

Remodeling Underway, part 2 of Rebels
September 29, 2013

As Christians we want to know and do the will of God in your life. In order to worship God acceptably with our lives we need to know and live out God's will in all the situations, decisions, and relationships of our lives each day.

Every day we face situations where we need to know God's will. Every day we have choices to make. We have decisions that need to be made. We are in relationships with different people and need to know how to act. What choice is going to bring Jesus glory? Which action will honor Him?

Learning the will of God in any particular situation of our lives is not always easy. For many of the issues, situations, and decisions that we face each day, discerning God's will is not so clear.

One thing that makes discerning God's will hard is that we have been shaped by the culture in which we are living. We have been shaped by the values and beliefs, the attitudes and actions, of those around us.

Let me give you an example of this. America is an independent country. It is independent because 237 years ago most of the people living here rebelled against the king of England. Maybe you believe they were justified in their rebellion against the King of England.

There may be multiple reasons for believing that. But have you asked yourself why you believe that? Could the primary reason be that you adopted that belief because you grew up in America, where that victory is celebrated every July fourth? It is always presented as a good thing. People are proud that this side won the war.

In deciding that they were justified did you try to determine if it was God's will for them to rebel against the king? Many Christians living in that time wanted to know if it was within God's will to reject the King's authority. And many of them determined that it was not God's will. They read New Testament passages such as Romans 13.

Romans 13:1-2 (NIV) Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Many colonists understood this to mean that it was not God's will that they rebel against the King of England. Therefore they faced some difficult decisions about the war. Many of these people resisted the rebellion efforts and were persecuted for their loyalty to God and the king.

Well, the rebelling colonists won the war and their independence. But if they had lost the war, and America today was still part of the British Empire, would you still think the colonists were justified in their rebellion? In-other-words do you believe the colonists were justified because of what the Bible says, or because you grew up in a culture that says they were right?

Answering such a question matters if you want to know and live out God's will. As Christians we need to be in a process of seeing the differences between the culture's values and God's values. We need to be learning to see the world from God's point of view instead of an American point of view. We need to see our lives from God's point of view instead of a republican's point of view, or a democrat's point of view, or an engineer's point of view, or a teacher's point of view, or a man's point of view, or a woman's point of view, or a teenager's point of view.

We are shaped by those around us, those involved in our lives. We pick up many values, beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices from those people groups we are a part of. To learn and live out God's will we must be intentional about replacing those parts of the world that we find in ourselves. Paul writes of it this way.

Romans 12:2 (HCSB) Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

He writes to the early Christians in Rome, those who had grown up in the culture of the heathen Roman empire. He writes that they should not to be conformed to that culture. The truth was, they were already conformed in many ways. In dress, language, values, beliefs, prejudices, choices of food, entertainment, sports, and lots more they were conformed to the culture in which they lived.

It was inescapable. It is impossible to grow up in a culture and not be shaped in many ways by that culture. You know that. You see that all around you. People who grow up in America, have American values. People who grow up in France have French values. People who grow up in Japan have Japanese values.

Second generation Americans are a hodgepodge of their parent's values and American values. We call this the great American melting pot. People who grow up in America become Americanized.

People who grow up in racist families, tend to be racist. Not all of them. Environment and culture aren't the only things shaping people. But we see this is often true.

People who grow up in a certain political atmosphere, tend to adopt those politics. People who follow sports often follow a certain team because their parents did, or their friends do. I grew up between Washington and Baltimore. My dad rooted for the Washington teams, so it was natural for his children to adopt his teams as their own.

We are, to a great extent, shaped by the culture, or cultures, in which we grow up. We are shaped by the spirit of the age. Whatever the culture is, whatever most people are, that creates a shaping peer pressure on everyone.

It may be that some of those values coincide with God's will but that other values are opposed to God's will. Figuring out the difference is a major part of what living as a Christian is about.

The process for discovering the extent of the world in you and replacing it with the will of God is described as a transformation. You have to become someone different than the person you were before you became a Christian. You have to get the world out of you and spiritual truth in you.

How does this take place? It takes place in your thinking. He writes that you must renew your mind.

Renewing your mind means to replace the world's values, beliefs, and attitudes with those of God in you.

Some years ago my wife and I had a kitchen renovated in our home. We had two kinds of wallpaper in the kitchen, plus some copper tiles on the wall behind the stove. It was a hodgepodge in that one little room. We stripped off the tiles and wall paper and painted the whole thing one color. We put in a new floor, counter top, sink, faucet, and cabinets. We did not get a whole new kitchen. Some things, like the floor plan and appliances were the same. We kept what was still good of the old and replaced the rest.

That's what we have to do in our minds. We have to renovate or renew our minds. We have to change the beliefs upon which we live our lives. This is because **Our beliefs determine the things we say and do**. You act everyday upon your beliefs. People in other countries find it amazing that Americans do some of the things we do. And we are just as amazed at some of the things they do. The truth is we are both acting out of our beliefs. Our beliefs about right and wrong are different, so we behave differently. Our values are different. Our tastes are different. Our assumptions about the world are different. Our prejudices and attitudes about things are different. That's why we act differently.

There is much of our culture in us. There is much of the world in us. As Christians our beliefs and values need to be renewed in light of God's truth so we can know and live out His will. What you believe determines the things you say and do.

We need to see our world from God's perspective. We need to see God's values, God's priorities, God's purposes, God's morality. Then we will see more clearly God's will for our everyday lives. When we renew our minds, then we will know His will.

So how do we renew our minds? **Renewing your mind involves praying through the Bible.**

The process of renewal is accomplished when three things come together. The first is your humble, willing self. The second is the Bible. And the third is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truth and principles from the Bible. It is these truths and principles upon which we build a knowledge of God's will.

As the Holy Spirit interprets our lives for us in light of God's word, we will see what needs to change in our thinking. When you change your thinking, your beliefs, then your behavior will change.

Let me give you an example. The new television season has started for the major networks. We watched a few shows this week to see if they are worth watching. Some of the new shows we decided not to watch simply from the commercials for them. The content of the clips we saw in the advertisements were enough to reveal the immoral beliefs and values

being pushed by those shows. Other shows we had to watch in order to see what is there. We watched a couple of shows and could see they deserved a second try. One show we gave a mild nod to and decided if it did not improve in the next episode, we would drop it from our watch list.

I imagine you are doing the same thing. You have a set of beliefs about what is acceptable, what is beneficial, what is praiseworthy, what fits within the will of God. You use these beliefs of yours to decide what to watch for entertainment.

This is part of Christian repentance. Repentance from sin starts in the mind. Obedience starts in the mind. Behavior starts in the mind. When you start thinking about the world like God does, then what you used to think was interesting you will now see as wicked. And if you care about living out God's will, then you will change your words and actions.

This is a two part series of sermons. It is titled "Rebels" because we are to rebel against the form the world wants to shape us into. We are living in the age of sin against God. The world has turned away from God and His will. The spirit of sin in the world expects us to join up in resisting God and His will. The world wants all of us to sin.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to resist the pressure of the world to conform to its sinfulness. As the world rebels against God, we are to rebel against the world.

Resist the world. Seek your transformation through the renewing of your mind.

Change is inevitable. You will be a different person a year from now. Your experiences will change you. Your relationships will change you. The things you learn will change you. Events in the world will change you. Changes in culture will change you. You will have to make choices because of what is happening around you, choices you wouldn't have to make if someone else did not force them on you.

As our world changes this year, you will be faced with issues calling for a choice. What will you believe? What will you support? What will you condone in others? What will you choose for your own behavior?

The question is not whether you will change. You will change. The question is what kind of you will you be a year from now? How will you change? Who will you be like?

Will you be more like Jesus, or more like the world? If you want to be more like Jesus, then seek to know and live God's will through the renewing of your mind.

The world is resisting God's will. Are you? God's will for you starts with admitting you are a sinner before Him. God doesn't want to condemn you for your sin. God wants to save you.

God loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins so that by faith in Him you can be forgiven. God raised Jesus from the dead to prove His acceptance of Jesus' death for sin.

Today, put your faith in Jesus and be forgiven of all of your sins.

