

I would to consider with you this morning a unified passage in the 5th chapter of Ephesians - 5:14-17 . . . (reading text)

Here is an interesting command Paul gives to Christians. "Be not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is." It sounds as if all of us are in one of two classes: we are either unwise or we understand what the will of the Lord is. What is the will of the Lord? Certainly the will of the Lord has created all the galaxies, all the stars. Certainly the will of the Lord controls all the tremendous processes in human life and in the life of an animal. All the different chemical processes, many of which are not understood yet, God controls them all. They are all a part of His will. Does this mean that we do not -- if we do not understand all these these things, then we are unwise? Certainly not! It must have a much narrower sense than that. There is much of the ways of God we cannot expect to understand in this life.

When he says, Be not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is, he is certainly referring what the will of the Lord is in relation to us. We should certainly understand His will relating to us. Some students have the idea when they go out in to the ministry that it is their purpose to explain all the ways of God. To give people a complete understanding of the universe and of all the problems of life, and to build the kingdom of God on earth. There is no such promise in the Bible that we would be able to do on ~~any~~ earth would be able to do all this, nor is it God's command that we should. These things are good. Any knowledge you can get is good to have, but that is not the meaning of this verse. It means the will of God as relating to us.

But not many of us understand the will of God as relating to ourselves. Do you know what is going to happen to you one year from now, or two years from now, or three years from now? Some of you ~~will~~ ^{may} probably be invalids by that ~~x~~ time. Some of you ~~will~~ ^{may} have had accidents, perhaps and be crippled. Some of you may be dead. Some of you may be successful. Some of you will have failed with whatever you have undertaken. We do not know the future. We are not unwise if we say we do not know the will of God a short distance in the future! But Paul says, Don't be unwise, be understanding the will of God. Evidently then there is a definite understanding that we are expected to have, and it is important we understand what it is.

In fact it is so important that Paul says, v.14, Wherefore he says, Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light." If we are really not understanding what the will of the Lord is, if we are unwise, he uses this other figure, we are asleep. Yet in fact we are dead. Now look at the command. Arise from the dead. How can you arise from the dead? A dead person can't rise. Impossible! Except as God works a miracle. You can't rise from the dead. We see however, that the great bulk of people of the world are dead in trespasses and sin. The great bulk of people do not know Jesus, they are dead in sins, but God is ready to work a miracle if they will just look to Christ and be saved. This is, of course, the most important thing in life i.e. that we make absolutely sure that we surely have been raised