

Are You Doing God's Will Part 5

"1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. 4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. 9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. 13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. 18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. 19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. 21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." (1 Peter 2:1-25 KJV)

In the mid of the Scripture that Peter wrote we can read the following: ***"15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."*** (1 Peter 2:15 KJV) Peter mentioned that according to the will of God we are requested to be well doing certain things in our lives in order that we will have our communications done well and effectively in the world. Therefore let us start reading and meditating from the beginning of this chapter.

"1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking:" (1 Peter 2:1 KJV) God wants us to lay aside and to get rid of the following bad things that will have negative things in our lives.

Malice: Ill will, a desire to injure and inclination toward depravity.

Guile: Craftiness and deceit.

Hypocrisies: Like stage player who hide himself under a false appearance.

All evil speaking: All the unwholesome talk, lies, slanders and accusation.

All what we had learned from the world of bad things we need to confess its futility and we need to throw away.

"2 As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:" (1 Peter 2:2 KJV) *We need to start to feed ourselves by the Word of God. The Word of God will make us grow into holy and Godly life. The Word of God will make us grow into the right direction that God wants us to be in.* ***"As newborn babes,"*** they frequently suck the milk from their mothers and if the mother is away they will start to cry. *We too need to continue to read the Bible to grow spiritually with the pure milk that will make us strong, immune from the evil work and ready for doing the good work of God.*

"3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious:" (1 Peter 2:3 KJV) We should be the more eager to go on this way of life and to adopt such new style of living because we had tasted that the Lord is good and He had done great miracles to us. *The more grace we receive from God then the more we are motivated to move forward to live in holiness and Godliness renouncing all the ungodly practices.*

"4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious:" (1 Peter 2:4 KJV) As the Lord is gracious then we need to be drawing near to Him. Peter called the Lord here a living stone because he started here to use the allegory of the house to compare it with the church. As stones are used to build the house, so man, a living stone is used to build up God's church. In likewise manner Peter was first called by Christ to be a rock upon whom Christ will build up His church, ***"18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*** (Matthew 16:18 KJV)

"4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious:" (1 Peter 2:4 KJV) Christ is disallowed and rejected in this world. But He is chosen and is precious to God. *In the same way when we come to God through Jesus Christ our Lord we will be also exposed to rejection, isolation and to persecution, and we need to bear that all in order for us to do well.*

"5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:5 KJV) Peter here announced that we who believe and draw near to Christ, we are lively stones, and these stones when coming together will build up a spiritual house, and that is God's church. Apostle Peter announced that every lively stone is a holy priesthood commissioned by God to offer their lives to serve the Lord in leading others and their families and to bring them to Christ.

"6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." (1 Peter 2:6 KJV) In starting a building they usually after they dig the foundation they will start to lay down the

stone. The first stone is the chief corner stone that the other stones will come and put over it and around it. The chief corner stone it has a special shape and protrusions that the next stones need to be arranged to fit itself on the chief corner stone. ***“20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” (Ephesians 2:20 KJV)*** Christ is elected as chief corner stone in building His Church, and He is precious because without Him nothing can be started or done. *We therefore as spiritual stone we understand from such arrangement that we need to be changed and make ourselves fit and to be conformed to the pattern that Christ gave us to follow in order to be fitted with Christ our chief corner stone. Christ has a good plan for each and every one of us and we need to trust that arrangement, that Christ has for each and every one of us knowing that as we obey what He planned for us and command us then we will not be put to shame.*

In the building the temple of God in Jerusalem, the stones that they used to build the temple was prepared in a separate place and brought ready to be put in the temple of God as we read, ***“7 And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.” (1 Kings 6:7 KJV)*** So at the final site of construction there was no sound heard in fixing the stones or to rearrange them. But in the site of preparation they were cut and chiseled out using chisels and hammers to be shaped appropriately according to the given design. The same for us now, in this world we are at the site of the preparation, the Lord is preparing us, the Holy Spirit is leading us and equipping us, the church is teaching us, and correcting us. We might have struggle, admonished, rebuked and even disciplined. Our voice might be raised up, and misunderstanding may disturb our peace for certain time. But certainly we are reshaped, transformed and moved forward from glory to glory, filled with the Holy Spirit, waiting for the redemption of our bodies that when Christ will come we will be taken up into the sky meeting the Lord in the cloud. The church today is the site of preparation preparing God’s children for His coming, to be ***“made ready before it was brought thither,”*** into the holy Jerusalem that would be coming down from Heaven prepared for us as we read, ***“10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” (Revelation 21:10-11 KJV).***