Remodeling Underway, part 2 of Rebels
September 29, 2013

As Christians we want to know and do the will of God in your life. In order to worship God acceptably with our lives we need to know and live out God's will in all the situations, decisions, and relationships of our lives each day.

Every day we face situations where we need to know God's will. Every day we have choices to make. We have decisions that need to be made. We are in relationships with different people and need to know how to act. What choice is going to bring Jesus glory? Which action will honor Him?

Learning the will of God in any particular situation of our lives is not always easy. For many of the issues, situations, and decisions that we face each day, discerning God's will is not so clear.

One thing that makes discerning God's will hard is that we have been shaped by the culture in which we are living. We have been shaped by the values and beliefs, the attitudes and actions, of those around us.

Let me give you an example of this. America is an independent country. It is independent because 237 years ago most of the people living here rebelled against the king of England. Maybe you believe they were justified in their rebellion against the King of England.

There may be multiple reasons for believing that. But have you asked yourself why you believe that? Could the primary reason be that you adopted that belief because you grew up in America, where that victory is celebrated every July fourth? It is always presented as a good thing. People are proud that this side won the war.

In deciding that they were justified did you try to determine if it was God's will for them to rebel against the king? Many Christians living in that time wanted to know if it was within God's will to reject the King's authority. And many of them determined that it was not God's will. They read New Testament passages such as Romans 13.

Romans 13:1-2 (NIV) Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Many colonists understood this to mean that it was not God's will that they rebel against the King of England. Therefore they faced some difficult decisions about the war. Many of these people resisted the rebellion efforts and were persecuted for their loyalty to God and the king.

Well, the rebelling colonists won the war and their independence. But if they had lost the war, and America today was still part of the British Empire, would you still think the colonists were justified in their rebellion? In-other-words do you believe the colonists were justified because of what the Bible says, or because you grew up in a culture that says they were right?

Answering such a question matters if you want to know and live out God's will. As Christians we need to be in a process of seeing the differences between the culture's values and God's values. We need to be learning to see the world from God's point of view instead of an American point of view. We need to see our lives from God's point of view instead of a republican's point of view, or a democrat's point of view, or an engineer's point of view, or a teacher's point of view, or a man's point of view, or a woman's point of view, or a teenager's point of view.

We are shaped by those around us, those involved in our lives. We pick up many values, beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices from those people groups we are a part of. To learn and live out God's will we must be intentional about replacing those parts of the world that we find in ourselves. Paul writes of it this way.

Romans 12:2 (HCSB) Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

He writes to the early Christians in Rome, those who had grown up in the culture of the heathen Roman empire. He writes that they should not to be conformed to that culture. The truth was, they were already conformed in many ways. In dress, language, values, beliefs, prejudices, choices of food, entertainment, sports, and lots more they were conformed to the culture in which they lived.

It was inescapable. It is impossible to grow up in a culture and not be shaped in many ways by that culture. You know that. You see that all around you. People who grow up in America, have American values. People who grow up in France have French values. People who grow up in Japan have Japanese values.

Second generation Americans are a hodgepodge of their parent's values and American values. We call this the great American melting pot. People who grow up in America become Americanized.

People who grow up in racist families, tend to be racist. Not all of them. Environment and culture aren't the only things shaping people. But we see this is often true.

People who grow up in a certain political atmosphere, tend to adopt those politics. People who follow sports often follow a certain team because their parents did, or their friends do. I grew up between Washington and Baltimore. My dad rooted for the Washington teams, so it was natural for his children to adopt his teams as their own.

We are, to a great extent, shaped by the culture, or cultures, in which we grow up. We are shaped by the spirit of the age. Whatever the culture is, whatever most people are, that creates a shaping peer pressure on everyone.

It may be that some of those values coincide with God's will but that other values are opposed to God's will. Figuring out the difference is a major part of what living as a Christian is about.

The process for discovering the extent of the world in you and replacing it with the will of God is described as a transformation. You have to become someone different than the person you were before you became a Christian. You have to get the world out of you and spiritual truth in you.

How does this take place? It takes place in your thinking. He writes that you must renew your mind.

Renewing your mind means to replace the world's values, beliefs, and attitudes with those of God in you.

Some years ago my wife and I had a kitchen renovated in our home. We had two kinds of wallpaper in the kitchen, plus some copper tiles on the wall behind the stove. It was a hodgepodge in that one little room. We stripped off the tiles and wall paper and painted the whole thing one color. We put in a new floor, counter top, sink, faucet, and cabinets. We did not get a whole new kitchen. Some things, like the floor plan and appliances were the same. We kept what was still good of the old and replaced the rest.

That's what we have to do in our minds. We have to renovate or renew our minds. We have to change the beliefs upon which we live our lives. This is because **Our beliefs determine the things we say and do**. You act everyday upon your beliefs. People in other countries find it amazing that Americans do some of the things we do. And we are just as amazed at some of the things they do. The truth is we are both acting out of our beliefs. Our beliefs about right and wrong are different, so we behave differently. Our values are different. Our tastes are different. Our assumptions about the world are different. Our prejudices and attitudes about things are different. That's why we act differently.

There is much of our culture in us. There is much of the world in us. As Christians our beliefs and values need to be renewed in light of God's truth so we can know and live out His will. What you believe determines the things you say and do.

We need to see our world from God's perspective. We need to see God's values, God's priorities, God's purposes, God's morality. Then we will see more clearly God's will for our everyday lives. When we renew our minds, then we will know His will.

So how do we renew our minds? **Renewing your mind involves praying through the Bible.**

The process of renewal is accomplished when three things come together. The first is your humble, willing self. The second is the Bible. And the third is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truth and principles from the Bible. It is these truths and principles upon which we build a knowledge of God's will.

As the Holy Spirit interprets our lives for us in light of God's word, we will see what needs to change in our thinking. When you change your thinking, your beliefs, then your behavior will change.

Let me give you an example. The new television season has started for the major networks. We watched a few shows this week to see if they are worth watching. Some of the new shows we decided not to watch simply from the commercials for them. The content of the clips we saw in the advertisements were enough to reveal the immoral beliefs and values

being pushed by those shows. Other shows we had to watch in order to see what is there. We watched a couple of shows and could see they deserved a second try. One show we gave a mild nod to and decided if it did not improve in the next episode, we would drop it from our watch list.

I imagine you are doing the same thing. You have a set of beliefs about what is acceptable, what is beneficial, what is praiseworthy, what fits within the will of God. You use these beliefs of yours to decide what to watch for entertainment.

This is part of Christian repentance. Repentance from sin starts in the mind. Obedience starts in the mind. Behavior starts in the mind. When you start thinking about the world like God does, then what you used to think was interesting you will now see as wicked. And if you care about living out God's will, then you will change your words and actions.

This is a two part series of sermons. It is titled "Rebels" because we are to rebel against the form the world wants to shape us into. We are living in the age of sin against God. The world has turned away from God and His will. The spirit of sin in the world expects us to join up in resisting God and His will. The world wants all of us to sin.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to resist the pressure of the world to conform to its sinfulness. As the world rebels against God, we are to rebel against the world.

Resist the world. Seek your transformation through the renewing of your mind.

Change is inevitable. You will be a different person a year from now. Your experiences will change you. Your relationships will change you. The things you learn will change you. Events in the world will change you. Changes in culture will change you. You will have to make choices because of what is happening around you, choices you wouldn't have to make if someone else did not force them on you.

As our world changes this year, you will be faced with issues calling for a choice. What will you believe? What will you support? What will you condone in others? What will you choose for your own behavior?

The question is not whether you will change. You will change. The question is what kind of you will you be a year from now? How will you change? Who will you be like?

Will you be more like Jesus, or more like the world? If you want to be more like Jesus, then seek to know and live God's will through the renewing of your mind.

The world is resisting God's will. Are you? God's will for you starts with admitting you are a sinner before Him. God doesn't want to condemn you for your sin. God wants to save you.

God loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins so that by faith in Him you can be forgiven. God raised Jesus from the dead to prove His acceptance of Jesus' death for sin.

Today, put your faith in Jesus and be forgiven of all of your sins.

