

=PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING=

Lesson 7

The Christian and the Will of God

AIM: to teach my pupils the importance of finding the will of God, how to find the will of God, and the tragedy of not finding and doing God's will.

POINT OF CONTACT: Ask the pupils what is the greatest thing that one can accomplish in life. Of course, the answer is, "to do the will of God." Then ask the pupils how many of them feel that they know what God wants them to do as far as their main work in life is concerned. Ask a few of them what this is.

- I. WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD? Salvation is more than deliverance from the wrath to come. Having been saved from something, we are also saved for something and to something. That something is to do the will of God. Jesus said in John 4:34, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." He said in John 5:30b, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." Then in John 6:38, He said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Hence, if we are to be Christlike, we are to do the will of God.
 1. The perfect will of God. Notice Romans 12:1, 2 and you will find there is a difference between the perfect and the acceptable will of God. The perfect will of God is that which God plans for us for our lives. It is that thing of following Him day by day in the little things and year by year in the big things and reaching the fullest of God's purpose for us.
 2. The acceptable will of God. When a person has forfeited the perfect will of God, then he must seek to do the acceptable will of God. For example, if a man marries the wrong woman, or vice versa, or complicates his life so that he forfeits his opportunity to do the main thing that God wanted him to do, he must then try to salvage what he can of his life and spend the rest of it serving God. God then gives an acceptable will. It will not be as fruitful as what might have been, but it will be far more fruitful than what could have been.

- II. OUR ATTITUDES TOWARD THE WILL OF GOD.
 1. We are to want to do God's will. Psalm 40:8a, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." In other words, it should not be a drudgery for us to do what God wants us to do, for the Christian's happiness should be to do the will of God for his life.
 2. We are to seek the will of God. John 5:30b, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." This does not mean that we are constantly to be seeking what is the next step. It is much better to be doing the last command. However, in our youth we should seek the will of God for our lives.
 3. It should be our purpose in life. John 6:38, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." The biggest thing in our lives should be to do the will of God. This is the purpose of our existence. This is the reason that we are here. Hence, nothing else should matter much but doing the will of God.
 4. We should learn all we can about the will of God. Psalm 143:10a, "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God." This, of course, is learned as we walk with God and stay in His Word.
 5. The will of God is the greatest achievement in life. David Livingstone said, "I had rather be in the heart of Africa in the will of God than on the throne of England out of the will of God." Someone else has said, "A dew drop does the will of God as much as a thunderstorm." This means that we should not aim to be big but aim to be in the will of God. This is the greatest thing that we can accomplish in life.
 6. The will of God is the greatest thing we can know. How foolish it is to accumulate a lot of facts and knowledge and not to know the great thing, which is the will of God! Dr. George W. Truett said, "To know the will of God is the greatest knowledge; to do the will of God is the greatest achievement."
 7. There is immortality in the will of God. As long as we are in God's will, we're immortal. This means that there is safety in the will of God. A missionary was asked, "Is it safe to work among the lepers as you do?" "Yes," was his reply. "It is safer to work among the lepers if it is my job than to work anywhere else." Consequently, the safest place in the world is in the will of God.

8. The will of God offers us a guarantee that everything will come out for our good. Romans 8:28. What a blessed promise this is! This is one of the greatest incentives in all the world for staying in the will of God.

III. HOW TO FIND THE WILL OF GOD.

1. By reading the Word of God. The Bible tells us directly in definite, unmistakable terms what the will of God is in many cases.

For example, we know it is the will of God to lead holy lives. I Thessalonians 4:3, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication." This is a plain, simple command. We know what the will of God is in this case because the Bible says it so plainly.

We also know we are to be filled with the Holy Spirit, for it is plainly commanded in Ephesians 5:18.

We know we are to pray and that it is the will of God that we pray, for we read in I Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray without ceasing." In I Timothy 2:8 it says, "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." Hence, we know it is the will of God that we pray.

There are many other things that the Bible tells us to do and not to do. We know what the will of God is in these matters, for it is plainly given to us in the Bible.

2. By losing our own will. It is exceedingly difficult to find the will of God if we have a will of our own. When seeking the will of God in a big matter, we should first come to the place where we are willing to do either choice. In fact, we should be just as willing to go either way.
3. If for any reason you do not know the will of God for the future, continue doing what His last command was. In other words, keep doing what He said last until you hear from Headquarters again! In the Bible, God always called busy people.
4. Look at your talents and gifts. For example, if you have a good singing voice, God would have you use it. If you have the ability to speak before people, God would have you use this. This does not necessarily mean that you should enter into full-time music work or full-time preaching, but use whatever God has given you.
5. Seek the advice of godly, concerned people, for God often leads us through such advice. Dr. George W. Truett was called to preach because his church felt he should preach. He had felt so too, but not strongly enough to yield. His church felt that he should be a preacher, and he felt this was God's leadership. When seeking the will of God in any matter, always seek wise counsel and advice from those who are spiritual and who care.
6. Observe circumstance. Oftentimes God uses circumstances to open His will to us. This includes normal opening and shutting of doors which we must accept as of God. If only one door is open and you must move forward, no doubt this is of the Holy Spirit; and He it is Who opened the door. If the door is definitely closed, oftentimes God is leading to another door.
7. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you leadership. Oftentimes the Lord will give us definite leadership through the Holy Spirit. In order to have this privilege, we must be sure we are walking in the Spirit and that the Spirit is leading.
8. We must ask God to give us wisdom to make the right decisions. When our will is lost in any matter and we are as willing to do one thing as another, and when we are aware that God will lead us and we sincerely desire and seek that leadership, usually the decision we make will be led of the Spirit. He will control our minds and lead us to make the proper decision.

IV. THE RESULTS OF DISOBEYING GOD'S WILL.

1. Tragedy and heartache. David got out of the will of God for his life. He married the wrong woman, and in so doing, their first baby died early; one son was guilty of raping his sister; one of his boys killed another; and one of his sons rebelled against his father in open battle.
2. Death. Ananias and Sapphira got out of the will of God and were killed for their disobedience. See Acts 5:1-11. Read also the first few verses of John 15 and find that God oftentimes cuts off a branch that does not bear fruit.
3. Loss of opportunity. Saul refused to walk obediently before God and rejected the will of God for his life. We find the tragedy in I Samuel 15:23, “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.”
4. There are many other examples, yea, tragic examples, of leaving the will of God. Samson is one, Adam and Eve’s disobedience is another, Cain is another, Jacob is another—any number of these can be used as illustrations of the tragedy of leaving the will of God.

CONCLUSION: Certainly the will of God should be the big thing in our lives! The “children” in our classes are growing up quickly, so it is vital that we teach them how important the will of God is NOW and will be THROUGHOUT their lives!