

# Knowing Gods Will

by Billy Strachan

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*Billy Strachan emphasizes the importance of seeking God's will through faith, prayer, and scripture, while warning against worldliness and selfish desires.*

**Duration:** 47:13

**Scripture:** Psalm 37:4-119, Proverbs 3:5-6, Jeremiah 29:11, Matthew 4:1-11

**Topics:** "Gods Will"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker talks about the importance of preparing a place for people to come and feel welcome in a building. He emphasizes the need to clean and tidy up the space so that it feels fresh and inviting. The speaker also discusses the individuality of each person's communication with God, stating that God will speak to each person in a way that is unique to them. He encourages listeners to trust in God's plan for their lives and to be open to the avenues of communication that God uses. The speaker concludes by reminding listeners that it may take time for God's plan to unfold, but ultimately following His will brings true happiness.

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## Transcript

James chapter 4. Now we have looked at faith giving us victory over the outward circumstances and the inner temptations, and now we saw yesterday faith is required to exercise control over that enemy, the tongue, that's totally untamable. And now in chapter 4 we see that we have to exercise that faith-loved relationship with Jesus Christ to overcome worldliness, worldliness. Now it's a chapter that is quite condemning really upon believers, and that's why some of the later theologians wanted to try to say that this wasn't really an early letter, or that James was putting a parenthesis in here to talk about non-believers, because surely no Christian would behave like this, but the answer is yes they do.

There are good Christians, there are bad Christians. From whence come wars and brawlings among you believers? Where does all of that fighting inside the church come from, believer with believer? Your lust, come they not hence even of your lusts, your pleasures, just what you want, that war in your members that are always fighting there? Your lust and you have not. You are jealous and desire to have and you can't get.

You fight and you war and somehow or other it just never comes to fruition, you have not, and the whole answer is because you just don't turn in faith to the Lord and make your requests known to him, you ask not. Oh yes I do. Ah but notice that it says here you ask and receive not, because you're asking with the

wrong motives that you may consume it upon your lusts.

Your prayer request to God is I want what I want and not what you want, and as a Christian I should be able to get everything I want as a sign that God is blessing me, and everybody else should cooperate to give me what I want, to encourage me to believing that everything that I'm getting that I'm asking for is a sign of God blessing me, and that's nothing but worldliness, to presume that you have a right to get everything you want, and it's I want, I need, I ought to get, and every other Christian should understand that. Well the attitude of just seeing to it that within the framework of your Christian faith you get everything you want is worldliness. It's worldliness, it's suiting yourself, it's wanting your own pleasures, and you'll see here that it's teaching you, that attitude can blind you and teach you to pray wrongfully.

You end up praying out of the will of God. Everybody loves to pretend that they want the will of God for their life. Everybody says I want his best, I want what he wants for me in this life, I only want God's plan, but do you really? Well it so happens that one of the major reasons that knowing the will of God is one of the biggest mysteries to the Christian is because they don't really want to know the will of God.

If you can keep the will of God as a mystery, then you can always play hit and miss, trial and error, and excuse yourself in whatever you do because you say well I'm just trying to find the will of God. And people love running around and asking all the preachers, how do you know the will of God? Because they're taking an opinion poll. They want 10 or 11 people to say one thing, and if the majority say one thing, then the one that was odd, then that's not the will of God, it must be the majority opinion.

And people love to pretend that everything they're doing is the will of God. So much so that if you dare to question the sanity of some of the things that some believers do, you're sort of verbally slapped in the face and told to back off, God told me to do it. And it's just nothing more or less than spiritual blackmail to get your own way.

We have a statement in our brochure that summer guests should not arrive in this place until after two o'clock on a Saturday afternoon. That's not because it's an awkward time that we chose, but there's this very good sane reason after running a holiday center for 36 years that we choose that time. And that's because from eight o'clock in the morning until two o'clock in the afternoon, you're throwing 250 people out, cleaning out all the bedrooms and remaking all these beds and getting the place all tidied up, hoovered up, all the junk cleared out, new flowers out, the carpet's done, the lounge tidied up, so that when they come in they are under the impression we are the first people who have ever used this building.

