

Sunday Evening Message (Preached at Sumter Baptist Temple)

August 14, 2016

The Safest Place on Earth

Topic – The Will of God

Text – Jeremiah 42:7 – 12

Introduction

Explain the context of chapter 42

This passage takes place at the time of the Babylonian captivity. King Nebuchadnezzar had taken most of the people of Jerusalem and Judaea into captivity into the land of Babylon. The King had left a very small remnant of impoverished people in the land.

However, the land of Judah became a very lawless and dangerous place. In chapter 41, we read about a man named Ishmael who slew Gedaliah, the governor of the land of Judah; and 70 other men who had come into the city of Mizpah to bring offerings and incense to the house of the Lord.

The Land of Judah had become a very dangerous place, and it would make perfect sense, humanly speaking, for the people of God to leave there to go to a place that was safer, a place that is more prosperous, a place where there are better jobs. But as we see in our text, Judah was also the place of God's will; the place where God was going to bless His people.

Illustrate – My wife and I both grew up in a town called Brick, NJ. Several years ago Brick, NJ was proclaimed to be the safest place in America.

Conversely - Camden, NJ has been at the top of just about every crime category in the country.

Almost 20 years ago – God led my family to work as a youth pastor and bus worker at the Lighthouse Baptist Church in Gloucester City, NJ – right next door to Camden. Much of our ministry work took place in Camden.

In Camden I personally witnessed:

- 1 People selling guns and drugs
- 2 Major drug bust on a street that we picked up on, where the criminals actually came back and attacked the police in order to recover their drugs, guns and money.
- 3 While picking up on a Sunday morning, I was within 30 yards of a shootout.
- 4 While trying to break up a fight between two teenage girls, I saw one of them break a Snapple bottle over the other one's head.

Camden and Gloucester City were very dangerous places; but for my family they were the safest places on planet earth because Gloucester City and Camden were the perfect will of God for our lives.

This evening, I want to speak to you for a few minutes about this subject – *“The Will of God - The Safest Place on Earth”*

Review Chapter 42

I The Professed Desire of the People to Submit Themselves to the Will of God (vs. 1 – 6)

We will see in a minute that these same people will forsake the revealed will of God given through the counsel of God’s man, Jeremiah; but, for a moment, let’s consider whether or not these people were sincere in that they truly desired to what God wanted them to do.

I think most times God’s people truly want to do what’s right.

Illustrate – Peter and James and John in Gethsemane – the spirit indeed is willing

Illustrate – Peter really believed he would die for the Lord.

The problem comes when the will of God, goes against the human wisdom of man.

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.” (Proverbs 3:5-8)

II The Promised Defense of the Lord to Protect the People If They Obey Him and Stay in Judah (vs. 7 – 12)

III The Prophesied Dissemblance of the People (God told Jeremiah that the people would not listen)

The bottom line is that the people were going to do what they wanted to do anyway.

Illustrate – People often come to me for counsel, but I know that they are going to do what they think is best anyway. Often they are just hoping for a stamp of approval for what they already plan on doing.

People often shop for counsel.

Jeremiah knew what the will of God was for the people of Judah. He was the spokesman from God to the people. Jeremiah knew that the will of God for them was to stay in Judah. It was:

1 The Place of Security and Safety

Not that bad things can't happen inside the will of God – sometimes it is the will of God for God's people to suffer. Paul suffered in the will of God with a thorn, but God gave him grace with the thorn. If he had been out of the will of God he would have suffered the same thorn, or a worse one; but, he would have also lost the grace that came with being in God's perfect will.

2 The Place of Success

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." (Joshua 1:8)

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psalm 1:1-3)

Illustrate – Elijah – Brook Cherith – I have instructed the Ravens to feed you there (1 Kings 17)
The rest of King Ahab's kingdom were starving, but God showed Elijah a place where he could be provided for by God.

3 The Place of Satisfaction

God's people wouldn't have just survived had they stayed in the land, they would have thrived.

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." - (John 10:10)

Practical Points:

Illustrate – Lee Roberson with Lou Rossi – “find the will of God and do it”

How Can I Live My Life Inside of the Perfect Will of God? How can I know the will of God and do the will of God?

1 The Will of God Is Discernible

God will never ask you to do something without making it clear to you that it is in fact His will.

It is revealed in the Word of God

It is perfected through a Walk with God

Walking with God means that you are daily in the Word and prayer.

Walking with God means that you are part of a New Testament Church, and you are attending the preaching and teaching of the Word of God; and you are serving God according to your gifts and level of growth.

So, when I am determining whether something is the will of God for my life, I first go to the Word of God to see if it is in accordance with Biblical principle; and then I pray about it to see if God gives me peace – a green light; and then I get some counsel from my pastor or some other godly men or women in the church.

The will of God can be a principle that God wants me to implement in my life.

The will of God can be a purpose that God wants me live for.

The will of God can be a position in a local church.

The will of God be a profession where God wants me to serve.

The will of God can be a place where God wants me to go, or stay.

Illustrate – God called me to Texas; God called me to New Jersey.

The will of God can be a person that God wants me to marry.

Illustrate – Girl meets a guy, but he is not saved.

2 The Will of God is Doable

God will never ask you to do something that He will not equip you to do.

Need Money -

*"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." -
(Philippians 4:19)*

Need Strength -

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." - (Philippians 4:13)

Need wisdom -

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." - (James 1:5)

Need encouragement -

*"And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD." - (1
Chronicles 28:20)*

3 Will of God is Desirable

God will never ask you to do something that you would not enjoy and find fulfillment in. The will of God is your sweet spot.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." - (Romans 12:2)

"For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." - (Hebrews 10:36)

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." - (1 John 2:17)

Conclusion

Have you found the wills of God for your life? Are you doing the will of God with your life?

Life is just ticking away. Christ's return is imminent. Don't waste another day? Find out what God wants you to do and do it.

Illustration – Called to go to Bible College, but stayed behind – miserable.