

Seeking the Will of God

AA Retreat Talk

Intro: A popular song that is associated with Frank Sinatra is "**My Way**." He sings it with such conviction that I am sure he is speaking about himself. The words tell of a person who fought hard to do life his way and by and large is satisfied the way things turned out.

Yes, there were times, I'm sure you knew, When I bit off more than I could chew.

But through it all, when there was doubt, I ate it up and spit it out.

I faced it all and I stood tall; And did it my way...

The record shows I took the blows, And did it my way!

What happens to the song if we replace 'My Way' with '**God's Way**'? It really becomes a statement of a person who has the courage **to seek the will of God and to follow it.**

I There is in **all of us**, yes, all of us, to want to be in **control** of our lives, to be independent, and even rebellious. "**No one is going to tell me what to do.**"

A Some of us were **pushed around** in life – maybe in our youth or in a harmful relationship. We have a bad taste in our mouth towards **domineering** people. Or we are so **bull headed** that we cannot hear advice from a reliable person.

B Yes, some people have hurt us by their efforts to control us. **But what about God?** Is he our friend who is interested in our good? **Can we trust God? Yes.**

1 An important part of recovery is to believe and accept the truth of the **Third Step.**

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." Sounds like a willingness to do life God's way.

2 **Eleventh Step.** "**Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for**

us and the power to carry that out.”

3 To seek **God’s will** and ask for power to carry it out is a deep spiritual principle.

C For some people God is not real. **Atheists/agnostics**. On a New York City **Subway wall** someone wrote: “God is dead.” The next day that was crossed out and beside it read:

“Nietzsche is dead!” and signed it GOD!

II **God has a plan for you at every stage of your life**. e.g. I remember when I was 19 years old and thinking of **becoming a priest**. I was looking for a community life with an opportunity to preach. Along came the Passionists. I had to **step out in faith** that God was calling me. I said yes to the call of God.

- Yet God calls us each day to grow humanly and spiritually. We need his guidance.

III Jesus taught his disciples a most beautiful prayer: **Our Father** - In it we say **“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”** We could add, thy will be done **in me**. We should say this prayer slowly, reverently and with confidence.

A For **God’s will to be done** in our lives, we must be willing **to change**. Change is never easy. Habits want to linger on.

1 We get **comfortable** in our thinking and actions. Yet, **recovery is about change**. Think about the changes that have happened to you in these past years.

B The **Serenity Prayer** encourages us to **accept things** that we **cannot change**. We cannot change our past mistakes; we cannot choose to get younger; we cannot control other people; cannot change big problems in the world like poverty, disease and violence.

1 But we ask **God for courage to change the** things we can. That may not always be clear so we **ask for wisdom** to know the difference.

2 C **AA** and the **12 Step Tradition** has offered a pattern of change that brings a new lease on life. You **attend meetings** for yourself and others. You change some of your lifestyle. You hear **success stories** and you grow in confidence to give your lead.

3 **God becomes REAL.** I have heard people say that they have come to know God because of AA. As the saying goes, **No God, No Peace. Know God, Know Peace.**

IV How do we grow in **God's wisdom**? Lots of ways. **Wisdom** is a virtue that allows you **to make good choices**. The smartest people are not necessarily the wisest.

A Wisdom lets us see clearly the consequences of our choices, **good and bad**. E.g. If we choose to **be selfish, controlling and addictive**, people avoid us. We suffer the consequences. On the other hand, if we work to **change bad habits**, reach out the others **and give our time freely**, we will be more appreciated and loved.

1 When we hang around good, solid people we pick up **their wisdom** and learn from their life experiences. We should consult people who are more spiritually mature.

2 The **Big Book gives so much wisdom** on every page. Wise sayings: Serenity Prayer; KISS (Keep It Simply Stupid) ; Let Go and Let God; One Day at a Time.

B There is another big book, **the Bible**, which has tons of wisdom to guide us. A Christian makes an act of faith that the Bible is the **word of God in the words of men**.

- 1 There are too many wise sayings to list. But here are a few.
- "I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me." Phil. 4:13
 - "For those who love God all things work together unto good according to his purpose." Romans 8:
 - "If God is for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31
 - "For God all things are impossible." Matt. 19:26

Psalm 23 The Good Shepherd Guides and Nourishes His Sheep

Psalm 91 Security Under God's Protection

Psalm 139 God is All Knowing and Ever Present

Closing

God created us to be happy in this world. I believe we are **most happy** when we are obedient to God's call. If our **permanent attitude** is to seek his will, then God will reveal it to us. From there we move into action. When we say and do the right thing for the right reason, God is pleased and rewards our efforts. By the way, the next time you hear the song by Frank Sinatra, try using the phrase, "**I did it God's way.**"