And so you get a Saturday morning arrive and a guy comes through the door at nine o'clock in the morning, 250 trying to shove out with a suit bag, cake he served, bus, and him trying to fight his way in through the crowd in the wrong direction. Well, he didn't feel very welcome. Hacks his way through to the window and bangs the window and the secretary opens the window and says, yes, he's busy tightening up the new lists of accommodation, yes, what is it? He says, well, I wanted to know how to get back to the station.

He says, well, we told you yesterday if you put your name on the departure list out there we'll tell you when to be at the front door so we can take you to the station. He says, I wasn't here yesterday. You weren't here yesterday.

When did you arrive? Just now. And you want to leave? Yes. He says, just a moment please.

Phones me. I come through and I say, what is it? You know, we're all up to here getting the wretched house put together and I'm saying, what is it? He says, well, this gentleman wants to get to the station. I say, imagine that's me.

I say, look, we told you yesterday if you put your name on the list out there. And she says, he wasn't here yesterday. You weren't here yesterday? No.

When did you arrive? Just now. And you want to leave? Yes. When did he book in? Four months ago.

You booked four months ago to come here today for a week and you arrive and you want to leave right away? Yes. Why? Oh, the Lord told me to go to Edinburgh. I said, that's fine.

If you'll just bring your suitcase in and leave it there and write out the cheque for the fees, we'll drive you back to the station for your train to Edinburgh. But I'll need my suitcase. Why? Well, I won't be back.

How do you know? You didn't know after four months of being booked in here till you arrived here right now that the Lord was going to suddenly say, go to Edinburgh. Hey kid, you might be pulling your leg. We might take you to the station.

You'll be halfway to Edinburgh and the Lord will say, I was only kidding, go back. Why carry the suitcase all over the place? You might be halfway back and we say, London, Swansea, Inverness, France, Africa. I wouldn't carry that stuff all that way.

You might end up at the end of the day and say, I'll just go back to Cape May. I was only joking. He won't.

How do you know he won't? You didn't know until you arrived here this morning at nine o'clock that God was going to suddenly spring the surprise on you and tell you to go to Edinburgh. Now, if you couldn't guarantee that God wouldn't upset today's programme of coming here for the week, how can you guarantee that God will not say bye this evening to come back again? So he ended up yelling at me, I want to go to Edinburgh. I said, that's fine.

I said, I'll tell you what's the matter with you. You've arrived through the door and you don't feel welcome. The place is in a shambles.

Everybody's pushing you out the door when you try to get in. I said, but if you simply read your brochure, sir, we did advise you not to arrive until two o'clock in the afternoon. But if you feel that now you're not very welcome, I'll certainly take you to the station.

But you're not going to blame God for it. And people do that. The minute you question some of the things they're doing as Christians, that just reeks of worldliness, selfishness and wanting their own way in something.

The minute you question them, they turn around and say, the Lord told me. That means back off and mind your own business in case you fight against God. And we've got to back off.

But personally, I think God's fixed some of the things he asked people to do. He needs a doctor. And it's not necessary to live like that.

And it's not necessary to be praying wrongfully for the will of God. You can know exactly how to know the will of God for your life. And if you don't want to know, shut your ears off for the next five minutes.

Because I'm going to tell you. But once you know, you're responsible to do it and start behaving sanely. Now one of the best foundations that you can choose for knowing the will of God is in Isaiah 55 in verse 8. Isaiah 55 in verse 8. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

What you could imagine to be my will for your life and what I know to be my will for your life is so diverse that it's as high as the heavens are to the earth. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. So the only conclusion you can come to on that basis for a foundation of knowing the will of God for your life so that you won't be worldly is, I don't know nor can I imagine the will of God for my life.

That's a good way to start. I don't know the will of God nor can I imagine the will of God for my life. Well if that's true, how am I ever going to find out? Does he have a will for my life? Yes he does.

