

“What Does God Want from Me?”

by Paul Hammons

A few weeks ago, I posted on social media that obedience to God is not "Pharisee talk," it's "Jesus talk" - and quoted **Matthew 7:21**:

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

A poster responded by asking "What is the will of God?" From his previous posts, my suspicion is that his implied answer was "to believe" - therefore proving that you can do God's will simply by "believing" in Jesus.

As it happens, I think he asked a pretty important question. We ought to ask ourselves that as well, with no preconceptions: "What does God want from me?"

So here was my answer:

1. BELIEVE THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS ABOUT HIMSELF - 1 John 5:10-11

Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son

2. LIVE BEFORE GOD IN LOVE AND GRATITUDE - Hebrews 13:15

Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

3. LOVE OUR BROTHERS IN CHRIST AS HE LOVED US - 1 Jn 4:19-21

We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

4. LEARN WHAT PLEASURES GOD, AND LIVE ACCORDINGLY - Eph. 5:8-10

For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

5. TURN FROM THE LUSTS OF THE WORLD - 1 Pe 4:1-2

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

It's not complicated unless we make it complicated. Seek the Lord with a desire to serve Him in every aspect of our lives. If we do that with a sincere heart, the details really don't matter because whatever God calls me to do, I'm going to do it. I'm not going to make my allegiance to God dependent on whether I find something in God's word that I don't like, or that doesn't make sense to me, or that contradicts other goals I might have in life.

If those five rules dictate the way I live, I can please God. As Moses asked the Israelites in **Deut. 10:12-13**:

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?

My attitude toward God is going to determine how difficult those requirements are. If my mind is in the world and I want to do what pleases me at the moment, I'm going to find God's word demanding and unreasonable. It requires me to give up everything in service to Christ.

But the disciple of Christ doesn't see a book of limitations on his behavior. He sees a pathway to God, showing him clearly how to attain the goal of a life with the Creator, and warning him of all the obstacles he needs to avoid in order to achieve it.

Life in Christ is not burdensome for someone who doesn't want to live any other way. That doesn't mean we aren't tempted, and it doesn't mean we don't have to give things up along the way. It does mean that we never have to be confused about how to live a godly life, and what God's expectations for us are. They do not change.

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? - Mic 6:8.