

## Lesson # 2 -- The Importance of the Will of God

### Introduction

- A. In our study of this subject we are looking at the will of God in the light of His preceptive revelation. Therefore, we must keep in mind that we mean by the term "the Christian life." To live in or according to the will of God -- is to live in harmony with the commandments, promises, exhortations, and invitations given to us in the Bible.
- B. God has graciously revealed His will to us so we can be rescued from sin and its terrible effects in our life.
- C. When we look at the will of God, through the perspective of the Bible, we immediately realize there is nothing more important for us, nothing more valuable, nothing that will bring more benefit to those about us, nothing that will make us more fruitful and fulfilled, and nothing that will glorify God more -- than simply doing His will.

### I. The Will of God and the Assurance of Salvation.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Matt. 7:21

#### A. The Explanation

1. In this section of the Sermon on the Mount the Lord Jesus was teaching the inward character of the kingdom of God. The immediate context had to do with the fine illustration of the tree and its fruit and how that related to the acceptance and practice of His Word.
2. We must keep in mind that our Savior was talking to many who were religious only and were rejecting His claim to be the Old Testament Messiah. Their good works were only the expression of their religious culture.
3. As we look at the Sermon on the Mount we immediately recognize that what the Lord Jesus meant by "the will of My Father" was repentance, faith, a desire for righteousness, and a practice of His teaching. (Matt. 5:3-12, 17-20; 6:1-15, 33; 7:1-5, 24-29)

B. The Instruction

1. Salvation has its origin, its beginning, in the work of regeneration -- the new birth. In salvation the Holy Spirit applies to us the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus which causes an inner spiritual transformation. We become a "new person." (II Cor. 5:17)
2. The evidence of salvation is found in how we live. As the Lord Jesus said -- the believer will do the will of God -- he will understand and manifest repentance (a desire to be free from sin), faith (trust in the Savior), righteousness (a desire to live righteously), and he will seek to obey the Bible.

C. The Application.

1. It is helpful for each of us to ask as to whether or not we have such evidence in our life. Is our Christian walk the result of an inner devotion for the Lord Jesus or have we simply accepted the religious culture of our parents and church?
2. When the Savior spoke of obedience He did not mean a life of perfection. That is clear from such passages as Matthew 6:12 as well as I John 1:8, 10. The Christian can and does sin -- but that is not the basic characteristic of our life.

II. The Will of God and our Relationship with the World.

Who (Jesus Christ) gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father. Gal. 1:4

A. The Explanation

1. In this passage we are led to an understanding of the content of the will of God -- deliverance from this evil world.
2. The apostle reminds us that one of the goals of the work of Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection -- was to make it possible for every believer to be set free from the bondage to the sin of "the world."
3. It may help us to be reminded how John defines the world. He states it has to do with "the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." (I John 2:16) Each of these are sinful expressions of our self-centeredness.

B. The Instruction

1. As the true believer considers his relationship with the sinful world culture -- he is aware of two spiritual truths. On one hand he knows -- in his better moments -- that he does not find his basic pleasure in the world. And on the other hand he knows the serious influence the world holds over him.
2. This twofold awareness is the result of the new birth. In our salvation we were separated from all identification with the world and its people. The Lord Jesus said, "You are not of the world." (John 15:19; 17:16)
3. Every Christian, however, recognizes some area of life in which we are too influenced by the world. This may result in a temporary form of bondage and cause one a great deal of difficulty.

C. The Application.

1. We must be thankful and express our gratitude to God for saving us out of the world -- and then give ourselves to learning how to live free from its influence.
2. The key, as stated in the above text, is found in the work of the Lord Jesus. Through His death, resurrection, ascension, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit we can learn to live in freedom. The first step is to recognize that the world is not so much "out there" as within each of us -- in our selfish and self-centeredness.

III. The Will of God and our Relationship to Spiritual Growth.

For this is the will of God, even your sanctification (spiritual growth), that ye should abstain from fornication (sensuality). I Thess. 4:3

A. The Explanation

1. The word "sanctification" in this text puts the emphasis on the daily life -- how we are to live. The Christians in Thessalonica were not to live according to the sensual standards of their day -- even though they were culturally approved.
2. Again we have a twofold emphasis -- deliverance from sin and growth in spirituality. The importance of these two are immediately recognized when we ask "What do I want to characterize my children or my friends?"

B. The Instruction.

1. In order to live in the will of God and practice the truth, as the Psalmist said (86:11), we must put a great deal of emphasis on applying the Bible to our daily life.
2. We are all aware of the far-reaching influence of sensuality in our modern world. Almost everything seems to be designed to pander to our fleshly satisfaction and comfort. We are constantly being urged by the advertizer to indulge ourselves without restraint in all forms of intemperate activity.
3. The Christian is one who knows that he should say "No" a great deal of culture. The key is not legalism, or some form of asceticism -- but spiritual growth.

C. The Application.

1. In the Garden of Eden God made us spiritual people. When we were born again we were re-created according to that pattern. We must learn to live as spiritual people.
2. In His death and resurrection the Lord Jesus made every provision for our freedom from sin (self-centeredness), as well as the enablement to grow spiritually.
3. All too often our problem is simply "I don't want to." Many Christians have never lived long enough as a spiritual person to understand its meaning or its basic fulfillment. And, many of us are hampered by problems of the past or present. However, as we read the verse before us we must make a choice -- to obey God -- and to learn how to live according to His will.

IV. The Will of God and our Relationship to Prayer.

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petition that we desired of him.  
I John 5:14,15

A. The Explanation.

1. The will of God is closely related to the Biblical concept of prayer. It is the answer to the question, "What requests are we to present to God in prayer?"

2. The promise in these verses is overwhelming. In simple language we are presented with a truly profound truth: the believer can pray the will of God into actuality in the life of another!
3. While a person's determination to disobey God cannot be overlooked -- we see in these verses a way whereby we can cooperate with God for the welfare of another.

#### B. The Instruction.

1. The greatest promises of the Bible are related to prayer. It is a great privilege to be able to speak to God concerning our own needs as well as the needs of others.
2. A part of what it means to live an unselfish life is to be concerned for the needs of those about us and to express our love and faith for them by prayer.
3. It is God's will that we become involved in the lives of those about us -- through prayer. We can claim the will of God for them and thereby cooperate with God in His work in their life.

Ephaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. Col. 4:12

#### C. The Application.

1. Many believers do not have a Biblical prayer life because they have allowed their selfishness to intrude even here.
2. Because of such failure to know and do the will of God in regard to prayer many Christians have never known a fruitful and fulfilling prayer life.
3. It would help to make a list of the will of God for the believer, as well as the non-believer, and present such requests to God daily. When we pray in such a way -- we cannot fail.

#### Conclusion

Because of the importance of the will of God -- we must learn to live in His will -- in spite of how we feel about it.