You'll find that for instance if you look in Ephesians Ephesians in chapter 2 verse 8, the verse that everybody knows, for by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast. That's coming to know Christ as your savior. You don't do anything to be saved but notice this, for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God before ordained that we should walk in them.

So you don't work to be saved but the minute you're saved you can be conscious of one thing and that is that he has prepared and preordained good works for you to walk and work after you're saved. There is a definite computer will of God and program for your life that will just be the best program for your life custom built for you. But you can never imagine it, you can never guess it but it's there.

Well how am I going to know? Well God speaks and he's going to use various avenues of communication. Now although I have put down on the blackboard the points one, two, three, four, five, would you please note that God is so big, God is so great, God is so infinite, God is so intelligent that you can't put them into a box. I have to show you these avenues of communication.

I've got to put them down one after the other but I'm not giving you a tied up order. So don't put it down and say Billy second said it'll be one, two, three, four, five. For somebody here it could be one, four, three, two, five.

For somebody it could be four, one, two, three, five. For somebody it could be one, four, three, two, five. For somebody it might be as boring as one, two, three, four, five.

You know, in other words you're such a distinct individual that in accordance with your own temperament, your own background, feelings, nature, God will secure an avenue of communication for you that will generally be the one way that you'll know he talks to you and he very seldom varies it so that you get used to knowing how he's talking to you. How did he talk to you brother Billy? What's your order? You mind your own business. You find your own order.

I'm not telling you mine. It's mine and you're going to find it. For instance in scripture, God always spoke to Mary through an angel but God always spoke to Joseph in dreams.

Over a period of years he always got the will of God for his life and for looking after Jesus in exactly the same way he went to bed, had a good night's sleep, woke up in the morning, knew what he had to do. Oh some of us would just let me go to bed with death of things. That's what he did with his problems.

Every time we had a problem, oh what shall I do? Shall I divorce her? Shall I not? Shall I expose her to public shame? Shall I not? Oh God what do you do? I think I'll go to the middle of the night and the Lord says the child will be of the Holy Ghost, take her. And he got up and he just took her and that was it. He didn't touch her until she'd conceived and brought forth Jesus.

And while he was sleeping one night the angel says get to Egypt. So he got up in the morning, sold out and went to Egypt. He was there establishing business and after a period of years one night he had a good sleep and the Lord said go back to the Holy Land.

So he went back. So he went to Nazareth. So he went to Nazareth.

God communicated to that man all that and his best gift was sleeping. Yet there are those that tell you you know you shouldn't do that. Christians should be awake 24 hours a day on the ball.

That's why some of you like to try to keep them up at night. You feel it's your job to train them to stay awake. Well you're quite wrong.

For some people sleep is what they need and sometimes God talks to them in their sleep. But he'll find out the avenue just for you. But I'm going to give you avenues but it's entirely up to you to find out the ones that you're going to have.

For instance one of the methods of communication is in the mind. Is in the mind. If you look at 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians and chapter 2. Let's see. 1 Corinthians 2 and verse 16. For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him but we have the mind of Christ.

What do we have? The mind of Christ. You see when you ask Jesus Christ into your life to be a personal savior here, he didn't leave his mind in heaven. When he came in, he brought his mind in with him.

The divine mind in the divine Christ who is in you by the divine Holy Spirit knows the divine mind of what's the best for your life in this world. And so what will happen is that God can communicate a God thought to your mind and you'll think it. And you'll say, hold on a cotton peckin' minute.

You mean to tell me my mind is untrustable? Yes. And yet I'm going to get a thought and just think it and that'll be God thinking it in me? Yes, he can do that. But Billy, it's not thinking what's the will of God for my life, it's which thought's mine.

I mean, is it me thinking it for myself and being worldly? Is it God thinking it in me? Is it the devil thinking it in me? Is it my parents thinking it in me that it's what God wants me to do? Is it other people pressuring me into thinking it's what God's thinking in me? Oh, I'm confused. Yes, I don't doubt it. And that's why if God only spoke to our mind, we'd be in a mess because your mind is evil continually from its youth up.