“7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner:” (1 Peter 2:7 KJV) As all these spiritual facts are clear to us then Christ, and His Word and commands are precious. He is indispensable and we are undone without Him. He is precious to us and without Him we are in chaos and disorder. ***“But unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.”*** To those who disobey Christ and reject Him, and will try to go away from living in His will, Christ will be for them made the head of the corner. Even they don’t like Him they will be obeying Him by force.

“8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.” (1 Peter 2:8 KJV) For those who are disobedient Christ will be for them a painful experience and a rock of offence and they will comply to His commands and Word not by delight but by force. That is why you found in the church people who smoothly obey the instruction and comply with Christ’s Word. And the other people you found them adamant and not willing to give up their stand and comply with

God’s Word. They stumble and fall, regressing backward, being disobedient to Christ; you see them with your eyes but they are far from God and His blessings due to their disobedience.

“9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;” (1 Peter 2:9 KJV) Apostle Peter had confidence in the member of God’s church that he is writing. Those who read and follow the Word of God that is sent to them they will be changed. ***“But ye are a chosen generation.”*** God had purpose in choosing us, is that in obeying Him we are becoming a royal priesthood, holy in living, and to lead others to live in holiness to become and to be part of a holy nation. ** Christ as He chose us and we receive Him and become to us precious then we are peculiar people, and unusual with our characters and abilities: but to the people of this world, we are odd, strange, and abnormal. But that is what is needed to be manifested and revealed so that we can declare Him, we can declare His work in us in praises, in delight and in adoration, the one who called us from darkness into His marvelous light. * We don’t get intimidated of what the people speak about us after we came to Christ, and their opinion of us because we know very well where we had been and we know where Christ had brought us.*

“10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” (1 Peter 2:10 KJV) Before being integrated in Christ and placed in His church we were not people. Our lives were without meaning and of no hope. But now we have hope and we can see clearly the future and what God had prepared for us. In coming to Christ our sins forgiven and we had shown mercy and given the chance to experience the new life.

“11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul:” (1 Peter 2:11 KJV) Therefore as we received mercy and become a chosen people of God, therefore Apostle Peter is beseeching us. We need to understand that we are just pilgrims in the world. The earth is not our country. Our place is in Heaven and one day we will be there. Therefore we behave as strangers. Strangers they don’t delight in the new place they are living. They always remember home and they will always want to go back. Our home is in Heaven, and we delight to go back there, yearning to the moment that Christ will come and transform our lowly bodies to a Heavenly one. As a manifestation of our Heavenly citizenship we don’t delight in earthly sinful actions and deeds. Therefore we abstain and totally cut all fleshly lust. The fleshly lust is against the soul. The soul will remain alive after death. The righteous soul will be with God, but if the soul is wicked then will be in hell after death. The fleshly lust will always push the soul to sin and put him in danger of hell. Therefore we need to give no heed for the fleshly lust so that we will always be at peace with God and in line with His Word and commands.

“12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” (1 Peter 2:12 KJV) Rejecting the fleshly lust will not only protect our souls but also will express honest communication with the people around us, especially toward the non believers. The people as earlier described, they may misunderstand us and name us adversely of who we are. They might even see us as harmful people and bad toward them. But the time will come when God shall adjudge us when He will judge the world, ***“which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”***

The day of visitation, is not the second coming of Christ, but every now and then and after a period of time God will adjudge and bring justice in revealing the truth to the people by paying the wicked for his wickedness and rewarding the righteous for his righteousness. When God will do that, those who mistreated us they will realize that we were right and what we were doing was good, and it was intended good for them. That might happen after years, and even it might happen when we are no more existing in the world, when we are in Heaven. God will do that to reinstate the people into the right path and to vindicate and to prove our authenticity toward the people. Therefore we need to persevere in our stand and loyalty toward Christ, being royal priesthood, living in holiness, bearing all the accusation and the injustice, trusting the One who will visit and will adjudge, and people would become aware of the truth. When that will take place, people will be able to see our lives and actions that they witnessed before, is the proper example for them to repent, to follow Christ and to live in His will.