Remodeling Underway, part 2 of Rebels
September 29, 2013

As Christians we want to know and do the will of God in your life. In order to worship God acceptably with our lives we need to know and live out God's will in all the situations, decisions, and relationships of our lives each day.

Every day we face situations where we need to know God's will. Every day we have choices to make. We have decisions that need to be made. We are in relationships with different people and need to know how to act. What choice is going to bring Jesus glory? Which action will honor Him?

Learning the will of God in any particular situation of our lives is not always easy. For many of the issues, situations, and decisions that we face each day, discerning God's will is not so clear.

One thing that makes discerning God's will hard is that we have been shaped by the culture in which we are living. We have been shaped by the values and beliefs, the attitudes and actions, of those around us.

Let me give you an example of this. America is an independent country. It is independent because 237 years ago most of the people living here rebelled against the king of England. Maybe you believe they were justified in their rebellion against the King of England.

There may be multiple reasons for believing that. But have you asked yourself why you believe that? Could the primary reason be that you adopted that belief because you grew up in America, where that victory is celebrated every July fourth? It is always presented as a good thing. People are proud that this side won the war.

In deciding that they were justified did you try to determine if it was God's will for them to rebel against the king? Many Christians living in that time wanted to know if it was within God's will to reject the King's authority. And many of them determined that it was not God's will. They read New Testament passages such as Romans 13.

Romans 13:1-2 (NIV) Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Many colonists understood this to mean that it was not God's will that they rebel against the King of England. Therefore they faced some difficult decisions about the war. Many of these people resisted the rebellion efforts and were persecuted for their loyalty to God and the king.

Well, the rebelling colonists won the war and their independence. But if they had lost the war, and America today was still part of the British Empire, would you still think the colonists were justified in their rebellion? In-other-words do you believe the colonists were justified because of what the Bible says, or because you grew up in a culture that says they were right?

Answering such a question matters if you want to know and live out God's will. As Christians we need to be in a process of seeing the differences between the culture's values and God's values. We need to be learning to see the world from God's point of view instead of an American point of view. We need to see our lives from God's point of view instead of a republican's point of view, or a democrat's point of view, or an engineer's point of view, or a teacher's point of view, or a man's point of view, or a woman's point of view, or a teenager's point of view.

We are shaped by those around us, those involved in our lives. We pick up many values, beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices from those people groups we are a part of. To learn and live out God's will we must be intentional about replacing those parts of the world that we find in ourselves. Paul writes of it this way.

Romans 12:2 (HCSB) Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

He writes to the early Christians in Rome, those who had grown up in the culture of the heathen Roman empire. He writes that they should not to be conformed to that culture. The truth was, they were already conformed in many ways. In dress, language, values, beliefs, prejudices, choices of food, entertainment, sports, and lots more they were conformed to the culture in which they lived.

It was inescapable. It is impossible to grow up in a culture and not be shaped in many ways by that culture. You know that. You see that all around you. People who grow up in America, have American values. People who grow up in France have French values. People who grow up in Japan have Japanese values.

Second generation Americans are a hodgepodge of their parent's values and American values. We call this the great American melting pot. People who grow up in America become Americanized.

People who grow up in racist families, tend to be racist. Not all of them. Environment and culture aren't the only things shaping people. But we see this is often true.

People who grow up in a certain political atmosphere, tend to adopt those politics. People who follow sports often follow a certain team because their parents did, or their friends do. I grew up between Washington and Baltimore. My dad rooted for the Washington teams, so it was natural for his children to adopt his teams as their own.

We are, to a great extent, shaped by the culture, or cultures, in which we grow up. We are shaped by the spirit of the age. Whatever the culture is, whatever most people are, that creates a shaping peer pressure on everyone.

It may be that some of those values coincide with God's will but that other values are opposed to God's will. Figuring out the difference is a major part of what living as a Christian is about.

The process for discovering the extent of the world in you and replacing it with the will of God is described as a transformation. You have to become someone different than the person you were before you became a Christian. You have to get the world out of you and spiritual truth in you.

How does this take place? It takes place in your thinking. He writes that you must renew your mind.

Renewing your mind means to replace the world's values, beliefs, and attitudes with those of God in you.

Some years ago my wife and I had a kitchen renovated in our home. We had two kinds of wallpaper in the kitchen, plus some copper tiles on the wall behind the stove. It was a hodgepodge in that one little room. We stripped off the tiles and wall paper and painted the whole thing one color. We put in a new floor, counter top, sink, faucet, and cabinets. We did not get a whole new kitchen. Some things, like the floor plan and appliances were the same. We kept what was still good of the old and replaced the rest.

That's what we have to do in our minds. We have to renovate or renew our minds. We have to change the beliefs upon which we live our lives. This is because **Our beliefs determine the things we say and do**. You act everyday upon your beliefs. People in other countries find it amazing that Americans do some of the things we do. And we are just as amazed at some of the things they do. The truth is we are both acting out of our beliefs. Our beliefs about right and wrong are different, so we behave differently. Our values are different. Our tastes are different. Our assumptions about the world are different. Our prejudices and attitudes about things are different. That's why we act differently.

There is much of our culture in us. There is much of the world in us. As Christians our beliefs and values need to be renewed in light of God's truth so we can know and live out His will. What you believe determines the things you say and do.

We need to see our world from God's perspective. We need to see God's values, God's priorities, God's purposes, God's morality. Then we will see more clearly God's will for our everyday lives. When we renew our minds, then we will know His will.

So how do we renew our minds? **Renewing your mind involves praying through the Bible.**

The process of renewal is accomplished when three things come together. The first is your humble, willing self. The second is the Bible. And the third is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truth and principles from the Bible. It is these truths and principles upon which we build a knowledge of God's will.

As the Holy Spirit interprets our lives for us in light of God's word, we will see what needs to change in our thinking. When you change your thinking, your beliefs, then your behavior will change.

Let me give you an example. The new television season has started for the major networks. We watched a few shows this week to see if they are worth watching. Some of the new shows we decided not to watch simply from the commercials for them. The content of the clips we saw in the advertisements were enough to reveal the immoral beliefs and values

being pushed by those shows. Other shows we had to watch in order to see what is there. We watched a couple of shows and could see they deserved a second try. One show we gave a mild nod to and decided if it did not improve in the next episode, we would drop it from our watch list.

I imagine you are doing the same thing. You have a set of beliefs about what is acceptable, what is beneficial, what is praiseworthy, what fits within the will of God. You use these beliefs of yours to decide what to watch for entertainment.

This is part of Christian repentance. Repentance from sin starts in the mind. Obedience starts in the mind. Behavior starts in the mind. When you start thinking about the world like God does, then what you used to think was interesting you will now see as wicked. And if you care about living out God's will, then you will change your words and actions.

This is a two part series of sermons. It is titled "Rebels" because we are to rebel against the form the world wants to shape us into. We are living in the age of sin against God. The world has turned away from God and His will. The spirit of sin in the world expects us to join up in resisting God and His will. The world wants all of us to sin.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to resist the pressure of the world to conform to its sinfulness. As the world rebels against God, we are to rebel against the world.

Resist the world. Seek your transformation through the renewing of your mind.

Change is inevitable. You will be a different person a year from now. Your experiences will change you. Your relationships will change you. The things you learn will change you. Events in the world will change you. Changes in culture will change you. You will have to make choices because of what is happening around you, choices you wouldn't have to make if someone else did not force them on you.

As our world changes this year, you will be faced with issues calling for a choice. What will you believe? What will you support? What will you condone in others? What will you choose for your own behavior?

The question is not whether you will change. You will change. The question is what kind of you will you be a year from now? How will you change? Who will you be like?

Will you be more like Jesus, or more like the world? If you want to be more like Jesus, then seek to know and live God's will through the renewing of your mind.

The world is resisting God's will. Are you? God's will for you starts with admitting you are a sinner before Him. God doesn't want to condemn you for your sin. God wants to save you.

God loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins so that by faith in Him you can be forgiven. God raised Jesus from the dead to prove His acceptance of Jesus' death for sin.

Today, put your faith in Jesus and be forgiven of all of your sins.