Other people are always trying to indoctrinate you and pressurizing you into believing this is the will of God for your life. It's done by parents, it's done by friends, it's done by church hierarchies. They now tell you we know what God wants you to do.

God tells us to tell the church and they capture people's minds, tell them to take arsenic by tea time and commit suicide and it's the will of God and they go ahead and do it. Hey, that's crazy. Well, how am I going to know? Well, God uses the other avenues of communication to confirm or reject a thought.

You just keep it in the open palm of your hand and let God confirm it or reject it. Now, if we give you an illustration that I will trace all the way through. I wake up in a cold January morning.

I bring my nose out from under my feather blanket and I breathe in. And it's so cold I have to have my nostrils re-bored. And I get the impression it's kind of frosty.

And I look at the windows and the frost on the inside of the windows. Now, it's at that precise moment that I get a lovely thought, be a missionary in Hawaii. Girls in sarongs, flowers, straw skirts, and garlands, and coconut, pineapple, beaches, tracts, and giving out the New Testament.

Oh, oh, he's just asked me to be a missionary in Hawaii. That was a great thought in a frozen morning. How am I going to know if the thought in a frozen morning is the will of God or just the fact that two days before I was in a travel agency booking my flights for my next tour of ministry and saw on the rack a girl in a sarong with a little flower in her hair.

And it says, fly to Hawaii, the sunshine paradise of the Pacific. Now, what's making me think I have to be a missionary? That, God, the cold. How am I going to know? Well, that's where he uses the other avenues.

In Psalm 119, we find that he uses the word. He uses the word. If you look at Psalm 119, in verse 105.

Psalm 119, verse 105. Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. The strongest focal beam will be on the next step.

And as I take a step by faith in the light of the immediate piece of illumination, I'm going up the path of his direction. Ah, but here you have a problem, you see. If you are not reading this word, and I'm not talking about a quiet time, nor am I talking about studying the Bible.

I'm talking to you about just a time every day and every 24 hours where you give God an opportunity to say something through this book if he wants to. That's not saying that every day he's going to, but at least if you are regular in it, he's going to have a once in 24 hour opportunity to say something to you and knows that he's got that chance every day. But you see, if you're not reading this book for months, and suddenly you get the idea, go to Hawaii, you'll say, oh, I wonder a lamp to my feet.

Thy word will guide. Where should I have been? Oh, mighty word. Oh, mighty word.

So many pages, Lord. Can we just get it to fall? Thus saith the Lord, thou shalt not go. I didn't like that.

Lord, what I have said, I have said. You heard. Now that's fatal.

It's using it like a fortune teller's book, but you get your mind made up. What you want to hear is an answer. So you have your mind made up.

I want to go. Where can I find a verse that will say yes, so that when everybody else in the house says, why are you going there? I'll say, the Lord told me. So there must be a verse in there that says go.

Now, where can I find one? Now that's fatal. That's why it's better just to proceed. And I have found that by using the bookmark, remember the bookmark, any two fingers, no evangelical way of opening it.

You take it by the fist. You can take it delicately by the thing, not even the same two fingers you can take with the thumb and the little one. And when you finish reading today, you put it in, shut it.

And when you come back tomorrow, there's the bit hanging out, you open and you see where you were yesterday and you just proceed. And it just means that you're proceeding. And I'll tell you something, if God has something to say, you never have to look for it.

He'll suddenly show you in the next part of your reading if he wants to say it. I've got another problem, brother Billy. What's that? Okay.

So I get the thought of Hawaii and I get my Bible and I open at the bookmark. And supposing I open at the bookmark and I've been regular in reading every day, not for getting something out of it, not for studying, not for a quiet time, but just saying, Hey God, I wonder if you have a telegram to give me today. Here's a chance and I'll read a few chapters and shut it.

And I've been faithful in doing that. And in fact, with all sincerity, I got the thought of Hawaii, I opened at the bookmark and I just began to read. And the very first thing I read was, thus saith the Lord, arise and go.