“13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme” (1 Peter 2:13 KJV) The call of Apostle Peter for the church to live as strangers and pilgrims is evident here in his instruction to the believers to be in submission to the authorities; to the king as higher authorities or to the governors who are under the king as we also can read in the next verse. These authorities are composed of non believers people and when the believers will show respect and submission to these authorities then they will give a good idea about who is Christ and how He teaches His people to be respectful to rules and authorities. The testimony of Christ will be better portrait when the believers show respect to the rules and keep the system and abide with the rules of the government. The rules of the government may include tax and other payments for governmental services. Therefore we are obliged to do well in abiding with all that in order for us to fulfill God's will.

“14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well:” (1 Peter 2:14 KJV) The rule of the government are directed to punish those who are doing evil and to reward those who do good. *Therefore for us to do good and to be spared the punishment and the penalties of the government upon their subjects we need to abide with all the rules and the regulations of the government.*

Initially the Jewish were having God's kingdom on earth. But since they disobeyed and started to worship idols and brought them to God's temple, the Lord sent them enemies, the fieriest of them was the Babylonian, who conquered them and brought them to exile in Babylon, and from that day the Jewish lost their kingdom and become subject to other nations. Even after exile when they returned to their land they were under the subjection of other government. That situation was imposed on them. Therefore submission to the non believers' authorities and accepting to abide with their rules is submission to the discipline of God and what He ordained as consequences to their sins.

Nebuchadnezzar the king of the Babylonian when he made a covenant with king Zedekiah, that he need to be subject to king Nebuchadnezzar, the Scripture tell us the following about King Zedekiah: ***“11 Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. 12 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD. 13 And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God***

of Israel.” (2 Chronicles 36:11-13 KJV) Nebuchadnezzar the king of the Babylonian made king Zedekiah swear by the name of our God to be subject to King Nebuchadnezzar. But later on rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar and God considered that action as rebelliousness against God who placed King Nebuchadnezzar against him as a discipline for him in order to bear the consequences of his sin.

When the people of God did not abide with the principle of God's Word and abuse His grace, God would handed them over to the non believers to rule over them. It is a fair punishment. They did not know how to fear God and respect Him, then God put them under the non believers to rule over them. Therefore they needed to fear the authorities to be spared punishment; otherwise they will be dealt with harshly if they will abuse the authorities. The non believers' authorities that God had placed His people under their care, the other purpose of them is to protect his people. Therefore authorities of the governments are protection to the subjects and terror to those who rebel.

The same for us today as Christians; our Kingdom is not on earth, therefore while we are living on earth we need to submit to the government authorities that God had set on us as consequences of our sins in abusing His grace. When Christians now a day behave as non believers then to be put them under the mercy of non believer government is a fair deal.

The Prophet Jeremiah kept on admonishing them to go and surrender and submit to the authorities of the Babylonians. Prophet Ezekiel admonished God's people who were in exiles in Babylon with the same thing. Jeremiah was in Jerusalem, and Ezekiel was in Babylon, they were not in communication but both of them wrote the same thing to the people of God, to submit to the authorities.

In the New Testament the writing of Peter is directing the church to submit to authorities. The writing of Apostle Paul also has the same prospect to submit to authorities. Both of them were not in direct communication but the Holy Spirit inspired them with the same thing: ***“1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.” (Romans 13:1-7 KJV)***

Therefore the government of the non believers is the will of God for us today and we need to persevere and behave till He come and take us to Heaven. Even Christ crucified by the Romans soldiers in submission to God's will. Therefore rebelling against the non believer's government authorities is rebelling against God.

“15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:” (1 Peter 2:15 KJV) The will of God then is to accept to be under the rules of the government of the non believers and in doing so we are doing well and exactly fulfilling the will of God. When apostle Peter wrote, ***“that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men”***, what he means here is the following: *The places that we are living under the authorities of non believers government, and as we are obeying and submitting to their rules, there are also other people around us who are rebelling against these rules, and who keep rebelling and speaking bad against the government. When they will see us doing well and prospering under the same government they will be put to shame. Our obedience to the rules will silence them. It will prove to them that their stand is not correct, and the fault is not on the rules or the government but on them.*

“16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God:” (1 Peter 2:16 KJV) Apostle Peter instructed them to live as free men. Christ entering our lives gave us freedom from sin and death. Therefore we should not use the grace of God and the freedom that God gave us to do evil things, or to do things on our own.