Remodeling Underway, part 2 of Rebels
September 29, 2013

As Christians we want to know and do the will of God in your life. In order to worship God acceptably with our lives we need to know and live out God's will in all the situations, decisions, and relationships of our lives each day.

Every day we face situations where we need to know God's will. Every day we have choices to make. We have decisions that need to be made. We are in relationships with different people and need to know how to act. What choice is going to bring Jesus glory? Which action will honor Him?

Learning the will of God in any particular situation of our lives is not always easy. For many of the issues, situations, and decisions that we face each day, discerning God's will is not so clear.

One thing that makes discerning God's will hard is that we have been shaped by the culture in which we are living. We have been shaped by the values and beliefs, the attitudes and actions, of those around us.

Let me give you an example of this. America is an independent country. It is independent because 237 years ago most of the people living here rebelled against the king of England. Maybe you believe they were justified in their rebellion against the King of England.

There may be multiple reasons for believing that. But have you asked yourself why you believe that? Could the primary reason be that you adopted that belief because you grew up in America, where that victory is celebrated every July fourth? It is always presented as a good thing. People are proud that this side won the war.

In deciding that they were justified did you try to determine if it was God's will for them to rebel against the king? Many Christians living in that time wanted to know if it was within God's will to reject the King's authority. And many of them determined that it was not God's will. They read New Testament passages such as Romans 13.

Romans 13:1-2 (NIV) Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Many colonists understood this to mean that it was not God's will that they rebel against the King of England. Therefore they faced some difficult decisions about the war. Many of these people resisted the rebellion efforts and were persecuted for their loyalty to God and the king.

Well, the rebelling colonists won the war and their independence. But if they had lost the war, and America today was still part of the British Empire, would you still think the colonists were justified in their rebellion? In-other-words do you believe the colonists were justified because of what the Bible says, or because you grew up in a culture that says they were right?

Answering such a question matters if you want to know and live out God's will. As Christians we need to be in a process of seeing the differences between the culture's values and God's values. We need to be learning to see the world from God's point of view instead of an American point of view. We need to see our lives from God's point of view instead of a republican's point of view, or a democrat's point of view, or an engineer's point of view, or a teacher's point of view, or a man's point of view, or a woman's point of view, or a teenager's point of view.

We are shaped by those around us, those involved in our lives. We pick up many values, beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices from those people groups we are a part of. To learn and live out God's will we must be intentional about replacing those parts of the world that we find in ourselves. Paul writes of it this way.

Romans 12:2 (HCSB) Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

He writes to the early Christians in Rome, those who had grown up in the culture of the heathen Roman empire. He writes that they should not to be conformed to that culture. The truth was, they were already conformed in many ways. In dress, language, values, beliefs, prejudices, choices of food, entertainment, sports, and lots more they were conformed to the culture in which they lived.

It was inescapable. It is impossible to grow up in a culture and not be shaped in many ways by that culture. You know that. You see that all around you. People who grow up in America, have American values. People who grow up in France have French values. People who grow up in Japan have Japanese values.

Second generation Americans are a hodgepodge of their parent's values and American values. We call this the great American melting pot. People who grow up in America become Americanized.

People who grow up in racist families, tend to be racist. Not all of them. Environment and culture aren't the only things shaping people. But we see this is often true.

People who grow up in a certain political atmosphere, tend to adopt those politics. People who follow sports often follow a certain team because their parents did, or their friends do. I grew up between Washington and Baltimore. My dad rooted for the Washington teams, so it was natural for his children to adopt his teams as their own.

We are, to a great extent, shaped by the culture, or cultures, in which we grow up. We are shaped by the spirit of the age. Whatever the culture is, whatever most people are, that creates a shaping peer pressure on everyone.

It may be that some of those values coincide with God's will but that other values are opposed to God's will. Figuring out the difference is a major part of what living as a Christian is about.

The process for discovering the extent of the world in you and replacing it with the will of God is described as a transformation. You have to become someone different than the person you were before you became a Christian. You have to get the world out of you and spiritual truth in you.

How does this take place? It takes place in your thinking. He writes that you must renew your mind.

Renewing your mind means to replace the world's values, beliefs, and attitudes with those of God in you.

Some years ago my wife and I had a kitchen renovated in our home. We had two kinds of wallpaper in the kitchen, plus some copper tiles on the wall behind the stove. It was a hodgepodge in that one little room. We stripped off the tiles and wall paper and painted the whole thing one color. We put in a new floor, counter top, sink, faucet, and cabinets. We did not get a whole new kitchen. Some things, like the floor plan and appliances were the same. We kept what was still good of the old and replaced the rest.

That's what we have to do in our minds. We have to renovate or renew our minds. We have to change the beliefs upon which we live our lives. This is because **Our beliefs determine the things we say and do**. You act everyday upon your beliefs. People in other countries find it amazing that Americans do some of the things we do. And we are just as amazed at some of the things they do. The truth is we are both acting out of our beliefs. Our beliefs about right and wrong are different, so we behave differently. Our values are different. Our tastes are different. Our assumptions about the world are different. Our prejudices and attitudes about things are different. That's why we act differently.

There is much of our culture in us. There is much of the world in us. As Christians our beliefs and values need to be renewed in light of God's truth so we can know and live out His will. What you believe determines the things you say and do.

We need to see our world from God's perspective. We need to see God's values, God's priorities, God's purposes, God's morality. Then we will see more clearly God's will for our everyday lives. When we renew our minds, then we will know His will.

So how do we renew our minds? **Renewing your mind involves praying through the Bible.**

The process of renewal is accomplished when three things come together. The first is your humble, willing self. The second is the Bible. And the third is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truth and principles from the Bible. It is these truths and principles upon which we build a knowledge of God's will.

As the Holy Spirit interprets our lives for us in light of God's word, we will see what needs to change in our thinking. When you change your thinking, your beliefs, then your behavior will change.

Let me give you an example. The new television season has started for the major networks. We watched a few shows this week to see if they are worth watching. Some of the new shows we decided not to watch simply from the commercials for them. The content of the clips we saw in the advertisements were enough to reveal the immoral beliefs and values

being pushed by those shows. Other shows we had to watch in order to see what is there. We watched a couple of shows and could see they deserved a second try. One show we gave a mild nod to and decided if it did not improve in the next episode, we would drop it from our watch list.

I imagine you are doing the same thing. You have a set of beliefs about what is acceptable, what is beneficial, what is praiseworthy, what fits within the will of God. You use these beliefs of yours to decide what to watch for entertainment.

This is part of Christian repentance. Repentance from sin starts in the mind. Obedience starts in the mind. Behavior starts in the mind. When you start thinking about the world like God does, then what you used to think was interesting you will now see as wicked. And if you care about living out God's will, then you will change your words and actions.

This is a two part series of sermons. It is titled "Rebels" because we are to rebel against the form the world wants to shape us into. We are living in the age of sin against God. The world has turned away from God and His will. The spirit of sin in the world expects us to join up in resisting God and His will. The world wants all of us to sin.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to resist the pressure of the world to conform to its sinfulness. As the world rebels against God, we are to rebel against the world.

Resist the world. Seek your transformation through the renewing of your mind.

Change is inevitable. You will be a different person a year from now. Your experiences will change you. Your relationships will change you. The things you learn will change you. Events in the world will change you. Changes in culture will change you. You will have to make choices because of what is happening around you, choices you wouldn't have to make if someone else did not force them on you.

As our world changes this year, you will be faced with issues calling for a choice. What will you believe? What will you support? What will you condone in others? What will you choose for your own behavior?

The question is not whether you will change. You will change. The question is what kind of you will you be a year from now? How will you change? Who will you be like?

Will you be more like Jesus, or more like the world? If you want to be more like Jesus, then seek to know and live God's will through the renewing of your mind.

The world is resisting God's will. Are you? God's will for you starts with admitting you are a sinner before Him. God doesn't want to condemn you for your sin. God wants to save you.

God loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins so that by faith in Him you can be forgiven. God raised Jesus from the dead to prove His acceptance of Jesus' death for sin.

Today, put your faith in Jesus and be forgiven of all of your sins.