And I thought, Oh, that's it. But I've just remembered on the Mount of Temptation, Jesus defeated Satan's first temptation by quoting the word. But the second temptation was when the devil misquoted the word to try and tempt Jesus.

Now, if it's possible for Satan to misquote the word, how do I know if arise and go, is God saying arise and go? Or if it's the devil misusing the word to make me go when I should stay home? I've got a problem. Yes, you have. That's why it's not enough to rely on your mind and just rely on the word.

Now, the psalmist says the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. And so he has another avenue called circumstances. Circumstances.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Now, if you want this illustrated, I wake up, I find that it's frosty, I find I'm frozen, I'm cold, and my mind says go to Hawaii. So faithfully, I open up the bookmark and the word says arise and go.

And so I pack my bag and I come downstairs and I'm just crossing the kitchen to go out to the garage and go to the airport and go to Hawaii when I meet my first circumstance of the morning, my wife. And that is a circumstance to be reckoned with. Because I have a wife that's so sane and so non fuzzy in her belief that as she stands making the coffee and looks at my case crossing the floor with me all dressed to go, she would do several things at once.

She'd look at the untouched breakfast, the clock in the wall, the calendar, the children, and then she'd go in and I'd stop and I'd say, oh, good morning dear. Never saw you there. No, I didn't think you did.

Going somewhere? And I'd say, oh yes, I'm going to Hawaii as a missionary. Oh, before breakfast? And she'd just come across the room and she'd take me by the hand, lovingly but firmly, drag me across to the table and as she poured the coffee in my lap would say to me, where did you get that idea? Oh, oh, it was a God thought dear. Oh, oh, it was a God thought.

Sure, that's very nice. Are you sure it was a God thought? Oh, the grace I've read the word and I get a marvellous verse this morning that says, thus saith the Lord, arise and go. Well, that's very nice.

What does it cost? You know, I'd never thought of that. Think, I'm sorry, look at my pocket. Two pence.

That's a two. That's a five. How much do you think it costs? Well, if I went one way and never came back, I suppose it might cost about two or three hundred pounds.

Oh, got that much. Twenty pence. No, well, isn't that unusual dear? All the rest of your ministry, whenever the Lord's wanted you anywhere from here to Australia and back, the money's always been there.

It's most unusual you've got the thought and the direction this morning and not the cash. And another thing, if you don't mind my asking you, who's going to lecture to the students this morning or see you do up for the first two hours? Oh, well, I hadn't thought of that. Well, I suggest you think, because I don't think that the Lord in implementing his will in your life is going to leave 185 students sitting for a few months waiting for somebody to come up and run the course.

God never causes chaos in the lives of another 200 people just to supply the need of one and to implement his life in one. If it was God's will for you, dear, to go to Hawaii, he would have had the time off, no school in existence or somebody else running it. He's not going to leave them sitting in the class and the staff wondering who's running the show by just suddenly whisking you eccentrically across the other side of the world.

And besides, you promised to take the children out this afternoon. Who's doing that? And we were going to go shopping. Who's doing that? Oh, aye, aye, aye, aye.

Yeah, so down. And the thing is, just through the sheer sanity of circumstances, you can be prevented from making a mistake. That's why if you're in the process of registering for a college, if you're committed and trusted, don't expect a text that says thou shalt go.

If you have a thought of going in a direction and a word that says, I want you for service, and you say, well, I think I'll plan on that school. Then you start the machinery of the school going in the circumstances of the preliminary investigation of you as a prospective pupil can be ordered by the Lord to keep you from getting there. And so if ever a registrar writes back and says, sorry, no room.

You don't cry. You say, hallelujah. What a wonderful circumstance.

You've ordered it so that I don't make a mistake and go in the wrong place. It's the same if you lose a girlfriend. It's the same if you lose a boyfriend.

You're not losing anything. God's cleared the way for something better. I've never known God yet to give anybody something worse.

