

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH

LESSON 13

GOD'S WILL AND GUIDANCE

Supplemental Class Notes

Lesson Objectives

1. To see the difference between *sovereign* and *commanded* (revealed) will of God.
2. To learn how to discern the will of the Lord in our lives.

INTRODUCTION

I. GOD'S WILL

A. GOD'S SOVEREIGN WILL

God accomplishes all that He purposes (Isaiah 14:24; 46:9-10).

Nothing is by chance:

- Remember lesson #6 on salvation and how God "*predestined*" all who would be saved - Romans 8:29-30
- Christ going to the cross was predetermined - Acts 2:22-23
- Governments are established by God - Romans 13:1

Common Question: "*Can I know God's sovereign will?*"

Fortunately, there are guidelines to help us align our will with God's sovereign will.

B. GOD'S WILL OF DESIRE

God's will of desire is consistent with His sovereign will but is not always fulfilled.

For example:

- +Jesus desired Jerusalem to come to Him, but they were unwilling - Matthew 23:37
 - +God desires all men to be saved, but all will not be saved - 1 Timothy 2:3-4
 - +Christ desires all to come to Him, and they do not - Matthew 11:28-29
 - +God desires that Christians be obedient and sanctified, but we fail - 1 Thess 4:3
- God desires, but we are still responsible to obey and align our wills with His.

C. GOD'S COMMANDED WILL

God's commanded will is also part of God's desired will. Unfortunately, we often fail to obey God's commands. God's commands are revealed throughout the pages of Scripture as laws or principles.

Can we know God's commanded will? (Colossians 1:9)

To be "*filled*" literally means to be completely filled, or totally controlled.

“Having the knowledge of God's Word control our minds is the key to righteous living.

What controls your thoughts will control your behavior.

Self-control is a result of mind-control, which is dependent on knowledge.

Knowledge of God's Word will lead to all spiritual wisdom and understanding.”

John MacArthur

D. OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S WILL

1. Our response to God's sovereign will

Trials should be expected and are given by God for our testing:

- ❖ The Lord tests the righteous - Psalm 11:5
- ❖ Testing reveals your true heart - Deuteronomy 8:2
- ❖ Do not be surprised when you are tested - 1 Peter 4:12

Our response needs to be one of entrusting our souls to God, as brought out in the lesson verse, 1 Peter 4:19.

2. Our response to God's commanded will (Ephesians 5:17; Deuteronomy 11:1; 29:29)

Being obedient to all that God has revealed in His Word is the beginning of aligning our will with His will.

However, this implies that we have immersed ourselves into the Scriptures to determine what the will of the Lord is.

E. GUIDELINES TO DISCERNING GOD'S WILL IN EVERYDAY DECISIONS

"How can I know God's will in the choice of a career, or who I should marry?"

The answer to this question is to be faithful to God's will as revealed in the Bible, and then follow the guidance of Psalm 37:4, *"Delight yourself in the LORD; and He will give you the desires of your heart."*

Delighting ourselves in the Lord includes loving Him with a heart of obedience.

This leads to the question, "What are key areas that are clearly revealed in Scripture as God's will?" The following is a partial list:

- ❖ Be saved- 1 Timothy 2:4 (lessons 5 and 6)
- ❖ Be Spirit filled- Ephesians 5:18 (lesson 7)
- ❖ Be submissive to authorities – 1 Peter 2:13-15 (lesson 13)
- ❖ Be willing to suffer for His sake - 1 Peter 3:17-18 (lesson 13)
- ❖ Be sanctified - 1 Thessalonians 4:3 (lessons 7 and 12)
- ❖ Be self-sacrificing - Romans 12:1-2 (lesson 9)

To be filled with the Spirit is to live in the consciousness of the personal presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, as if we were standing next to Him, and to let His mind dominate our life. It is to fill ourselves with God's Word, so that His thoughts will be our thoughts, His standards our standards, His work our work, and His will our will.

Christ consciousness leads to Christ likeness.

John MacArthur

Exhortation: If all of the items in the list above are in place, then follow the desires of your heart, (Psalm 37:4) and trust God for the outcome (Proverbs 3:5-6).

II. GUIDANCE

We need to be immersed in, and obedient to God's Word so we are in a position for the Holy Spirit to guide us (Ephesians 5:18).

God guides through His Word, through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, through providence, and through godly counsel.