Remodeling Underway, part 2 of Rebels
September 29, 2013

As Christians we want to know and do the will of God in your life. In order to worship God acceptably with our lives we need to know and live out God's will in all the situations, decisions, and relationships of our lives each day.

Every day we face situations where we need to know God's will. Every day we have choices to make. We have decisions that need to be made. We are in relationships with different people and need to know how to act. What choice is going to bring Jesus glory? Which action will honor Him?

Learning the will of God in any particular situation of our lives is not always easy. For many of the issues, situations, and decisions that we face each day, discerning God's will is not so clear.

One thing that makes discerning God's will hard is that we have been shaped by the culture in which we are living. We have been shaped by the values and beliefs, the attitudes and actions, of those around us.

Let me give you an example of this. America is an independent country. It is independent because 237 years ago most of the people living here rebelled against the king of England. Maybe you believe they were justified in their rebellion against the King of England.

There may be multiple reasons for believing that. But have you asked yourself why you believe that? Could the primary reason be that you adopted that belief because you grew up in America, where that victory is celebrated every July fourth? It is always presented as a good thing. People are proud that this side won the war.

In deciding that they were justified did you try to determine if it was God's will for them to rebel against the king? Many Christians living in that time wanted to know if it was within God's will to reject the King's authority. And many of them determined that it was not God's will. They read New Testament passages such as Romans 13.

Romans 13:1-2 (NIV) Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Many colonists understood this to mean that it was not God's will that they rebel against the King of England. Therefore they faced some difficult decisions about the war. Many of these people resisted the rebellion efforts and were persecuted for their loyalty to God and the king.

Well, the rebelling colonists won the war and their independence. But if they had lost the war, and America today was still part of the British Empire, would you still think the colonists were justified in their rebellion? In-other-words do you believe the colonists were justified because of what the Bible says, or because you grew up in a culture that says they were right?

Answering such a question matters if you want to know and live out God's will. As Christians we need to be in a process of seeing the differences between the culture's values and God's values. We need to be learning to see the world from God's point of view instead of an American point of view. We need to see our lives from God's point of view instead of a republican's point of view, or a democrat's point of view, or an engineer's point of view, or a teacher's point of view, or a man's point of view, or a woman's point of view, or a teenager's point of view.

We are shaped by those around us, those involved in our lives. We pick up many values, beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices from those people groups we are a part of. To learn and live out God's will we must be intentional about replacing those parts of the world that we find in ourselves. Paul writes of it this way.

Romans 12:2 (HCSB) Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

He writes to the early Christians in Rome, those who had grown up in the culture of the heathen Roman empire. He writes that they should not to be conformed to that culture. The truth was, they were already conformed in many ways. In dress, language, values, beliefs, prejudices, choices of food, entertainment, sports, and lots more they were conformed to the culture in which they lived.

It was inescapable. It is impossible to grow up in a culture and not be shaped in many ways by that culture. You know that. You see that all around you. People who grow up in America, have American values. People who grow up in France have French values. People who grow up in Japan have Japanese values.

Second generation Americans are a hodgepodge of their parent's values and American values. We call this the great American melting pot. People who grow up in America become Americanized.

People who grow up in racist families, tend to be racist. Not all of them. Environment and culture aren't the only things shaping people. But we see this is often true.

People who grow up in a certain political atmosphere, tend to adopt those politics. People who follow sports often follow a certain team because their parents did, or their friends do. I grew up between Washington and Baltimore. My dad rooted for the Washington teams, so it was natural for his children to adopt his teams as their own.

We are, to a great extent, shaped by the culture, or cultures, in which we grow up. We are shaped by the spirit of the age. Whatever the culture is, whatever most people are, that creates a shaping peer pressure on everyone.

It may be that some of those values coincide with God's will but that other values are opposed to God's will. Figuring out the difference is a major part of what living as a Christian is about.

The process for discovering the extent of the world in you and replacing it with the will of God is described as a transformation. You have to become someone different than the person you were before you became a Christian. You have to get the world out of you and spiritual truth in you.

How does this take place? It takes place in your thinking. He writes that you must renew your mind.

Renewing your mind means to replace the world's values, beliefs, and attitudes with those of God in you.

Some years ago my wife and I had a kitchen renovated in our home. We had two kinds of wallpaper in the kitchen, plus some copper tiles on the wall behind the stove. It was a hodgepodge in that one little room. We stripped off the tiles and wall paper and painted the whole thing one color. We put in a new floor, counter top, sink, faucet, and cabinets. We did not get a whole new kitchen. Some things, like the floor plan and appliances were the same. We kept what was still good of the old and replaced the rest.

That's what we have to do in our minds. We have to renovate or renew our minds. We have to change the beliefs upon which we live our lives. This is because **Our beliefs determine the things we say and do**. You act everyday upon your beliefs. People in other countries find it amazing that Americans do some of the things we do. And we are just as amazed at some of the things they do. The truth is we are both acting out of our beliefs. Our beliefs about right and wrong are different, so we behave differently. Our values are different. Our tastes are different. Our assumptions about the world are different. Our prejudices and attitudes about things are different. That's why we act differently.

There is much of our culture in us. There is much of the world in us. As Christians our beliefs and values need to be renewed in light of God's truth so we can know and live out His will. What you believe determines the things you say and do.

We need to see our world from God's perspective. We need to see God's values, God's priorities, God's purposes, God's morality. Then we will see more clearly God's will for our everyday lives. When we renew our minds, then we will know His will.

So how do we renew our minds? **Renewing your mind involves praying through the Bible.**

The process of renewal is accomplished when three things come together. The first is your humble, willing self. The second is the Bible. And the third is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truth and principles from the Bible. It is these truths and principles upon which we build a knowledge of God's will.

As the Holy Spirit interprets our lives for us in light of God's word, we will see what needs to change in our thinking. When you change your thinking, your beliefs, then your behavior will change.

Let me give you an example. The new television season has started for the major networks. We watched a few shows this week to see if they are worth watching. Some of the new shows we decided not to watch simply from the commercials for them. The content of the clips we saw in the advertisements were enough to reveal the immoral beliefs and values

being pushed by those shows. Other shows we had to watch in order to see what is there. We watched a couple of shows and could see they deserved a second try. One show we gave a mild nod to and decided if it did not improve in the next episode, we would drop it from our watch list.

I imagine you are doing the same thing. You have a set of beliefs about what is acceptable, what is beneficial, what is praiseworthy, what fits within the will of God. You use these beliefs of yours to decide what to watch for entertainment.

This is part of Christian repentance. Repentance from sin starts in the mind. Obedience starts in the mind. Behavior starts in the mind. When you start thinking about the world like God does, then what you used to think was interesting you will now see as wicked. And if you care about living out God's will, then you will change your words and actions.

This is a two part series of sermons. It is titled "Rebels" because we are to rebel against the form the world wants to shape us into. We are living in the age of sin against God. The world has turned away from God and His will. The spirit of sin in the world expects us to join up in resisting God and His will. The world wants all of us to sin.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to resist the pressure of the world to conform to its sinfulness. As the world rebels against God, we are to rebel against the world.

Resist the world. Seek your transformation through the renewing of your mind.

Change is inevitable. You will be a different person a year from now. Your experiences will change you. Your relationships will change you. The things you learn will change you. Events in the world will change you. Changes in culture will change you. You will have to make choices because of what is happening around you, choices you wouldn't have to make if someone else did not force them on you.

As our world changes this year, you will be faced with issues calling for a choice. What will you believe? What will you support? What will you condone in others? What will you choose for your own behavior?

The question is not whether you will change. You will change. The question is what kind of you will you be a year from now? How will you change? Who will you be like?

Will you be more like Jesus, or more like the world? If you want to be more like Jesus, then seek to know and live God's will through the renewing of your mind.

The world is resisting God's will. Are you? God's will for you starts with admitting you are a sinner before Him. God doesn't want to condemn you for your sin. God wants to save you.

God loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins so that by faith in Him you can be forgiven. God raised Jesus from the dead to prove His acceptance of Jesus' death for sin.

Today, put your faith in Jesus and be forgiven of all of your sins.