And instead of going and jumping off a roof and killing yourself because you lost your girlfriend, you lost your boyfriend, if you just simply know that you held them in the open palm of your hand anyway and only wanted God's will, he's going to say to you, thank you for letting me take that person away. I ordered that because I've got somebody far better for you. Just wait and you'll never regret it.

You'll never regret it. He orders your steps. Some official person grumps in one direction and you get flung out that area and that keeps you going in the path you should be going.

And so he'll use the circumstances, but also just in case somebody's tampering with the circumstances, that's why it's never right to tell anybody what you're really thinking about where you're going. Try to keep it all for long enough. Yes, but I wanted to know this morning.

Tough. Sometimes it takes years for all of that to fall in line. But he will also use as a means counsel.

Now, I don't mean by counsel marching into my office and saying, should I or should I not marry Mary? Should I or should I not go to Africa? Should I or should I not be a pastor? No, I'm not going to tell you. Some pastors might be daft enough to accept your invitation to play God in your life and many of them do. But you like that because if it goes wrong, you blame the pastor.

You don't blame yourself. Now, what I mean by counsel is when you haven't shared what's going on in your mind or you've read in the world or your circumstances and you're sitting in a room with somebody and it's still going on in your mind and inwardly you're praying, oh Lord, I just would like some clarification for this. And suddenly the person next to you starts talking to you about the very thing that you know they don't know anything about.

And they become a voice of God direct to you in counsel that helps you to tie it up. It's like one of the occasions that my mother, when she died, she died of cancer. And so I remember in the early Bible school here and I had a part of me that wasn't well and immediately my imagination jumped to the conclusion that maybe I'm getting cancer too.

And your mind goes wild or anything like that. So I came downstairs and I was being a person at that time that lived on nervous energy and seven meals a day and never put on an ounce. I came down and sat at breakfast and people serving came up and slapped the plate down.

I said, not for me this morning. Thank you. And everybody looked at me as much as you not eat.

And sitting opposite me was a lady I'd never seen before who just popped in for a few days. And so she looked across at me, you see, and I wasn't eating and he took it from me and put it in front of her. And she says, no, thank you.

And of course she was an enormous lady. She says, I don't have a quick breakfast. She says, I'm slimming.

And so when he said to me, go on, I can have it. And I said, no, thank you. I'm slimming too.

Well, at that time I could be a pipe cleaner. So she looked at me and she was German and she said, oh, you're not slimming. And I said, no, not really.

I just don't feel like eating this morning. I said, but normally I do. I said, I can eat by the ton load and I just never put on an ounce of weight.

And she was a doctor and I didn't know it. And she didn't know what was going on in my mind. And she turned around and said, well, if that's the case, I'll tell you something.

And she named the specific part of the body that was worrying me that morning and said, that shows that that area of your body is functioning absolutely perfectly. And if that's what it's like, you'll live a long time. I said, hey, I'll have that and hers as well.

Because I got the message and she didn't know she relayed a message to me. But it came so through to my young Christian heart as a message direct from God that I was able to take that because I knew that nobody put her up to it. She didn't know what was going on inside.

That's why I'll never put out these praying letters to invite people to help me to fulfill my miracle. And then the other thing is too, that he'll tie the whole lot up in a bundle with peace, with peace. And if there's no peace, just the magic word, wait.

God always answers prayer. Yes, no, or wait. Yes, no, or wait.

Unfortunately we always want. Yes. Sometimes it's no.

And sometimes it's wait. Now I can assure you that this is really tremendous. And remember that this is not the only will of God declared in the Bible.

There are different types of the will of God in the Bible. This is the specific will of God for you as an individual. But the Bible also declares the sovereign will of God, where he makes a move in your life without consulting you, but it's always for your betterment, not for your detriment.

That one he doesn't like using. That's his last resort. You're not a chess piece.

He loves a loving cooperation and a wanting to do his will. But if he sees you're going to do something stupid, he may move in by sovereign will and make an adjustment. The word of God also declares the general will of God for everybody.

