

Lesson # 3 -- The Promises Regarding the Will of God

Introduction

- A. In the series entitled, The Importance of Being a Christian, we discussed together a number of valuable benefits that are given to the believer. Probably the most significant was the first in that series -- that the Christian can call God his Father.
- B. In this lesson I want to talk with you about a subject that is very close to that one. The emphasis is upon the will of our Heavenly Father and some of the promises related to His will.
- C. The subjects which make up the concept of the Fatherhood of God -- are highly important for each of us -- if we are to understand what it means for God to be God and what it means for us to be a Christian.

I. The Will of God and the Believer's Identity.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Eph. 1:3-5

A. The explanation

1. Paul states God is to be blessed (eulogized or praised) because He has given to all believers all spiritual blessings.
2. A brief list of some of these benefits includes being chosen by God in eternity past so we would be holy, without blame, and related to Jesus Christ in love. Paul also speaks of being predestinated (marked out) to be adopted by God. All of these benefits are a reality to us simply because of "the good pleasure of His will."
3. The passage before us reminds us of the value and importance of being "in Christ." When He came into our life He brought every good with Him.

B. The instruction.

1. The truths found in these verses regarding the will of God establishes the believer's identity. When we realize that we are always spoken of as created by God as a person -- and in this passage as redeemed -- we are brought to a clear understanding of who we are -- a redeemed person.
2. Each of these words must be given careful attention. As a person you are an entity, created by God in His image, different from all other persons, with many rights and privileges. The word "redeemed" designates you as one chosen by God, brought into a living spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ, through Whom every benefit of the grace of God has been made yours.
3. While it is true that our identity is somewhat known by our gender, family relationship, geographic place, and occupation -- our true identity (spiritual) is that we are a redeemed person.

C. The application.

1. As we consider our identity we immediately realize how wrong it is for us to accept and believe our feelings of inferiority and worthlessness.
2. We must believe God that we possess in Christ all spiritual blessings. What can be more clear than such words as "blessed," "chosen," and "adopted?" We may not live as the redeemed person we are -- but the key to beginning such a life is to accept these truths.
3. The Bible has been given us as our final authority. This means that we must accept it as such, believe it, and practice its truths by faith.

Observation: Many times an affirmation will help us understand and apply the truth. For the next few days state -- "I declare on the basis of the Bible that I am a person created by God and redeemed from my lost condition by the work of Jesus Christ. I am therefore a spiritual person, I possess all the benefits of the grace of God, and I choose to live that way today."

II. The Will of God and the Believer's Assurance.

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. John 6:39,40

A. The explanation.

1. In the first lesson of this series we were reminded of the intimate relationship between God's sovereignty and His will. The latter is a revelation of His eternal decrees. The plan of salvation has been established by God so that the divine promises given to believers cannot fail.
2. Note the relationship in the above verses between "The Father's will" and "lose nothing," "everlasting life," and "raise him up." Because these promises are founded in God's eternal decrees it is impossible for a believer to be lost!
3. Some have attempted to weaken this truth by holding that salvation is built upon human works. Such a view is flatly contradicted by the Bible, in fact in this very chapter Vs 37, 39, 44, 65. (See also Gal. 3:10,11; Eph. 2:8,9)

B. The instruction.

1. In the first section of this lesson we discussed the words "chosen," and "predestinated." In the passage now under consideration that theme is taken up in the words "All (believers) which he (God the Father) hath given me (the Lord Jesus)." Any person who believes upon Jesus Christ as Savior is among those chosen by the Father and given to the Lord Jesus.
2. This truth was so important to our Savior that He spoke of it with thanksgiving in His prayer (John 17).

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. John 17:6-9

3. The only conclusion we can draw from these passages is that the believer and his salvation is involved in the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. The security of our salvation is not found within ourselves -- but in our Father's eternal will.

C. The application.

1. Many Christians continue to lack the assurance of their salvation in that they approach this subject from the viewpoint of their daily failures and emotional fear.
2. Each of us can understand how easy it is to do this. It is, however, not the Biblical approach in that such a view is based upon the error that salvation is to be earned by good works.
3. Other believers lack assurance in that they are never sure they have truly believed. We must face ourselves with the truth in these verses that we believe because we were chosen by the Father and given to the Son. Faith is a gift of God given in the new birth. Saving faith is not an ability possessed by the non-believer.

III. The Will of God and the Believer's Privileges.

There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him . . . And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother. Mark 3:31,33-35

A. The explanation.

1. The way the Lord Jesus threw Himself into His ministry and the uproar that it caused must have caused His mother deep concern. We're not sure why she came with her other sons to see the Savior but it may have been to warn Him of the antagonism they saw about them.
2. The Savior did not turn away from His family but used the occasion to teach a valuable truth. It has to do with the privileges of all believers -- they are as close to Him as His mother and brethren.
3. When we ask as to what special privilege the family of Lord Jesus possessed -- the answer would be "fellowship." The natural unity and familiarity of the family was here used by the Savior to point out what He sought in every believer.

B. The instruction.

1. One of the great privileges that has been given to the believer is that we have been "called" (in salvation) into a relationship with the Lord Jesus where we can have fellowship with Him.

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
I Cor. 1:9

2. This privilege is the legal right of all who are true believers. However, it can only become an experience in the life of the Christian who has learned to "do the will of God."
3. The word "fellowship" means "to share in common." It indicates a mutual participation, a personal involvement, an enjoyable communion, a seeking of the good of another.

C. The application.

1. It is almost beyond human comprehension to realize that God seeks to fellowship with us. However, it is true, and is the privilege of all those who choose to walk in the will of God.
2. One of the greatest promises of the Bible has to do with this subject. The Lord Jesus spoke of it just before He went to the cross.

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words (the will of God), and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. John 14:23

3. What believer would not want such a relationship with the Lord Jesus -- so that he would experience the love of God and experience what it meant for God to dwell with him?
4. It is this relationship that the Savior had in mind when He said -- "Whosoever will do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother."
5. Such a walk with God is our privilege. The choice is ours. Let's make the choice and ask God to teach us how to live up to the truth we know -- so we may do His will.