Remodeling Underway, part 2 of Rebels
September 29, 2013

As Christians we want to know and do the will of God in your life. In order to worship God acceptably with our lives we need to know and live out God's will in all the situations, decisions, and relationships of our lives each day.

Every day we face situations where we need to know God's will. Every day we have choices to make. We have decisions that need to be made. We are in relationships with different people and need to know how to act. What choice is going to bring Jesus glory? Which action will honor Him?

Learning the will of God in any particular situation of our lives is not always easy. For many of the issues, situations, and decisions that we face each day, discerning God's will is not so clear.

One thing that makes discerning God's will hard is that we have been shaped by the culture in which we are living. We have been shaped by the values and beliefs, the attitudes and actions, of those around us.

Let me give you an example of this. America is an independent country. It is independent because 237 years ago most of the people living here rebelled against the king of England. Maybe you believe they were justified in their rebellion against the King of England.

There may be multiple reasons for believing that. But have you asked yourself why you believe that? Could the primary reason be that you adopted that belief because you grew up in America, where that victory is celebrated every July fourth? It is always presented as a good thing. People are proud that this side won the war.

In deciding that they were justified did you try to determine if it was God's will for them to rebel against the king? Many Christians living in that time wanted to know if it was within God's will to reject the King's authority. And many of them determined that it was not God's will. They read New Testament passages such as Romans 13.

Romans 13:1-2 (NIV) Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Many colonists understood this to mean that it was not God's will that they rebel against the King of England. Therefore they faced some difficult decisions about the war. Many of these people resisted the rebellion efforts and were persecuted for their loyalty to God and the king.

Well, the rebelling colonists won the war and their independence. But if they had lost the war, and America today was still part of the British Empire, would you still think the colonists were justified in their rebellion? In-other-words do you believe the colonists were justified because of what the Bible says, or because you grew up in a culture that says they were right?

Answering such a question matters if you want to know and live out God's will. As Christians we need to be in a process of seeing the differences between the culture's values and God's values. We need to be learning to see the world from God's point of view instead of an American point of view. We need to see our lives from God's point of view instead of a republican's point of view, or a democrat's point of view, or an engineer's point of view, or a teacher's point of view, or a man's point of view, or a woman's point of view, or a teenager's point of view.

We are shaped by those around us, those involved in our lives. We pick up many values, beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices from those people groups we are a part of. To learn and live out God's will we must be intentional about replacing those parts of the world that we find in ourselves. Paul writes of it this way.

Romans 12:2 (HCSB) Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

He writes to the early Christians in Rome, those who had grown up in the culture of the heathen Roman empire. He writes that they should not to be conformed to that culture. The truth was, they were already conformed in many ways. In dress, language, values, beliefs, prejudices, choices of food, entertainment, sports, and lots more they were conformed to the culture in which they lived.

It was inescapable. It is impossible to grow up in a culture and not be shaped in many ways by that culture. You know that. You see that all around you. People who grow up in America, have American values. People who grow up in France have French values. People who grow up in Japan have Japanese values.

Second generation Americans are a hodgepodge of their parent's values and American values. We call this the great American melting pot. People who grow up in America become Americanized.

People who grow up in racist families, tend to be racist. Not all of them. Environment and culture aren't the only things shaping people. But we see this is often true.

People who grow up in a certain political atmosphere, tend to adopt those politics. People who follow sports often follow a certain team because their parents did, or their friends do. I grew up between Washington and Baltimore. My dad rooted for the Washington teams, so it was natural for his children to adopt his teams as their own.

We are, to a great extent, shaped by the culture, or cultures, in which we grow up. We are shaped by the spirit of the age. Whatever the culture is, whatever most people are, that creates a shaping peer pressure on everyone.

It may be that some of those values coincide with God's will but that other values are opposed to God's will. Figuring out the difference is a major part of what living as a Christian is about.

The process for discovering the extent of the world in you and replacing it with the will of God is described as a transformation. You have to become someone different than the person you were before you became a Christian. You have to get the world out of you and spiritual truth in you.

How does this take place? It takes place in your thinking. He writes that you must renew your mind.

Renewing your mind means to replace the world's values, beliefs, and attitudes with those of God in you.

Some years ago my wife and I had a kitchen renovated in our home. We had two kinds of wallpaper in the kitchen, plus some copper tiles on the wall behind the stove. It was a hodgepodge in that one little room. We stripped off the tiles and wall paper and painted the whole thing one color. We put in a new floor, counter top, sink, faucet, and cabinets. We did not get a whole new kitchen. Some things, like the floor plan and appliances were the same. We kept what was still good of the old and replaced the rest.

That's what we have to do in our minds. We have to renovate or renew our minds. We have to change the beliefs upon which we live our lives. This is because **Our beliefs determine the things we say and do**. You act everyday upon your beliefs. People in other countries find it amazing that Americans do some of the things we do. And we are just as amazed at some of the things they do. The truth is we are both acting out of our beliefs. Our beliefs about right and wrong are different, so we behave differently. Our values are different. Our tastes are different. Our assumptions about the world are different. Our prejudices and attitudes about things are different. That's why we act differently.

There is much of our culture in us. There is much of the world in us. As Christians our beliefs and values need to be renewed in light of God's truth so we can know and live out His will. What you believe determines the things you say and do.

We need to see our world from God's perspective. We need to see God's values, God's priorities, God's purposes, God's morality. Then we will see more clearly God's will for our everyday lives. When we renew our minds, then we will know His will.

So how do we renew our minds? **Renewing your mind involves praying through the Bible.**

The process of renewal is accomplished when three things come together. The first is your humble, willing self. The second is the Bible. And the third is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truth and principles from the Bible. It is these truths and principles upon which we build a knowledge of God's will.

As the Holy Spirit interprets our lives for us in light of God's word, we will see what needs to change in our thinking. When you change your thinking, your beliefs, then your behavior will change.

Let me give you an example. The new television season has started for the major networks. We watched a few shows this week to see if they are worth watching. Some of the new shows we decided not to watch simply from the commercials for them. The content of the clips we saw in the advertisements were enough to reveal the immoral beliefs and values

being pushed by those shows. Other shows we had to watch in order to see what is there. We watched a couple of shows and could see they deserved a second try. One show we gave a mild nod to and decided if it did not improve in the next episode, we would drop it from our watch list.

I imagine you are doing the same thing. You have a set of beliefs about what is acceptable, what is beneficial, what is praiseworthy, what fits within the will of God. You use these beliefs of yours to decide what to watch for entertainment.

This is part of Christian repentance. Repentance from sin starts in the mind. Obedience starts in the mind. Behavior starts in the mind. When you start thinking about the world like God does, then what you used to think was interesting you will now see as wicked. And if you care about living out God's will, then you will change your words and actions.

This is a two part series of sermons. It is titled "Rebels" because we are to rebel against the form the world wants to shape us into. We are living in the age of sin against God. The world has turned away from God and His will. The spirit of sin in the world expects us to join up in resisting God and His will. The world wants all of us to sin.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to resist the pressure of the world to conform to its sinfulness. As the world rebels against God, we are to rebel against the world.

Resist the world. Seek your transformation through the renewing of your mind.

Change is inevitable. You will be a different person a year from now. Your experiences will change you. Your relationships will change you. The things you learn will change you. Events in the world will change you. Changes in culture will change you. You will have to make choices because of what is happening around you, choices you wouldn't have to make if someone else did not force them on you.

As our world changes this year, you will be faced with issues calling for a choice. What will you believe? What will you support? What will you condone in others? What will you choose for your own behavior?

The question is not whether you will change. You will change. The question is what kind of you will you be a year from now? How will you change? Who will you be like?

Will you be more like Jesus, or more like the world? If you want to be more like Jesus, then seek to know and live God's will through the renewing of your mind.

The world is resisting God's will. Are you? God's will for you starts with admitting you are a sinner before Him. God doesn't want to condemn you for your sin. God wants to save you.

God loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins so that by faith in Him you can be forgiven. God raised Jesus from the dead to prove His acceptance of Jesus' death for sin.

Today, put your faith in Jesus and be forgiven of all of your sins.