“17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king:” (1 Peter 2:17 KJV) In regard to people outside the church and those who are not yet in our faith, ***“Honour all men. Love the brotherhood.”*** We are instructed here to respect and to honor them in respect to their positions and understand that what they have from position is from God and is used by God to provide a valuable service as we had explained. In regard to the brethren inside the church, we are instructed to love them and care for them because the Lord died for His church and He wants us to be keepers of our brethren. Loving the brotherhood is not like the love of the world, but we need to care for them and keep them from temptations and help them while they are in troubles or in times of need. We are instructed to fear God and to do what is correct even if the eyes of men is not over us because we know that the eye of God is watching over all the affairs of our lives. God is the one who is managing the whole universe, ***“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.” (2 Chronicles 16:9 KJV)*** God who manage the affairs of the whole universe, He is the one who install kings and the rest of the authorities of the non-believers to fulfill His own purpose and He wants us to honor them. Therefore he says ***“Honour the king:”*** Even if the kings are wicked we still need to obey their rules because they are doing the very purpose of God. *Submission to the world leaders is total even if they are wicked. That is contrary to the church leaders. We are called to submit and to be under Godly church leaders. But those disobedient and unfaithful church leaders we are not called to submit to them or honor them especially when they try to drag us to go away and against the will of God.*

“18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward:” (1 Peter 2:18 KJV) It will be easy to submit to good people and obey them. But for the bad people it will not be an easy thing. The purpose of this submission is well explained by Apostle Paul, ***“9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; 10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” (Titus 2:9-10 KJV)*** The purpose of such submission is finally to show Christ in a better way to them.

In the Old Testament the law of God required the following from those who find a slave who run away from their master: ***“15 Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee: 16 He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him.” (Deuteronomy 23:15-16 KJV)*** The instruction was not to hand over the slave to His master, and that contradict of what Peter and Paul instructed the church to do. The reason behind that is that the servants who were working under the Jewish, most of them were non believers, and God would not allow the Jewish to suppress or to be a bad example to them or a hindrance to them from coming unto the Lord. The same reason is what made Peter and Paul instructing the church believers to submit to their non believer authorities; to please them so they will be more responsive to the gospel when they see the good example of the Christians who are humble before the rules and the regulations of the place that they are working.

“19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.” (1 Peter 2:19 KJV) We endure all of that for the sake of the keeping the law of God intact. It is thankworthy that God had entrusted us with such ministry that through our lives the Gentiles will know God. Our suffering should not come out because of sin or worldliness or because of attitude problem. But if we suffer for the sake of God, bearing his name, receiving insult and grief and enduring patiently in order that HIS name would be glorified, then that is acceptable and commendable before God, ***“20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.” (1 Peter 2:20 KJV)***

“21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:” (1 Peter 2:21 KJV) The above description of the kind of life that God wants us to live is what God called us for. Christ went ahead of us in this kind of suffering in preaching and spreading God’s Word. His suffering was under the hand of the Gentiles. He was put to death by the Romans soldiers. Apostle Peter when He was asking the believers to submit to the government authorities, he was also reminding them to follow the example of Jesus who suffered under the non believers and submitted His life to them.

“22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:” (1 Peter 2:22 KJV) Christ did not sin and He had no bitterness in His heart toward those who hurt Him.

“23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not;” (1 Peter 2:23 KJV) *God wants us to be trained that when we received insults and get humiliated we will not react and revenge from those who hurt us. As long as we have desire to revenge or threatened when we are hurt then we are not yet mature and our training not yet finished.* ***“But committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:”*** There are times in life that injustice either beyond our control or beyond our ability to bear and in such situation what is in our hands is just to trust God and commit our lives into His hand for the outcome of those trials. God is a God of justice and He will finally prevail against the power of the evil one. The persecution against the church may seem beyond our ability and control, but once we entrust ourselves and the situation to God, He will judge righteously and will give us whatever is due for us. It is a high sense of responsibility of what we are asked to do and achieve. Christ bared all the injustice of the cross in order for us to be relieved from the sin and death. He carried the sin of the whole world to bring the salvation of

