against his holy name. It was at his last dinner with his disciples that he took a cup and said this wrath will be consumed in my blood. Jesus was saying, "Every time you drink the cup in this communion meal remember – I took God's judgment for you." Yet now he is saying – take it away. Why?*

*Because the cost is more than pain and suffering – it is weight of shame and guilt and all the Father’s wrath poured out on him. All he has known is the Father’s love and joy and now - all he will know is his judgment, anger, wrath – punishment. And it breaks him – he doesn’t sin. He is not broken like we are – but it drives him to his knees trying to see if there is any other way to make this happen. Notice – when pride temps our view of life grows narrow as did Jesus. But he won this temptation to and made the most amazing statement of humility ever. “Yet not what I will, but what you will.” And he got up and walked humbly with his Father and went to the cross and was literally broken.*

Look at the brokenness of Christ>

Broken in the garden as the humanity of Christ is literally driven to his knees seeking to do anything but sin to avoid losing his Father’s love – even for a moment.

Broken on the cross – as he takes on your and my shame, your and my guilt, your and my punishment for all our sin, for all our pride that seeks to replace God, that says you are not enough!

**Our brokenness –** When we really see the depths of our pride that believes we can be God. When we see how we have sought to replace Him because ultimately we don’t believe He is enough – it drops us to our knees. But if this is all we see – we go there in despair, hopeless. **But there is hope!** God will show me: you have a will for me and it is better than anything I can accomplish or imagine?

### **Christ’s brokenness**

- When we see the brokenness of Christ, we see that He was broken to redeem us to God.
- When we see the brokenness of Christ, we see that He was broken to redeem God’s name ravaged by our pride that says, “You are not enough.”
- When we truly see the brokenness of Christ, our despair is turned to joy and we cease becoming beggars on our knees and **we are raised up empowered** to become worshippers, servants who want to walk humbly with God.

**Remember our prayer:** God will show me: you have a will for me and it is better than anything I can accomplish or imagine?

In **Christ’s brokenness, His humility empowers us to ...**

- Trust He has a plan and He is in control – of all of life, even when it feels out of control.
- Walk in his revealed his will - even when it makes no sense.
- Pursue every thing we do asking – will this allow me to walk in humility with God.
- Believe even in the mundane – God is working his grand redemptive plan into and through our life.

### **Stories**

**Memoirs of an ordinary pastor – The Life and Story of Tom Carson by DA Carson.** Tom Carson was a regular guy, who pastored a small church that he felt was a failure. He walked in humility with God.

**Mary was no ordinary earthly mother.** If ever there were cause to boastful. And, our religious world has tried to make her great, a saint, even almost divine in her nature. But she was humble, “be it done to your servant.”

**Bill – successful businessman.** He ran a large business and affected many lives – but he took the time to invest in 25 yr old me. Taught me about a humble Jesus, that caused him to walk humbly with God.

**Jill - House mom of the Discipleship House in DC.** She wasn’t a congresswoman, a successful businesswoman, writer, or teacher. She was a wife and mom – who impacted by wife bc of her humble walk.

God will show me: you have a will for me and it is better than anything I can accomplish or imagine?

In the humility of Christ – we fall to our knees and find our purpose in life – to be raised to walk in humility with God.