

“God’s Will, My way”

ser4038 God in the Real World, Pt 2

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by Dez Childs

Happy Mother’s Day! I’m honored that Pastor Bruce has asked me to speak with you this morning.

My husband Steve and I celebrate ten years of marriage this month. Go us! We have two children together, Tristan and Zoe. Today is my son, Tristan’s, fifth birthday, so when you see him today make sure you wish him a happy birthday.

Being a Mom was never something I thought GOD would call me to be. Growing up, I was never very nurturing or motherly. My Mom is here this morning, so Happy Mother’s Day, Mom!

I was never the one whom our neighbors would ask to babysit their children. I am the baby of the family. I liked to be the one who was taken care of and not the other way around. It’s still that way!

As a child, I always wanted to be a famous singer. In many ways singing helped me gain the acceptance I so deeply desired, so early on I began this pursuit of a music career.

I started singing lessons pretty young. I began performing at different local events and contests. At around 18 years old I

was in a few different bands and played the bar scene. I tried out for American Idol. I did anything that might bring me closer to this goal of Stardom.

When I was 15, I had accepted Christ after seeing the Passion Play here at GCCC. But it wasn't until my early 20's that I began to take my Christian faith more seriously. My husband, before we were married, actually had the greatest influence in helping me grow in my faith. His knowledge of Creationism really helped me see that the Bible was real and could be trusted. So I started going to church on a regular basis and I started reading my Bible every day.

At 22 I went to Bible College in California. And while in Bible College I discovered this thing called, "Contemporary Christian Music". So, naturally, I thought to myself, "Well, I'm a Christian. I can sing. I should become a Christian Artist." I thought, "Surely, this is GOD'S WILL for my life and this is indeed *the way*. To be a famous Christian artist."

But, as we will see over the next few minutes, we cannot pursue, "God's will, my way". I know I have a gift and I want to use it for the Lord. But I never sought God's will on HOW to use my talents.

In 2012, I released my first CCM album and started to tour locally. In 2014, I released my first Christmas single. I took a job as a radio host for a Christian music station. I got to open for some bigger Christian acts because of my connections with the station. In 2016, I released my second Contemporary

Christian record. I released some more Christmas music. I played one of the biggest Christian music festivals called Creation a few times. In 2019 I decided to visit Georgia to work with Christian music producer, Scotty Wilbanks, who worked with NewSong, Third Day and now with Luke Bryan.

I loved the music Scotty and I produced and it was a great experience. But at about 8 years into building this Christian music kingdom I noticed how stressed out I really was. I was constantly discouraged. I constantly had this inner turmoil. Always striving and always wanting more. It all just felt very, “wrong”. And, by this point in my career, I was married and I had two kids, so keeping up with a music career was getting harder. In some ways I thought my kids got in the way, and that’s when I knew that something was definitely wrong. I started showing physical signs of stress. I carried a heavy burden of failure and depression over my music career.

I was finding that being a Christian Artist was more of a career than a calling.

So, I finally did what I should've done at the beginning of this career.

I prayed.

I prayed, “God, how do YOU want me to use my gifts? Because my way just doesn’t seem to be the way.” And through prayer and reading of God’s word I sensed deeply

that God was telling me to let go of my pursuit of becoming a Contemporary Christian Artist. At least the way I was doing it.

I felt in some ways that I was using God's kingdom to build my own. So, in the coming months I'll be taking some major steps back in my career as a Christian Artist. My heart is really for my children and to be the best Mother I can be. It's never a bad idea to invest in your children. I also truly enjoy teaching others to sing and developing other artists. So that's where I feel God may be leading me.

It was a very hard decision to make but I've learned over the years that when God says no to something it is not to hurt us. In fact, His direction is always for our protection.

On top of stepping back in my pursuit as a Christian artist, I have, sadly, decided to step out of my worship leader role here at GCCC. It has been a wonderful journey leading you in worship. But my husband and I have somewhat become ships in the night. We lead two separate lives and we both felt a need for change for the sake of our health and family. So, at the end of this month, I will no longer be the lead worshipper for GCCC.

The truth is, many of us may be trying to fulfill God's will in our own way. But before we get to that, let's take a look at scripture.

I cannot think of a better example of someone who knew God's will, yet did it his OWN WAY time and time again, than Abraham of our faith.

Abraham, who was also named Abram, had a wife named Sarai and they were old and didn't have any kids. There was nobody after Abram to continue the family line so he was concerned. Back then, to have children to carry on the family name was very important.

So, God showed up and made an awesome promise to Abram.

Let's read *Genesis 15:2-6*

2 But Abram said, "Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

4 Then the word of the Lord came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir." 5 He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

God HIMSELF made Abram a promise! A clear-cut promise! He promised an heir. A child in their old-age. Abram and Sarai were 75 years old. Now, I'm 34, and I'm exhausted chasing two kids. I couldn't imagine having a child at 75! NO THANK YOU!

