

“God’s Will Be Done”

Part Two

God's Will Be Done

- Previously - God's will takes more than one form:
 - Permanent will - Absolute and unalterable by anyone but God
 - Revealed will - Revealed, unchangeable instructions for humankind
 - Unrevealed will - Unknown, unknowable plans of God
 - Requisite will - Commands given to humankind that require human will to complete; never without consequences
 - Permissive will - God allows a choice without imposed consequences
- Presently - God's will and human will, collectively and individually
 - What does God purpose for man that requires his cooperation?
 - Does God have particular purposes for individuals?

God's Purpose For Humankind

- God's will for humankind
 - God wills for all to be saved
 - Matt. 18:14 - “Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”
 - 1Tim. 2:3-4 - “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

God's Purpose For Humankind

- God's will for humankind
 - But not all will be saved
 - Matt. 7:13-14 - “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

God's Purpose For Humankind

- God's will for believers
 - Believers are born by the will of God
 - John 1:13 - “Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”
 - Believers are to live for God's will
 - 1Peter 4:2 - “That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.”

God's Purpose For Humankind

- God's will for believers
 - Believers are to do the will of God from the heart
 - Eph. 6:6 - “Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart”
 - Believers who abide in God's will live forever
 - 1John 2:17 - “And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

God's Purpose For Humankind

- Believers are to know God's will
 - Believers can discern God's will by testing
 - Rom. 12:2 - “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”
 - God's will for man is for his sanctification
 - 1Thes. 4:3 - “For this is the will of God, your sanctification”

God's Purpose For Humankind

- God's will for us is for our greatest good
- But in order for it to be accomplished, we must cooperate with it

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Does God have a will distinctly tailored for each one of us individually?
 - How can it be known? Only by speculation or feelings; nothing is revealed about His will for you

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Which is it: our will or God's will?
 - Phil. 2:12-13 - “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.”

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- God willed Paul be called; Paul accepted the call
 - 1Cor. 1:1 - “Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God”
- By the commandment of God
 - 1Tim. 1:1 - “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope”
- God appointed Paul to learn of His will and to see Christ
 - Acts 22:14 - “Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth.’”

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Jesus' will for Peter and John
 - John 21:22 - “Jesus said to him, If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.”
 - Jesus reminds Peter that his job is to follow Jesus no matter what His will is for John
 - If Jesus' will was for John to live until He returned, that would not affect His will for Peter

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Seems to imply some level of individual purposes
 - However, please note that these statements are in the context of specific commissions
 - Please note that there were specific revelations by the Divine; the receiver was not left to guess God's purpose for him

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- James 4:13-15 - “Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.”

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Seems to imply specific purposes for individuals today.
- “Wills” in this context means permits; God may have other purposes
- There is no clear revelation in scripture for individual purposes, and as there is no individual revelation, it is a moot point
- This passage is about pride; our temporal purposes do not impact God’s permanent purposes

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- So what does this mean?
 - God has an overarching plan for humankind and this world. No force can stop it
 - God has a will for human behavior that does not interfere with human free will, but instead requires human cooperation in order for it to be fulfilled
 - God has provides the environment and allows conditions to exist that facilitate our decision to do or not do His will

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- So how does this work?
 - If it happens, God has willed it because He created the conditions to bring it about
- 1Peter 3:17 - “For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.”
 - If we do good, as commanded (1Peter 2:15), and we get evil in return, God created the conditions that for it and has allowed it to take place; hence, it is willed by God

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Rom. 12:3, 6 - “For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith... 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us”
 - God has given each of us different abilities, implying individual purposes
 - By creating the conditions that generate different people with different abilities, He has given us gifts

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- How are we to understand God's will for us?
 - God has already declared His will for us: to believe in His Son, do what is good, avoid what is evil, be saved

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Acts 16:6-10 - “Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. 7 After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. 8 So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, Come over to Macedonia and help us. 10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.”
- Even the Apostles, guided by the Spirit, acted according to what they thought was best under the circumstances

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- How do we live without a specific plan from God?
 - The will of God is not some nebulous thing we must see or understand before we move forward
 - Questioning over and over whether any event in your life is God's specific will for you as an individual is folly, for such a judgment is always subjective

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Remember: Satan has a will, too
 - Luke 4:6 - “And the devil said to Him, All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and to whomsoever I will I give it.”
- How would you discern whether any given path is the will of God or the will of Satan?

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Therefore, we ought to go through life living according to God's instructions, using the opportunities and abilities that come our way
- We should not expect that God will explicitly declare His will for us in specific ways in specific situations

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Instead, we should pray and ask for wisdom
 - James 1:5-6 - “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting...”
 - Not for Him to reveal His will but to give us wisdom to make the best decision by means of His previously revealed will

God's Particular Will For Individuals

- Esther 4:13-16 - “And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. 14 For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this? 15 Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai: 16 Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!”

How Can I Know God's Will For Me?

- Look for answers in the word of God; it is God's will for you - 2Tim. 3:16-17
- Listen to counsel from faithful Christians; it is God's will for you - Phil. 3:17
- Take advantage of opportunities to do good; it is God's will for you - Gal. 6:10
- Abstain from every form of evil; it is God's will for you - 1Thes. 5:16-22
- Use your abilities and resources for righteousness; it is God's will for you - Luke 12:48