

I. The Desirous Will of God

a. *Thelo* and *Thelema*

i. Definition

1. *Thelo* (verb)

- a. “means ‘to will;’ it signifies more especially the natural impulse or volition, and indicates a less formal or deliberate purpose...” – Vine’s
- b. “to desire (wish, will), wanting what is best (optimal) because someone is ready and willing to act...commonly used of the Lord extending His ‘best-offer’ to the believer” – HELPS Word Studies

2. *Thelema* (noun)

- a. “properly, a desire (wish), often referring to God’s ‘preferred-will,’ i.e. His ‘best-offer’ to people which can be accepted or rejected.”
- b. Mt. 23:37 – man’s free will can refuse God’s desirous will (“best offer”)

ii. Why Should The Believer Be Concerned with the Desirous Will of God?

1. Believers are encouraged to have a working knowledge (put the pieces together) of God’s desirous will for their lives – Ephesians 5:15-17
 - a. Unwise – Fool (8x), Foolish (2x)
 - b. Context – v.18 – allow self to be filled by the Spirit
2. Paul prayed that the believers would have a full experiential knowledge of God’s will, so they might order their lives in a way that is acceptable to the Lord and bearing fruit – Colossians 1:9-10
 - a. Pleasing – “accommodate one’s self to the opinions, desires, and interests of others”
 - b. Knowing God’s desirous will important for doing what He desires
3. Epaphras desired that the Colossians would stand convinced and filled up in all of God’s desirous will. – Colossians 4:12
4. The one who habitually does God’s desirous will remain at ease in the Age – 1 John 2:17
 - a. “...he doth remain [settled down, at ease]—to the age” – Young’s Literal Translation

iii. What is God’s Desirous Will for the Believer?

1. Present your bodies a living sacrifice –Romans 12:1
 - a. Mercies (Pl.) –
 - i. *Oiktirmos* – a more intense word that *eleos* (the more common word for mercy)
 1. A deep compassion
 2. 2 Cor. 1:3 – God is the Father of this type of mercy

- ii. The plural use carries the idea of the “whole provisions of God’s grace as they are directed to the grace believer by God” – David Spurbeck
 - 1. Consider hopeless estate of fallen humanity
 - 2. God has provided the believer in Christ: forgiveness, reconciliation, no condemnation, acceptance, security, access, enablement, peace, freedom from the sin nature, etc.
 - b. Present – carries idea of one time offer of purchased possession back to rightful owner
 - i. Present – “present for use”
 - ii. The believer has been purchased by Christ’s blood – 1 Pe. 1:18-19; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Gal. 3:13-14; Col. 1:14
 - c. Having considered the mercy of God, make a one time offer of your body, giving back to God what already belongs to Him, which is our logical priestly service
 - i. Accurate view of the grace of God seems to be necessary for the believer in Christ to be willing to make this presentation
 - ii. The believer in Christ is making themselves available for God’s use
 - 1. Rom. 6:6, 12 – Before salvation, believers presented their bodies to the sin nature to fulfill all its desires
 - 2. Rom. 6:13 – Christians should not make themselves available to the sin nature but present themselves to God
2. Conformity vs. Transformation – Romans 12:2
 - a. Conform – outward change or adaptation towards something else (Pres. Imper.)
 - i. Vine’s – this word cannot refer to inward reality
 - ii. Romans being told to stop outwardly conforming themselves to another standard
 - b. Age – *Aion*
 - i. “An age, era...period of indefinite duration...emphasis is not on length of time but that of a period marked by spiritual or moral characteristics...It is sometimes wrongly rendered ‘world’” – Vine’s
 - 1. Not *Kosmos* – Satanic world system
 - 2. Context: Rom. 9-11 not describing time period when Jew were conforming to the Satanic world system but were wrongly trying to establish their personal

righteousness before God by adhering to the Law

3. Context: "*I beseech ye therefore*"
 - a. Whenever therefore, determine what it is there for
 - b. Romans 9-11 – Paul introducing something new is going on
4. Warning against trying to live the Christian life by Legalism
 - a. "fleshly attitude which conforms to a code for the purpose of exalting flesh" – Ryrie
 - b. "Hey God! Look how righteous I am!"
- c. Transform – *Metamorphao* (Pres. Pass. Imper.)
 - i. Mt. 17:2; Mk. 9:2 - Christ's transfiguration
 - ii. 2 Cor. 3:18 - The believer transformed into the image of Christ
- d. Renewedness – Complete change for the better (Noun)
 - i. Emphasis is not on an action but where the process of transformation can take place
 - ii. The believer's mind prior to salvation
 1. 1 Cor. 2:12-16 – unsaved don't have an interest in nor do they have the ability to understand spiritual truth
 2. Ro. 8:7 – Carnal mind is hostile to God
 3. Eph. 2:3, 4:17 – Unsaved man fulfills all the desires of his fleshly mind and is empty of spiritual content
 - iii. The believer's mind as a result of salvation
 1. 1 Cor. 2:16 – we have the mind of Christ (Pres. Act. Ind.)
 - a. The mind of Christ is continuously available
 - b. We can understand God's thoughts and make sense of spiritual truth
 2. Eph. 4:23 – be renewed in spirit of your mind (Pres. Pass. Inf) –
 - a. The believer's mind is the place of renewal
 3. Phil. 2:5 – let this mind be in you (Pres. Pass. Imp.) – the believer is responsible to make use of their renewed mind

- e. Prove – “test, prove, scrutinize”
 - i. 1 Cor. 3:13 – the believer’s works will be scrutinized by fire at the Bema Seat to see which ones will be approved by Christ
 - ii. 1 Cor. 11: 28 – individual believers are encouraged to test and scrutinize their own lives
 - iii. 1 Pe. 1:7 – trials of life serve to test the quality of our faith
 - f. Good – *Agathos* – “describes that which, being ‘good’ in its character or constitution, is beneficial in its effect” – Vine’s
 - g. Acceptable – *Euairestos*
 - i. “pleasing” – Strong’s
 - ii. that which lines up with God’s desires
 - h. Perfect – *Teleios* - “lacking nothing for completion” – Thayer
3. When believers in Christ allow themselves to be transformed by their renewed mind they will be able to discern God’s desirous will for their life