God to the whole mankind. Jesus taught His disciples to go the extra mile with the non believers, ***“And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.” (Matthew 5:41 KJV)*** Jesus lived what He taught so that the righteousness of God shall be revealed to whole mankind. ***“24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” (1 Peter 2:24 KJV)*** His response to the betrayals of the Jewish and the atrocities of the Romans soldiers was with calmness and forgiveness, with humility and submission to the authority rules, even he was innocent, having neither hatred nor threat toward those who hurt him. All that had a great impact and worked out to change the hearts of the people who witnessed how the Lord acted and conducted himself on the cross. One of the criminal who was crucified with Him when he witnessed how Jesus acted on the cross he gave his life to Jesus, ***“42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:42-43 KJV)*** Jesus was a good example for that criminal to humble down and accept that he was punished justly and was receiving what is due for him. That thief sure heard about Jesus before, and he might witness and heard about His miracles, but what he witnessed of Jesus’ attitude on the cross, had worked much on him to be changed. Christ on the cross with utmost self control and willingness not to go beyond what God ordained for Him to do and to be, had touched the life of that criminal and changed him. People they don’t know Jesus, but we who are His body, and what they will witness from us from humility will work out to challenge them and finally to change them. Another person who witnessed the death of Jesus was the centurion who was responsible on the execution group of soldiers; he was able to see Jesus the Son of God, ***“And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. (Mark 15:39 KJV)*** *As Jesus was well watched and observed, we also are well watched and observed by the non believers around us and therefore we need to be good examples to them in pertain in forgiveness love, patient, humility, self control, and submission to authorities.*

My dear and beloved: “25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls:” (1 Peter 2:25 KJV) The above description is the way that God wants us to live in God’s will. The world around us contradicts such a way of life. As well as people around us may not understand why we are living is such way. In the past we were not observing that but we were living in a way contradict the Word of Jesus and the will of God. We were astray and lost. We were heading toward wrong direction, away from God and away from Heaven. But as we repented and changed and moved back to God, we returned to Jesus, the good Shepherd who will lead us into green pasture and beside quite water. Going back to Jesus is restoration for our souls and getting back to the right direction in life. Jesus is the overseer who will not only restore our souls but He will satisfy us with peace and who will be leading us into the right direction of life.

Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the death to give me eternal life. Lord I thank you for your word that makes me understand deeply that I am a spiritual stone in your house and Jesus Christ being the precious corner stone.

Let us confess and renounce our sins. Let us renounce malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, all evil speaking, unwholesome talk, lies, slanders, accusation, rebelliousness, lack of submission to authorities, non willingness to suffer, non reading the Bible, lack of prayer, and non willingness to reproduce the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Lord I commit myself to live according to your will in regard to submission to the authorities of the non believer governments, and to be willing to suffer and endure hardship so that your Word will be preached through the good testimony of my life. Lord sustain me with your power and energy, provide for me to continue to serve you.

Lord I pray for my brethren who committed their lives unto you. Lord bless them and reward them and help to reproduce the fruit of the Holy Spirit; love, joy, peace, patient, long suffering, self control, gentleness, kindness, generosity and humility, so that people will see Jesus in their lives and through their good example. Lord protects them from persecution and preserves them from the power of the evil one.

Lord bless your church and make your church grow. Lord I pray for more evangelism and more people will be reached out for Christ. Lord I pray for more Bible studies to be opened and more congregations to be planted. Lord those who are obedient anoint them with the Holy Spirit and use them to reach the lost and to bring the fruit that you desire to see in the life of your church. Lord help us and protect us as we persevere in serving you. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let you hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

Are You Doing God’s Will Part 5. 1 Peter 2:1-25. Matthew 16:18. Ephesians 2:20. 1 Kings 6:7. Revelation 21:10-11. 2 Chronicles 36:11-13. Romans 13:1-7. 2 Chronicles 16:9. Titus 2:9-10. Deuteronomy 23:15-16. Matthew 5:41. Luke 23:42-43. Mark 15:39.

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Note: The Bread of Life is a weekly publication from the Church of God, United Arab Emirates. For further issues and more spiritual enrichment you can visit our web site at: www.churchofgoduae.com.

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