Remodeling Underway, part 2 of Rebels
September 29, 2013

As Christians we want to know and do the will of God in your life. In order to worship God acceptably with our lives we need to know and live out God's will in all the situations, decisions, and relationships of our lives each day.

Every day we face situations where we need to know God's will. Every day we have choices to make. We have decisions that need to be made. We are in relationships with different people and need to know how to act. What choice is going to bring Jesus glory? Which action will honor Him?

Learning the will of God in any particular situation of our lives is not always easy. For many of the issues, situations, and decisions that we face each day, discerning God's will is not so clear.

One thing that makes discerning God's will hard is that we have been shaped by the culture in which we are living. We have been shaped by the values and beliefs, the attitudes and actions, of those around us.

Let me give you an example of this. America is an independent country. It is independent because 237 years ago most of the people living here rebelled against the king of England. Maybe you believe they were justified in their rebellion against the King of England.

There may be multiple reasons for believing that. But have you asked yourself why you believe that? Could the primary reason be that you adopted that belief because you grew up in America, where that victory is celebrated every July fourth? It is always presented as a good thing. People are proud that this side won the war.

In deciding that they were justified did you try to determine if it was God's will for them to rebel against the king? Many Christians living in that time wanted to know if it was within God's will to reject the King's authority. And many of them determined that it was not God's will. They read New Testament passages such as Romans 13.

Romans 13:1-2 (NIV) Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Many colonists understood this to mean that it was not God's will that they rebel against the King of England. Therefore they faced some difficult decisions about the war. Many of these people resisted the rebellion efforts and were persecuted for their loyalty to God and the king.

Well, the rebelling colonists won the war and their independence. But if they had lost the war, and America today was still part of the British Empire, would you still think the colonists were justified in their rebellion? In-other-words do you believe the colonists were justified because of what the Bible says, or because you grew up in a culture that says they were right?

Answering such a question matters if you want to know and live out God's will. As Christians we need to be in a process of seeing the differences between the culture's values and God's values. We need to be learning to see the world from God's point of view instead of an American point of view. We need to see our lives from God's point of view instead of a republican's point of view, or a democrat's point of view, or an engineer's point of view, or a teacher's point of view, or a man's point of view, or a woman's point of view, or a teenager's point of view.

We are shaped by those around us, those involved in our lives. We pick up many values, beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices from those people groups we are a part of. To learn and live out God's will we must be intentional about replacing those parts of the world that we find in ourselves. Paul writes of it this way.

Romans 12:2 (HCSB) Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

He writes to the early Christians in Rome, those who had grown up in the culture of the heathen Roman empire. He writes that they should not to be conformed to that culture. The truth was, they were already conformed in many ways. In dress, language, values, beliefs, prejudices, choices of food, entertainment, sports, and lots more they were conformed to the culture in which they lived.

It was inescapable. It is impossible to grow up in a culture and not be shaped in many ways by that culture. You know that. You see that all around you. People who grow up in America, have American values. People who grow up in France have French values. People who grow up in Japan have Japanese values.

Second generation Americans are a hodgepodge of their parent's values and American values. We call this the great American melting pot. People who grow up in America become Americanized.

People who grow up in racist families, tend to be racist. Not all of them. Environment and culture aren't the only things shaping people. But we see this is often true.

People who grow up in a certain political atmosphere, tend to adopt those politics. People who follow sports often follow a certain team because their parents did, or their friends do. I grew up between Washington and Baltimore. My dad rooted for the Washington teams, so it was natural for his children to adopt his teams as their own.

We are, to a great extent, shaped by the culture, or cultures, in which we grow up. We are shaped by the spirit of the age. Whatever the culture is, whatever most people are, that creates a shaping peer pressure on everyone.

It may be that some of those values coincide with God's will but that other values are opposed to God's will. Figuring out the difference is a major part of what living as a Christian is about.

The process for discovering the extent of the world in you and replacing it with the will of God is described as a transformation. You have to become someone different than the person you were before you became a Christian. You have to get the world out of you and spiritual truth in you.

How does this take place? It takes place in your thinking. He writes that you must renew your mind.

Renewing your mind means to replace the world's values, beliefs, and attitudes with those of God in you.

Some years ago my wife and I had a kitchen renovated in our home. We had two kinds of wallpaper in the kitchen, plus some copper tiles on the wall behind the stove. It was a hodgepodge in that one little room. We stripped off the tiles and wall paper and painted the whole thing one color. We put in a new floor, counter top, sink, faucet, and cabinets. We did not get a whole new kitchen. Some things, like the floor plan and appliances were the same. We kept what was still good of the old and replaced the rest.

That's what we have to do in our minds. We have to renovate or renew our minds. We have to change the beliefs upon which we live our lives. This is because **Our beliefs determine the things we say and do**. You act everyday upon your beliefs. People in other countries find it amazing that Americans do some of the things we do. And we are just as amazed at some of the things they do. The truth is we are both acting out of our beliefs. Our beliefs about right and wrong are different, so we behave differently. Our values are different. Our tastes are different. Our assumptions about the world are different. Our prejudices and attitudes about things are different. That's why we act differently.

There is much of our culture in us. There is much of the world in us. As Christians our beliefs and values need to be renewed in light of God's truth so we can know and live out His will. What you believe determines the things you say and do.

We need to see our world from God's perspective. We need to see God's values, God's priorities, God's purposes, God's morality. Then we will see more clearly God's will for our everyday lives. When we renew our minds, then we will know His will.

So how do we renew our minds? **Renewing your mind involves praying through the Bible.**

The process of renewal is accomplished when three things come together. The first is your humble, willing self. The second is the Bible. And the third is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truth and principles from the Bible. It is these truths and principles upon which we build a knowledge of God's will.

As the Holy Spirit interprets our lives for us in light of God's word, we will see what needs to change in our thinking. When you change your thinking, your beliefs, then your behavior will change.

Let me give you an example. The new television season has started for the major networks. We watched a few shows this week to see if they are worth watching. Some of the new shows we decided not to watch simply from the commercials for them. The content of the clips we saw in the advertisements were enough to reveal the immoral beliefs and values

being pushed by those shows. Other shows we had to watch in order to see what is there. We watched a couple of shows and could see they deserved a second try. One show we gave a mild nod to and decided if it did not improve in the next episode, we would drop it from our watch list.

I imagine you are doing the same thing. You have a set of beliefs about what is acceptable, what is beneficial, what is praiseworthy, what fits within the will of God. You use these beliefs of yours to decide what to watch for entertainment.

This is part of Christian repentance. Repentance from sin starts in the mind. Obedience starts in the mind. Behavior starts in the mind. When you start thinking about the world like God does, then what you used to think was interesting you will now see as wicked. And if you care about living out God's will, then you will change your words and actions.

This is a two part series of sermons. It is titled "Rebels" because we are to rebel against the form the world wants to shape us into. We are living in the age of sin against God. The world has turned away from God and His will. The spirit of sin in the world expects us to join up in resisting God and His will. The world wants all of us to sin.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to resist the pressure of the world to conform to its sinfulness. As the world rebels against God, we are to rebel against the world.

Resist the world. Seek your transformation through the renewing of your mind.

Change is inevitable. You will be a different person a year from now. Your experiences will change you. Your relationships will change you. The things you learn will change you. Events in the world will change you. Changes in culture will change you. You will have to make choices because of what is happening around you, choices you wouldn't have to make if someone else did not force them on you.

As our world changes this year, you will be faced with issues calling for a choice. What will you believe? What will you support? What will you condone in others? What will you choose for your own behavior?

The question is not whether you will change. You will change. The question is what kind of you will you be a year from now? How will you change? Who will you be like?

Will you be more like Jesus, or more like the world? If you want to be more like Jesus, then seek to know and live God's will through the renewing of your mind.

The world is resisting God's will. Are you? God's will for you starts with admitting you are a sinner before Him. God doesn't want to condemn you for your sin. God wants to save you.

God loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins so that by faith in Him you can be forgiven. God raised Jesus from the dead to prove His acceptance of Jesus' death for sin.

Today, put your faith in Jesus and be forgiven of all of your sins.

