

GOD'S WILL IN MY LIFE.

Part 1: Only one will.

With authority and simplicity, the Bible declares, in Revelation 4:11, that all things were created by God's will; in fact, Acts 17:28 goes on to say that nothing in heaven or on earth can live, move or have its being apart from God's will. The basic dependency upon the will of God governs both the natural and the spiritual creation:

John 1:12-13, "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God">

John 6:44, "No-one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him..."

James 1:18, "He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created."

Spiritual life, like natural life, is based upon and derived from the will of God; there's only one source of life in the universe – the Lord God. You aren't an accident, a meaningless cog in a cosmic machine; you're here by divine appointment; you've a destiny in Christ Jesus; you've a future in the will of God. You, I and everyone are important to God.

One of the most outstanding men in the Bible was Paul, and I'm constantly challenged by his philosophy of life and ministry, so often evident in his letters to the churches; for example:

1 Corinthians 1:1, "Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God..."

Paul recognised that in his life and ministry, everything was sustained and regulated according to the will of God. He fully accepted that he couldn't do, or be part of, anything apart from God's plan for his life; to persist in his own way would inevitably lead to destruction.

In the life of we modern-day Christians, there's still only one will that counts – God's will. The idea that "it doesn't matter what you do as long as you're involved in the Lord's work and do it for His glory" is wrong, and it's the cause of so much heartache and frustration in the lives of God's people, and many shipwrecked Christian lives too. We're not called simply to be busy, rather we're called to "wait on the Lord", and in waiting on the Lord, to hear His voice and discover His will for our lives.

Now please don't misunderstand me; I'm not saying that we don't have to work in the Kingdom of God, of course we do, but our work begins when the will of God is revealed. Until then, we should wait in His presence for His instruction and direction. Far too much time, effort and finance is wasted simply because we don't have "ears to hear what the Spirit is saying".

One definition of sin is "missing the mark" or "falling short" of God's standard of holiness and His will for our lives. So very often, people "miss the mark" not only in terms of violating God's moral laws, but also in terms of performing "dead works"; that is, doing things God hasn't called them to do. Far too often we undertake projects and pursue goals in the name of the Lord, but without His authority and approval. It might sound noble, and appear valiant, but if God hasn't told you to do it, leave it alone. It seems today that it's very "Christian fashionable" to be off somewhere "doing the Lord's work" but we have to be very careful that it is His work – His will and not our own according to the flesh. It appears to me that the church needs to cultivate a revised, or revived approach – Holy Spirit led, not man lead.

Actually Jesus recognised the subtlety of this problem and dealt with it in His teaching on the Kingdom of God,, what we've called "The Sermon on the Mount":

Matthew 7:21-23: "Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers".

Notice that Jesus didn't dispute their claims; but the implication of His reply is very clear; "I never knew you...I never authorised you...I never approved of you...I didn't tell you to do it". Additionally, Jesus calls those who act on their own initiative, apart from His authority and outside the parameters of God's will, "evildoers". The Kingdom of heaven, on the other hand, is made up of the humble and obedient; those who are submitted to the Father's will.

The will of God is the only basis upon which to build a fruitful and enduring life and ministry. If we build on the clear and specific instruction of the Lord, we're building on a sure foundation that will survive any kind of Satanic or human storm. If we build upon a revelation that God gave to someone else, or on a calling that someone else received, or on a method that someone else employed; we'll fall in the day of adversity. Hear Jesus' warning:

Matthew 15:13: "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots".

We'd better be sure that our life and ministry, all that you're saying and doing in Jesus' name, is based upon the foundation of God's revealed will for your life. Otherwise it will not last and you'll eventually come a cropper. [It seemed like a good idea at the time. But did it seem good to the Holy Spirit?]

Our Lord Jesus Christ is, of course, the ultimate example of a life fully committed to the will of God. Jesus expressed the whole focus, desire and dedication of His life in;

John 5:30: "By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgement is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me".

As a result of His commitment to the will of God, Jesus glorified the Father on earth and finished the work that the Father gave Him to do.

The will of God is the basis for fruitfulness in both life and ministry. May we, each one, be numbered among those who do the will of God and are fruitful:

John 15:1-8: "I am the true vine and my father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he trims clean so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself, it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory,, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."