

**UNDERSTANDING AND DOING GOD’S WILL
PART 3–OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GOD’S WILL
EPHESIANS 5:17**

INTRODUCTION

Last time we were here on this subject, let me remind you that we looked at **THREE BASIC STEPS IN KNOWING AND DOING THE WILL OF GOD:**

- I. *WE MUST FIRST ACKNOWLEDGE THE FACT OF GOD’S WILL FOR OUR LIVES!
GOD’S WILL concerns each member of HIS family!*

- II. *WE MUST GIVE ATTENTION TO THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST, WHO CAME TO DO THE FATHER’S WILL!
In HIS INCARNATION and LIFE, the LORD JESUS both EXEMPLIFIED and FULFILLED the WILL of HIS FATHER!*

The WILL of the SON was NEVER CONTRARY to the FATHER’S WILL, but rather, HE set the example of COMPLETE OBEDIENCE!

- III. *WE MUST ACCEPT THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO ENABLES US TO UNDERSTAND AND DO GOD’S WILL!
HE particularly helps us in the area of CHRISTIAN SERVICE, showing us what to DO and giving us the POWER to DO it.*

Tonight, I want us to look at **SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GOD’S WILL FROM SCRIPTURE.**

- I. **WHEN WE PRAY AFTER THE PATTERN THAT JESUS GAVE HIS DISCIPLES WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT WE HAVE A PART IN CARRYING OUT GOD’S WILL!**
Luke 11:1-4, “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth,”

As we **PRAY** after this manner, it should remind us of **OUR PART** to **UNDERSTAND** and **DO** what **GOD DESIRES IN OUR LIFE!**

(We can’t do anything about **OTHER BELIEVERS**, but we can do something about **OURSELVES** with the **LORD’S HELP!**)

(e.g. JOHN 21:15-22 especially vs 21-22 – Peter asked about John)

**UNDERSTANDING AND DOING GOD’S WILL
PART 3–OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GOD’S WILL
EPHESIANS 5:17**

- II. **THE GENERAL TENOR OF THE BIBLE INDICATES THAT GOD HAS A SPECIFIC WILL FOR EACH OF HIS CHILDREN!**
(He wants us to **WALK BY FAITH** in **DOING HIS WILL!**)

- A. **God Had A Will For The Old Testament Saints’ Lives!**
(Hebrews 11:1-40 – Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and many “others!”)

Two things about this:

First, they were **BLESSED** when they walked by **FAITH** according to **GOD’S WILL** for their lives! In fact, they were able to accomplish things that were far beyond their own abilities as they **YIELDED** to **GOD’S WILL** for their lives!

Second, they got into **TROUBLE** when they walked according to their **FLESH** outside of **GOD’S WILL** for their lives!

e.g. MOSES was used of GOD before PHARAOH in EGYPT and many times in the WILDERNESS before GOD’S PEOPLE as he UNDERSTOOD and DID the WILL OF GOD! MOSES got in trouble when GOD told him to SPEAK to the ROCK to bring forth water for a second time and he got angry at GOD’S PEOPLE in his FLESH and STRUCK the ROCK instead!

- B. **God Had A Will For The New Testament Saints’ Lives!**
(e.g. Acts 1...Peter and the other 10 remaining Apostles along with other followers of Christ in the upper room)

(e.g. Deacons Stephen and Philip in Acts 6, 7, 8)

(e.g. Saul who became the Apostle Paul in Acts 9)

In fact, we could say that **“The Acts Of The Apostles”** is largely the **APOSTLES UNDERSTANDING** and **DOING GOD’S WILL** for their lives and helping others to **UNDERSTAND** and **DO THE WILL OF GOD!**

UNDERSTANDING AND DOING GOD'S WILL
PART 3—OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GOD'S WILL
EPHESIANS 5:17

C. God Had A Will Then For His Churches And People And Still Has A Will For His Churches And People!

(e.g. Various Epistles Of The New Testament...we see Rebuke...Exhortation...Encouragement...Instruction

Then there is the Book of the Revelation where the Resurrected And Ascended LORD JESUS CHRIST gives the Apostle John messages to 7 actual Churches in Asia in Revelation 1-3!

And those messages have truths that extend even to US to know and do God's will!)

The repeated phrase: Revelation 2:11— “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches...”

Remember, that the **BIBLICAL DIRECTIVES** about **GOD'S WILL** are for us to **BOTH UNDERSTAND HIS WILL** and **DO HIS WILL!**

Ephesians 5:17— “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”

Ephesians 6:6— “...as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;”

Psalms 143:10— “Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God...”

Colossians 1:9— “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;”

UNDERSTANDING AND DOING GOD'S WILL
PART 3—OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GOD'S WILL
EPHESIANS 5:17

III. GOD'S WILL SHOULD TAKE THE PLACE OF PRIORITY IN OUR EARTHLY JOURNEY!

I really want you to get this: If JESUS came to earth to DO HIS FATHER'S WILL (and HE did!), and we are MEMBERS OF HIS BODY functioning IN HIM with HIM LIVING HIS LIFE IN AND THROUGH US (and WE are!), THEN THE FATHER'S WILL SHOULD STILL BE PARAMOUNT IN US!