And it never alters when it says thou shalt not commit adultery. That is for everybody. It doesn't say, well, it's okay for you, but you can't.

And it's okay for you and you can. Thou shalt not steal. Well, that's the law for everybody except you.

You can go ahead and do some stealing. I'll understand that. No, no, it's general.

That general will thou shalt not commit murder is for everybody. It's there, but there's also the other dangerous will of God. And that is the permissive will of God.

Unfortunately, that's the most popular one. And it's the worst one. And that's where as a naughty child, you stamp your feet in the ground and you insist that you get what you want.

I want what I want. And you have a tantrum and you tell God, you've said me a word. If I ask, you'll give all your jolly well going to keep your promises.

And this is what I want. And God has said sweetly to you. No, but you insisting, you insisting, you insist in getting what you want.

And God in the long run yawns and says, okay, you're going to get it. Oh boy, are you going to get it? And he said, permission granted. And you get the worst thing you could ever get and you'll live to regret it.

And that's playing in the Bible. The children of Israel, they put God in a corner when they were in the wilderness and said, we don't believe you can give us food in the wilderness. He had no intention of satisfying them in the wilderness.

He wanted to satisfy them in Canaan, but they kept shouting. We want food. We want it now.

We want that. And it says in the scripture, he gave them their own request and sent leanness to the soul. Yeah, they got what they wanted.

And for 40 years lived in leanness of soul and died without enjoying what God had for them. You take Hezekiah. Thus said the Lord, set thy house in order, thou shalt die.

That's God's will. He couldn't have made it plainer. You've been the best testimony since King David.

Now it's time to go home. And he turned his face to the wall, wept and cried and pleaded, reminded God of how faithful he'd been. And it was unfair to go now.

I want to live longer. And he wept and pleaded and cried and asked for a miracle of healing, wanted to keep alive. And God yawned and said, okay, you can get the calendar out, mark down the day of your death, 15 years to this spot in time.

Hey, I don't know about you. I don't want to know because the next thing for me is death. I just want it to be a surprise.

I don't want to wake up every morning knowing the date and the hour, 15 years, 10 years, whatever it is exactly the moment I'm going to die. Can you imagine how that man felt as the time drew near? I'd rather not know. And the amazing thing is the Bible tells us Hezekiah rendered unto the Lord nothing again, according to the benefit done to him because he had forced in his worldly attitude, he'd forced God to give him what he wanted.

He never again had any respect for God. He never rendered unto the Lord according to the benefit done to him and was proud and lifted up in his heart. And listen, he didn't have any program for the next 15 years.

The divine program was finished. And so he was a man on the earth at his own request for 15 more years without the control of the spirit or a spirit program. And the funny thing is he made all his mistakes in those 15 years, dragged the nation into ruin in 15 years.

If he died on time, he would have been super. Would you Christians please remember to die on time? Die on time. Instead of hanging around here wrecking the church, wrecking everybody, wrecking your families, let me die on time and go to heaven.

It was amazing to hear at that funeral the other week there that we went to that Arnold Pickering said, I've prayed all my life to get in heaven. And at the end, the pain was the fact that all the Christians were praying I'd stay on earth. They were all trying to keep me here for longer.

And I was wanting to go home. Why don't you die on time? We have this funny idea that if we're Christians and saved, we should be allowed to go through to 100 and then willingly go home. I'm ready now.

Hey, never lose sight that his own son died at 33. Never lose sight of the fact that Stephen died six months after his commitment to the Lord and was full of the Holy Spirit. We seem to think if you get a person full of the Holy Spirit, you should be allowed to stay alive and be a benefit to the church for a thousand years.

They're so rare, a spirit-filled people, but surely if you get one, God should let us keep him. And he didn't. He wiped him out.

He allowed his death in order that solitarsis could get saved. So be careful of the permissive will of God. Be careful of digging your heels in and insisting you get what you want because you might get it.

So if you're right, you have to live with it then and all the mess that will follow because it wasn't his will is what you wanted. But all of this can take a long time to fit in. I remember on one occasion coming back in the airplane from America in the early days and when I used to go, I went twice a year for 16 weeks at a time and I was preaching on an average six hours a day and I was exhausted.

