

The Way of the Lord

30. Living With Jesus As Lord: His Guidance Is Essential

Do you earnestly desire to know our Lord's will for you each and every day? If so, that's a strong indicator that you truly *belong* to Jesus and know Him as LORD of your life. Our Lord reveals His will to you through His Spirit and His Word, which always agree. He reveals His *specific* will through *rhema*, which guides you with the direct action and response you're to take to bring His will to pass. And He reveals His principles for your character development as you establish *halakhahs*—life applications which correspond to biblical truth.

Jesus addresses *rhema* as your obedient trust to *follow through* when God speaks His Word to your spirit: "*Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word (rhema) that comes from the mouth of God*" (Matthew 4:4). We live in obedient trust in Jesus as LORD when we purpose to search out and obey His specific guidance. And keep in mind this wonderful truth: When our Father reveals His will, He also releases His *spiritual power* to accomplish it.

Let's look at a Newer Testament example of how *rhema* works. The angel Gabriel told Mary that she'd give birth to a child who'd be called the Son of the Most High (Luke 1:31). Startled, she asked how she, a virgin, could conceive. The angel replied, "*Nothing is impossible with God*" (v. 37). In other words, every *word*, that is, every *rhema* that comes from God brings the power to fulfill His purpose. Mary's humble and willing obedience to *trust* was faith enough for God to act. The Holy Spirit came upon her and the Son of God was conceived.

In the Bible, whenever God gives a *rhema* word and it's *trusted*, His spiritual power goes forth to accomplish His will. The same holds true for us today who know Jesus as LORD of our lives. Our Lord has many ways to reveal His will to you. He may use a Bible passage; or spiritual gifts of prophecy, exhortation, wisdom or knowledge. He may use dreams or visions; you may hear a still, small voice within you; or a thought may come to you that you sense is God revealing His will to you.

When you take action after receiving *rhema*, someone may ask you *why* you're doing what you're doing. Because of God's *rhema* for you, you're able to answer not only how our Lord *guided your spirit*, but also to reveal your *motive* for your obedience. When you bear witness to *how* Jesus guided you and *why* you obeyed, your testimony can convict others of their own need to seek Him and obey Him as LORD.

The Spirit of Christ in you may also guide your life as you develop biblical applications, called *halakhahs*. These biblical principles that you put into action in your life mold your character into becoming more like Jesus.

Let's review here. *Rhema* guides you into specific acts of obedience, and *halakhahs* show you *how* to live in a Christ-like manner. Jesus gave His followers the authority to apply His Word when He promised them this: "*I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven*" (Matthew 18:18). Our Lord is telling us to *apply* the Bible as our life handbook so we'll live in a way that pleases Him. When we "loose" something on earth, we discover the areas of freedom we have to love and serve others for His glory. And when we "bind" something, we refrain from whatever would cause us to sin and bring

down His holy name.

Biblical applications are our Lord's way of helping you *distinguish good from evil*. Knowing good and avoiding evil is a theme you find throughout both the Older and Newer Testaments. But just *knowing* the difference isn't enough! You have to *apply* our Lord's righteous ways to your daily choices and actions: "*Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil*" (Hebrews 5:13,14).

The many ways in which you *apply the Bible* to your life are the building blocks of developing Christ's character. You'll probably find that as you establish biblical applications for yourself and your family, a number of inner toxic motives and hidden passive aggressive symptoms will come to light. As the Apostle Paul lamented, living as *Jesus* would have us live is an ongoing struggle against our sin nature! (Romans 7:14-25) But out of love for Jesus as your LORD, you *want* this darkness exposed. Then you can intentionally turn away from its influence and live a holy life that pleases Him.

We want to make clear to you that seeking God's *rhema* and *establishing biblical applications* are two powerful ways that evidence the LORDSHIP of Jesus in your life. And these two responses to Jesus's Lordship confirm both the *deference* in your heart, and the demise of *passive aggression* where *you* were in control rather than Jesus. So when people ask you *why* you're doing what you do, you can make clear *how* our Lord revealed His specific will, or the biblical principle the Spirit used to guide the particular decision you made.

We want to end this segment with a note of caution. Over the years we've encountered many who *say* they're seeking our Lord's will, but have done little to develop His character by applying specific Scripture to their choices, values and goals. Keep in mind that the Spirit of Christ in you *uses God's Word* for you to put into action! He entrusts you with His specific guidance to deepen your character. And as the character of Jesus in you matures, He entrusts you with even more guidance. By establishing biblical applications and seeking the Spirit's specific guidance, you'll *live* the way of the Lord as His beloved slave and child.

For Further Study

- Book: Pastoring By Elders — p. 109, *Rhema: God's Guidance in Leadership*
- Newsletter, April 1997: *Becoming A Man*
- Book: *Christian Halakhahs*
- Discussing How To Restore The Early Church, Lesson 48: *Seek Rhema, Establish Halakhahs, Ensure They're Followed*

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