(It is of utmost importance that we see that GOD'S WILL is NOT an OPTION, but rather it is a NECESSITY! i.e. We can't afford to ignore it!)

Colossians 1:18— “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

IV. BECAUSE CHRIST SAID FOR US TO PRAY, “**THY WILL BE DONE,**” WE KNOW THERE IS THE DEFINITE POSSIBILITY OF ITS FULFILLMENT! (i.e. GOD'S WILL CAN BE DONE!)

We are not to construe **GOD'S WILL** as something **MYSTERIOUS** or **UNATTAINABLE**, but as **INTENSELY PERSONAL**, **HIGHLY MEANINGFUL**, and **FULLY POSSIBLE** in our lives!

BELIEVERS who have **FOLLOWED** the **WAY OF CHRIST** will testify of the **BLESSINGS** and **REWARDS** they have received through **OBEDIENCE TO HIS WILL!**

V. WE MUST STRIVE TO YIELD OUR WILL TO GOD'S WILL!
(As we pray for GOD'S WILL and it is REVEALED to us, we must **SUBMIT** to HIS REVEALED WILL, **NOT RESIST IT!**)

So, that means there **MUST BE** an inner **DESIRE**, a genuine **WILLINGNESS** to **OBEY** the **LORD**, in our **HEART** and **MIND!**

UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER to the **LORD** is **ESSENTIAL!**

UNDERSTANDING AND DOING GOD'S WILL
PART 3—OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GOD'S WILL
EPHESIANS 5:17

This is the area of greatest difficulty for many strong-willed **BELIEVERS! Yes, even the LORD has some STRONG-WILLED CHILDREN!**

(Those of you who raised strong-willed children might have a better understanding of what I am saying.)

We must “*turn this corner*” so to speak in our pursuit of **GOD'S WILL!**

Some may argue that **GOD'S WILL** is not such a simple matter. After all, it requires **PRAYER, TIME, EFFORT, DILIGENCE, and PERSISTENCE!**

Yes, it requires all of that and much more even.

But we must begin by agreeing that **GOD** does reveal **HIS WILL**, and that **OBEYING** it is within the range of performance of each and every **BELIEVER!**

VI. AS WE WRAP THIS UP, LET'S OBSERVE A FEW HINDRANCES IN OUR THOUGHTS AND MINDS TO THE WILL OF GOD.

A. We ALL Are Often Hindered Because Our Fleshly Will Wants To Dominate Our Actions! (1 Timothy 6:6-19)

We know that our **FLESH** causes us to be naturally **SELF-INCLINED** and **SELF-INDULGENT!** (Our **FLESH** wants to drive our **WILL!**)

Philippians 2:21—“For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.”

Galatians 5:16–17— “16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”

UNDERSTANDING AND DOING GOD'S WILL
PART 3—OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GOD'S WILL
EPHESIANS 5:17

So, we should make sure that our thinking **GOD-CENTERED** instead of **SELF-CENTERED!**

B. We Are Often Hindered Because Our Goals Are Usually Temporal And Shortsighted! (Matthew 6:19-21; 24-34)
Our **FLESH** relates to **earthly values** and to **material things.**

We get caught up in living for the nasty now and now!

But in **PROVING THE WILL OF GOD**, we are not to be **conformed to this world**, but to be **transformed by the renewing of our minds.** (*Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 3:1*)

We need to continually pay attention to our direction and goals to make sure that we are still on **GOD'S** course for our life!

C. Having A Mistaken View Of The WILL OF GOD Can Also Hinder Us!

If we perceive **GOD'S WILL** as mostly being a **rugged road**, a **life of unpleasantness**, and an **unrealistic approach to living**, then we will back off from our **desire to honor and serve CHRIST!**

May the **LORD DELIVER US** from just staying in our comfortable rut and let months and years go by wasted that could have been lived for the **LORD.**

(This gets back to that “**REDEEMING THE TIME**” that **PAUL** mentioned in *Ephesians 5:16* and *Colossians 4:5*)

D. We Can Be Hindered By Having An Apathetic Attitude Thinking That It Doesn't Really Matter.

When we stand before Christ at His Judgment Seat of Christ, we will see how much it mattered, but it will be too late to do anything about it!

UNDERSTANDING AND DOING GOD'S WILL
PART 3—OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GOD'S WILL
EPHESIANS 5:17

“Nobody else was doing it” is NOT an acceptable answer with Christ!

Conclusion

So what do we need to do in light of all this?

- 1) We need to honestly review our attitudes toward the will of the Lord.
Have we been simply neglecting it? Ignoring it? Refusing to obey it because of faulty thinking?

- 2) Are we sincere in our faith and its expression in the world?
If we are then UNDERSTANDING and DOING GOD'S WILL is the only approach that will work!

- 3) Are we really committed to doing the will of God?
And if not, why not?

We need to be totally honest in answering these questions!