Remodeling Underway, part 2 of Rebels
September 29, 2013

As Christians we want to know and do the will of God in your life. In order to worship God acceptably with our lives we need to know and live out God's will in all the situations, decisions, and relationships of our lives each day.

Every day we face situations where we need to know God's will. Every day we have choices to make. We have decisions that need to be made. We are in relationships with different people and need to know how to act. What choice is going to bring Jesus glory? Which action will honor Him?

Learning the will of God in any particular situation of our lives is not always easy. For many of the issues, situations, and decisions that we face each day, discerning God's will is not so clear.

One thing that makes discerning God's will hard is that we have been shaped by the culture in which we are living. We have been shaped by the values and beliefs, the attitudes and actions, of those around us.

Let me give you an example of this. America is an independent country. It is independent because 237 years ago most of the people living here rebelled against the king of England. Maybe you believe they were justified in their rebellion against the King of England.

There may be multiple reasons for believing that. But have you asked yourself why you believe that? Could the primary reason be that you adopted that belief because you grew up in America, where that victory is celebrated every July fourth? It is always presented as a good thing. People are proud that this side won the war.

In deciding that they were justified did you try to determine if it was God's will for them to rebel against the king? Many Christians living in that time wanted to know if it was within God's will to reject the King's authority. And many of them determined that it was not God's will. They read New Testament passages such as Romans 13.

Romans 13:1-2 (NIV) Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Many colonists understood this to mean that it was not God's will that they rebel against the King of England. Therefore they faced some difficult decisions about the war. Many of these people resisted the rebellion efforts and were persecuted for their loyalty to God and the king.

Well, the rebelling colonists won the war and their independence. But if they had lost the war, and America today was still part of the British Empire, would you still think the colonists were justified in their rebellion? In-other-words do you believe the colonists were justified because of what the Bible says, or because you grew up in a culture that says they were right?

Answering such a question matters if you want to know and live out God's will. As Christians we need to be in a process of seeing the differences between the culture's values and God's values. We need to be learning to see the world from God's point of view instead of an American point of view. We need to see our lives from God's point of view instead of a republican's point of view, or a democrat's point of view, or an engineer's point of view, or a teacher's point of view, or a man's point of view, or a woman's point of view, or a teenager's point of view.

We are shaped by those around us, those involved in our lives. We pick up many values, beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices from those people groups we are a part of. To learn and live out God's will we must be intentional about replacing those parts of the world that we find in ourselves. Paul writes of it this way.

Romans 12:2 (HCSB) Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

He writes to the early Christians in Rome, those who had grown up in the culture of the heathen Roman empire. He writes that they should not to be conformed to that culture. The truth was, they were already conformed in many ways. In dress, language, values, beliefs, prejudices, choices of food, entertainment, sports, and lots more they were conformed to the culture in which they lived.

It was inescapable. It is impossible to grow up in a culture and not be shaped in many ways by that culture. You know that. You see that all around you. People who grow up in America, have American values. People who grow up in France have French values. People who grow up in Japan have Japanese values.

Second generation Americans are a hodgepodge of their parent's values and American values. We call this the great American melting pot. People who grow up in America become Americanized.

People who grow up in racist families, tend to be racist. Not all of them. Environment and culture aren't the only things shaping people. But we see this is often true.

People who grow up in a certain political atmosphere, tend to adopt those politics. People who follow sports often follow a certain team because their parents did, or their friends do. I grew up between Washington and Baltimore. My dad rooted for the Washington teams, so it was natural for his children to adopt his teams as their own.

We are, to a great extent, shaped by the culture, or cultures, in which we grow up. We are shaped by the spirit of the age. Whatever the culture is, whatever most people are, that creates a shaping peer pressure on everyone.

It may be that some of those values coincide with God's will but that other values are opposed to God's will. Figuring out the difference is a major part of what living as a Christian is about.

The process for discovering the extent of the world in you and replacing it with the will of God is described as a transformation. You have to become someone different than the person you were before you became a Christian. You have to get the world out of you and spiritual truth in you.

How does this take place? It takes place in your thinking. He writes that you must renew your mind.

Renewing your mind means to replace the world's values, beliefs, and attitudes with those of God in you.

Some years ago my wife and I had a kitchen renovated in our home. We had two kinds of wallpaper in the kitchen, plus some copper tiles on the wall behind the stove. It was a hodgepodge in that one little room. We stripped off the tiles and wall paper and painted the whole thing one color. We put in a new floor, counter top, sink, faucet, and cabinets. We did not get a whole new kitchen. Some things, like the floor plan and appliances were the same. We kept what was still good of the old and replaced the rest.

That's what we have to do in our minds. We have to renovate or renew our minds. We have to change the beliefs upon which we live our lives. This is because **Our beliefs determine the things we say and do**. You act everyday upon your beliefs. People in other countries find it amazing that Americans do some of the things we do. And we are just as amazed at some of the things they do. The truth is we are both acting out of our beliefs. Our beliefs about right and wrong are different, so we behave differently. Our values are different. Our tastes are different. Our assumptions about the world are different. Our prejudices and attitudes about things are different. That's why we act differently.

There is much of our culture in us. There is much of the world in us. As Christians our beliefs and values need to be renewed in light of God's truth so we can know and live out His will. What you believe determines the things you say and do.

We need to see our world from God's perspective. We need to see God's values, God's priorities, God's purposes, God's morality. Then we will see more clearly God's will for our everyday lives. When we renew our minds, then we will know His will.

So how do we renew our minds? **Renewing your mind involves praying through the Bible.**

The process of renewal is accomplished when three things come together. The first is your humble, willing self. The second is the Bible. And the third is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals spiritual truth and principles from the Bible. It is these truths and principles upon which we build a knowledge of God's will.

As the Holy Spirit interprets our lives for us in light of God's word, we will see what needs to change in our thinking. When you change your thinking, your beliefs, then your behavior will change.

Let me give you an example. The new television season has started for the major networks. We watched a few shows this week to see if they are worth watching. Some of the new shows we decided not to watch simply from the commercials for them. The content of the clips we saw in the advertisements were enough to reveal the immoral beliefs and values

being pushed by those shows. Other shows we had to watch in order to see what is there. We watched a couple of shows and could see they deserved a second try. One show we gave a mild nod to and decided if it did not improve in the next episode, we would drop it from our watch list.

I imagine you are doing the same thing. You have a set of beliefs about what is acceptable, what is beneficial, what is praiseworthy, what fits within the will of God. You use these beliefs of yours to decide what to watch for entertainment.

This is part of Christian repentance. Repentance from sin starts in the mind. Obedience starts in the mind. Behavior starts in the mind. When you start thinking about the world like God does, then what you used to think was interesting you will now see as wicked. And if you care about living out God's will, then you will change your words and actions.

This is a two part series of sermons. It is titled "Rebels" because we are to rebel against the form the world wants to shape us into. We are living in the age of sin against God. The world has turned away from God and His will. The spirit of sin in the world expects us to join up in resisting God and His will. The world wants all of us to sin.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are commanded to resist the pressure of the world to conform to its sinfulness. As the world rebels against God, we are to rebel against the world.

Resist the world. Seek your transformation through the renewing of your mind.

Change is inevitable. You will be a different person a year from now. Your experiences will change you. Your relationships will change you. The things you learn will change you. Events in the world will change you. Changes in culture will change you. You will have to make choices because of what is happening around you, choices you wouldn't have to make if someone else did not force them on you.

As our world changes this year, you will be faced with issues calling for a choice. What will you believe? What will you support? What will you condone in others? What will you choose for your own behavior?

The question is not whether you will change. You will change. The question is what kind of you will you be a year from now? How will you change? Who will you be like?

Will you be more like Jesus, or more like the world? If you want to be more like Jesus, then seek to know and live God's will through the renewing of your mind.

The world is resisting God's will. Are you? God's will for you starts with admitting you are a sinner before Him. God doesn't want to condemn you for your sin. God wants to save you.

God loves you and sent Jesus to die for your sins so that by faith in Him you can be forgiven. God raised Jesus from the dead to prove His acceptance of Jesus' death for sin.

Today, put your faith in Jesus and be forgiven of all of your sins.