And I remember once coming back in the plane and I really believed I was going to die and I was so ill and on the plane I happened to open up my Bible to do my day's reading and I got a scripture. What's your scripture Billy? Oh you find your own, I'm not telling you mine. But I got it and I was assured of the Lord that he was going to take me back to my own land and I'd live and he was going to plant me in my own land and not pluck me up and he was going to make me a blessing.

So I didn't tell a soul, I just wrote it in the back of my Bible, put down the date and left it there. But I came back and found that although I was getting the word that I should stay in my own country and I was thinking about it, circumstances kept me going across to America year after year after year. But I didn't push, I didn't complain, I said nothing, I just waited.

And years passed when suddenly counsel came to prevail. Somebody walked in and said to me in the office, I've got something to ask you and I said what is it? Well he says try and help me to make it easy because I think what I'm going to ask you is going to disappoint you. And I said what is it? Just spit it out.

Well I was just wondering if you would like to stop going to America and stay at home and consolidate things in the base here and do a lot more work on the base. And I said sure. Just like that? I said just like that.

Don't you want time to pray about it? I said no I've had a few years of that. What do you mean? So then I opened my Bible and showed that gentleman that I'd already had the word, already done all the thinking and now circumstances in his counsel were just falling in place and I said fine. And there was an absolute peace and when I wrote to counsel the next trip everybody understood, everybody was in agreement, God had made it nice across the board.

Now I stayed away, I stayed away from America for 11 years and then I got to the place where I was no longer going to do the summer conferences and I was going to rot in my garden. I had set myself 12 weeks of just the garden, doing nothing, just being a mushroom. And suddenly somebody knocked at the house door and then came one of the team members visiting the country and said hey Stachan I hear you're off this summer.

I said yes. We were wondering if you'd come to America. I said no.

No? No. Just like that, just like that. Why not? I'm not going to start going week by week by week by week a different bed every night for 12, 13 weeks in a row.

Supposing we keep you in the middle for five weeks in one place and build a school around you. Well that doesn't sound too bad. Nah I'm not going to leave my family at home and we'll fly your family out for those five weeks.

Well now looky here. I don't want you guys just engineering things to get what you want so let's give God a big chance to confirm it. Now what are you going to do? Pray? No.

I'll write to the American government and ask them for a working visa. Oh don't do that. Man it's hard enough getting a tourist visa.

You go in and see the place. They'll never let you. Oh they will if it's God's will.

He's in control of circumstances. So I'll just write in it. Look why can't you come as a tourist and then when you're over there just preach it because I'm converted and I'm a Christian.

Do you know anything about being a Christian? I just don't lie to governments. So I'm not going to turn around and tell a lie and say I'm coming for a holiday if I'm coming to work. There's no problem.

They say oh well that'll kill it. I say hey let's just find out. So I wrote up to the US government and explained what we wanted to do and I hadn't been there for 11 years and then closed all my old visas.

My old business visitors visas that let me go over for one or two trips and asked if there was any chance they could give me this working business visitors visa to pop in there and work for the summer and meet the demands of these people that invited me over and I thought that'll kill it. Garden here I come and within a week they sent back a letter and my passport and they had stamped in it a permanent business visitors visa that lasts the rest of my life. And you know to this day people say to me how did you get that? And I said ask him.

Obviously he wants me to go and the funny thing is in going again I went apprehensive that the work would exhaust me but you know I've never been fitter in my life and up until this year since 76 I've been crossing the Atlantic three times a year ministering throughout the states and I'm not exhausted. I'm as fit as a fiddle because if you're in the center of God's will he takes care of that. As your days so shall your strength be but look it took years for all of that to tie in not days and there's no need to be worldly there's no need to dig your feet in and say I want my plan implemented this is the best way and if you do it that way you'll find that you'll never be happier any other way.

Well with more to say about it go have a cup of tea.

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