But fast forward 15 years from God's initial promise. Abram and Sarai were 90 years old and still no baby! Even though Abram heard the very voice of GOD his wife Sarah became impatient. She desperately wanted a baby and to be a Mother. So she took matters into her own hands and tried to fulfill God's Will, Her Way.

Let's see what she did!

Let's go to Genesis 16:1-5 (Read)

16 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; 2 so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her."

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. 3 So after Abram had been living in Canaan for ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. 4 He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

Do you think this was a good plan?

LET'S CONTINUE TO READ...

"When she (HAGAR) knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress (SARAI). 5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me."

Things got a little cray cray in Abram's house. Sarai blamed her husband for the mess she had caused. And Hagar became prideful. Hagar knew she could bear children and Sarai couldn't. And Sarai became jealous.

For those of you that know the story, Hagar bore a son named Ishmael. Things got worse in Abram's house so Sarai sent them both away.

Abram lost his first son. Tragic. He was heart-broken.

OUR WAY, which is just a different word for SIN, only leads to further complications in life. Ishmael, the son of Hagar, was the work of the flesh, the fruit of strife and impatience. Most scholars believe that Ishmael's descendants went on to form the Arabic and Islamic Nations.

Fast forward another 10 years and finally God's promise is fulfilled. When Abraham and Sarah were about 100 years old, Isaac was born. Isaac was the true child of promise, the work of the Spirit. God's will. From Isaac came the Nation of Israel and then the Messiah, JESUS.

Ishmael is the offspring of, "MY WAY"! Striving in the flesh. Israel is the offspring of, "GOD'S WAY! Salvation for all mankind. Two brothers still at war with each other today! The Flesh and the Spirit are still at war today.

So YOU may be thinking, “Well, Dez, I’m not very musical. I’m not trying to pursue Christian music. Or I can’t really relate to Abraham’s story. How do I know if I’m trying to fulfill God’s will in my own way?”

Let me give you three examples of where you might know what God’s will is, but you might be going about it in your own way.

1. An example could be buying a House or a car

You earnestly desire a new home or car. You pray about it. You sense the Lord saying yes. You have peace about it. But instead of waiting for the right home and saving up your money you start house hunting the next day. You find a home that you know in the long run you cannot afford. But you buy it anyway because you desperately want it. God’s Will, Your Way

2. An example could be finding a Job

You know God has called you to find a job. You have a family and need to provide for them. You find a job that really doesn’t align with God’s call on your life. Maybe there’s a lot of dishonest work happening within your job. But you say, “Hey, I need a job. Gotta pay the bills”. God’s will is for you to work but you don’t really care about the way in which you work.

3. Finding a Marriage Partner could be another example

Many people don't know this but I was engaged to another guy before my husband, Steve. Oddly enough, his name was also Steve. I guess I just have a thing for Steve's. So we will call him the WRONG STEVE. The WRONG Steve and I met in Bible College. We actually met in a prayer group. All the stars aligned and it looked really good on the outside. But we fought all of the time. I had no peace about it. I knew God was calling me to get married but NOT to that STEVE!

Just because a person is a Christian doesn't mean you have to marry them. It may look good and feel good in the moment but believe me those feelings will pass. Maybe it is God's will for you to get married, but you know you're with the wrong person.

Follow God's Will. Do it His Way and you will wind up with the RIGHT STEVE! Or the right Stephanie!

Right now, I am praying that the Holy Spirit will bring to mind that one thing you know is God's will, but you're going about it your own way.

Don't do what Abraham did and try to fulfill God's will in your own way. Doing life our own way can have dire consequences. He will give you the desires of your heart in His perfect time.

Let's talk about someone who did God's will, God's way and reaped the most eternal benefits. Jesus is our most perfect example of someone WHO did God's will, God's way. For there was no other way.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, right before His terrible death on the cross, Jesus knelt before His Father in heaven in terrible agony. You know, Jesus did not want to go to the cross. He actually said, "Father, if there's ***another way***, please let this cup pass from me BUT nevertheless, not ***my will*** be done but **YOUR will** be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Jesus said, "Your will, YOUR WAY!"

So, knowing the will of the Father, Jesus took the way of the cross because we had chosen the wrong way. Then after Jesus died to pay for our sin, He rose again on the third day saving all who would call on His Name. It is **God's will** that none would perish but that all would have everlasting life.

Jesus is the way to that everlasting life.

Don't try to get to heaven your OWN WAY, because it will lead to eternal destruction.

- 1.) Admit the truth that you're a sinner, that your sin separates you from God.

- 2.) Believe that Jesus' finished work on the cross can save you from your sin.
- 3.) Commit your life to Jesus.
- 4.) Do it today, for tomorrow is not guaranteed.

God is the Father you always wanted. Dare I say, He is also the Mother you always wanted.

Happy Mother's Day.