

# THE WAYS OF GOD VS THE WAYS OF MAN

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## INTRODUCTION

Many times in the Bible we will read about stories of people trusting God even though it did not make sense at the time. The beauty of following God even when they didn't understand what God was doing is that each time they obeyed and trusted, then God gave them a tremendous victory.

There are also examples in the Bible where a principle or teaching goes against human nature. Jesus' and Paul's teachings are full of these types of principles. We also see them often in the book of wisdom, Proverbs. In our walk with God, His ways will not always make sense to us if we look at it from a carnal, natural perspective.

## MAN'S WAYS PRODUCE MAN'S RESULTS

### Moses Flees to Midian

#### Exodus 2:11-15 (NIV)

11 Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their hard labors; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. 12 So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one around, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. 13 He went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, "Why are you striking your companion?"...

14 But he said, "Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and said, "Surely the matter has become known." 15 When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well....

In Exodus 2 we find Moses asserting himself on behalf of his own people. He tried to free his people through a human approach. If Moses continued this way, thousands would have been slain. Moses tried to take Israel's matters into his own hands. It cost him 40 years of exile in Midian working as a shepherd.

Moses tried to deliver his people using human wisdom, therefore killing the Egyptian. If Moses continued this way, thousands of Hebrews would have lost their ways in battle against the Egyptians. Later, Moses learned to trust in God's ways. When God delivered the Israelites, how many Hebrew lives were lost? None. God even led the Egyptians to give the Hebrews their gold, silver and clothes. Egypt was plundered, the Egyptian army destroyed, and no Hebrew lost his life.

## GOD'S WAYS = GOD'S RESULTS

Doing God's things in God's ways will produce God's results. Often, we face challenges and we devise a plan to deal with the problem in our way instead of trusting God to show us His way. God's desire is that His people will follow His ways. Not following the Lord in your life can result in damaging results.

### **Proverbs 14:12**

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

### **Psalms 37:34**

Wait for the LORD and keep His way, And He will exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you will see it.

## **WE HAVE LIMITED KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING**

As people, we have limited knowledge and understanding, but God knows everything. He knows the future and holds it in His hands. Life will be easier for us if we can only learn to truly trust God in our day to day life.

He knows the end from the beginning while we see just a short part of the now.

### **Isaiah 55:8-9**

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts...."

God's ways do not always make sense to the natural mind. His ways are not always the logical step to take. For example: Look at how God led Israel to destroy Jericho.

## **JERICHO**

Joshua heard a battle plan that probably did not make much sense to him at the time. They were to walk around the city of Jericho once a day for six days. Then on the seventh day they were supposed to walk around Jericho seven times. The walls would fall. As crazy as the plan sounded, Joshua went back and reported to the Hebrew soldiers that was the way they would take the city. They obeyed God and saw a victory over the city of Jericho.

## **GIDEON'S ARMY**

Judges 7:7 And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.

God asked Gideon to go against an army of 135,000 with a band of only 300 men. Gideon started with 32,000 men which was still a small number against

the enemy. Yet God asked Gideon to pare the army down to just 300 so that when the victory came it was obvious that it was the hand of God.

Can you see that God's ways and strategies can sometimes seem illogical?

### **SALVATION IS A GIFT, NOT A REWARD**

Ephesians 2:8, 9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Religion wants to work for salvation, but that is not what the Bible teaches. Salvation is a gift of grace from God. It is not something we earn or purchase. The purchase was done by Christ on the cross and is now offered to us freely. Some people, because of the pride of human nature, never accept this gift. They want to earn something that God says is impossible to earn.

### **GIVING AND RECEIVING**

Man's wisdom, logic, rational, would say that if you give something away, you end up with less. It is an act of subtraction. You never subtract something and end up with more as a result. However, God's word says that if you give you will end up with more.

#### **Proverbs 11:24** *(italics added)*

There is one who scatters (gives), yet increases more; and there is one who withholds (keeps) more than is right, but it leads to poverty.

#### **Luke 6:38**

Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

These two scriptures can only be received and acted upon by faith that what the bible says is true. How can you know for sure that there will be an increase as a result of giving, or that you will can end up in poverty as a result of saving? It goes against logic! Can you be absolutely sure, that when you give, it will be measured back to you? Only if you have faith that God's word is true. It goes against man's wisdom, but it is the wisdom of God, that seems foolish to man, and can only be obtained by faith.

### **GOD'S WAYS DO NOT MAKE SENSE TO THE NATURAL MIND BECAUSE IT CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED BY FAITH!**

The mind does not understand the road of faith. Faith is when we believe God's ways rather than our own. When we trust the road that seems "strange" at times but knowing that God will cause everything to work out.

#### **Hebrews 11:6**

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who approaches Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

## **WALK IN THE SPIRIT NOT ACCORDING TO THE FLESH**

Romans 8:5-8

For those who live according to the flesh (carnal mind) set their minds on the things of the flesh (earthly nature apart from divine influence), but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh (carnal mind) cannot please God.

Only the spiritual man can properly discern God's spiritual ways.

## **THE PROPHETS**

One of the reasons God made His plans know to the prophets was to help the people to get use to His ways and to trust His ways above their own.

### **Psalm 128:1**

How blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, Who walks in His ways.

## **CONCLUSION – A GOD CENTERED LIVING**

God is our source and we need to focus our attention on Him, on a daily basis. Following God's ways will produce God's results. Following man's ways will produce man's results. We must always seek Heavens approach to circumstances, not man's.

The middle verse in the Bible is Psalm 118:8

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."

In growing this congregation (MBCC church), we need to follow His strategy, His ways, His wisdom.