

"EMBRACING THE WILL OF GOD"

Heb. 10:35-37

INTRODUCTION: Most true believers and followers of Christ say they want to do the will of God, and many of them do. **Are you one of them?**

A. When you think of the will of God, what comes to mind?

1. Are you like many Christians who think of God's will as ¹something that is **imposed** on them, or ²that it's something that is *illusive* and *hard to know*?
2. Are you like some who see the will of God as *something difficult or distasteful* - **that they are forced to do, or suffer the consequences?**
3. The perfect will of God should be a matter of great importance to all who say, they love the Lord.

I. THERE IS A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUBMITTING TO GOD'S WILL AND EMBRACING HIS WILL

A. To **submit** means to "*subject oneself to*"; "*give in to imposed conditions.*" ***Submitting is often thought of in terms of punishment and discipline.***

For example, the government of Iraq was forced to submit to conditions set forth by the United Nations. The Iraqis did not embrace the imposed discipline -- rather, they submitted to it, **and all the while they are resenting it. *Sadly enough, many Christians see the will of God in the same light***

A little boy was told to sit down and be quiet and was threatened with punishment if he got up again. He sat down and said to himself, "***I may be sitting down on the inside, but I'm standing up on the inside.***"

1. Many believers picture God as demanding and that they must give in to a hard set of rules and conditions that say: "Do it My way, or you're on your own."

a. How very wrong they are! How different our Heavenly Father is from such thinking.

b. This kind of thinking also casts Christ in a totally false light. **As our Shepherd He leads us, and doesn't force us.**

c. The truth is that, when a believer knows *the joy and glory of doing the Father's will*, he/she embraces it with joy and hope.

2. To **embrace** means "*to clasp, as in your arms -- to press to your bosom as an expression of love and affection.*" Yet the sad truth is that, very few Christians today are embracing God's perfect will.

3. God has an absolute, a perfect plan and will for every one of His children. **He leaves no single life to chance.**

a. In fact, He wants to direct every step of lives here on earth, and that includes us

entering into His plan and will for us today, tomorrow and the next day.

B. God's will is not just for ministers or deeply spiritual saints, **but for all His children.**

1. **The New Testament gives the following exhortation:**

I Pet. 4:2 "That (we) no longer should live the rest of (our) time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God."

Heb. 13:1 "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight."

C. The early Apostles had one desire for all the churches -- that every member would know God's perfect will for his/her life and embrace it.

1. Paul wrote of a brother named Epaphras, "*who is one of you, a servant of Christ...always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God*" (Col. 4:12).

a. **Epaphras knew that if they would stand perfect in the Lord's will, they would find joy and bliss, and their every need would be met.**

2. It is easy for us to say, "I want God's perfect will in my life!" **But the truth is: no believer enters His will without a personal struggle with the flesh.**

II. IN ORDER TO EMBRACE GOD'S WILL ONE MUST DIE TO ALL SELF-WILL

A. It was prophesied of Jesus from the beginning that He would come to earth for one eternal purpose: to fulfill the will of the Father.

Heb 10:7 "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) **to do thy will, O God.**"

1. Christ told His disciples: "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:30).

John 4:34 "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

John 6:38 "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

a. From these passages we are given to understand that there was never a moment in Jesus' life when He wasn't aware that His purpose on earth was to do the will of His Father.

b. This ought to be true of us as well. We no longer belong to our-selves; we have been bought with a price. (See **1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23**)

2. In every waking moment of the day we should seek to do His will.

B. No matter how spiritual you are or how long you have walked with Jesus, a time will come when you'll have to decide, once and for all, whose will is going to prevail in your life: yours -- or the Heavenly Father's.

1. Jesus had to face such an hour. When that hour came for Him, He saw before Him the painful cost of embracing the Father's will.

a. **Mat 26:38** says he became *"exceeding sorrowful, even unto death:"*

Luke 22:44 *"Being in an agony...his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."*

2. Christ's bloody (heart rending) battle at Gethsemane was all about embracing God's will:

Matt. 26:39 *"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: never-theless **not as I will, but as thou wilt.**"*

b. Jesus adhered to the Father's will with an **affection** that lifted Him beyond all the sufferings that lay ahead.

III. WE TOO WILL HAVE OUR GETHSEMANE WHEN FACED WITH DOING GOD'S PERFECT WILL

John 18:1 *"When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples."*

A. Jesus' crossing over the brook Kidron had significant meaning.

1. The word "**Kidron or Cedron**" means *"darkness or dark waters"* giving it also the name **"Black Brook."**

The waters of this stream were darkened by the steep cliffs on both sides of the river and by abundant trees and vegetation which protruded over the water, dropping leaves and other debris, which darkened the water.

2. **The waters of the Kidron were also darkened by blood.**

During the Passover, as many as 2 1/2 million Jews were in Jerusalem. This would mean that over 250,000 lambs would be slain in the Temple in one week. The blood of those lambs was poured on the altar as a crimson offering to God. From the altar, there was a channel which led down to the Brook Kidron. The blood from the altar drained down this channel into the brook Kidron.

3. When Jesus crossed the brook, it would still be red from the blood of the lambs.

The sacrifice He was about to make, with His own blood, would be vivid in His mind.

B. Jesus entered the garden known as Gethsemane which means *"oil press."*

1. ***Christ was about to go through the oil press of suffering for us.***

2. This garden was often an oasis of solitude for the Lord, especially when Jerusalem was filled with people.

By the way, do you have a quiet place where you can spend time with the Lord?

3. Jesus knew what was going to happen. **How?** He is God. **In fact, did it ever occur (come to mind) to you that nothing occurs to God?**

John 13:11 *"For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.*

Mark 8:31 *"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after*

three days rise again.

Jn. 2:24 "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because **he knew all men.**"

CONCLUSION:

A. Jesus protected the disciples by directing the focus of danger upon Him-self when **He asked, "Whom seek ye?"**

John 18:7-9 "Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. 8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: **if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way**: 9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none."

1. In this time of great difficulty, He was thinking of others.

Jesus took the problem by the throat and faced it head-on. He didn't run from it. Sometimes we have to do the same thing! Jesus knew He was doing God's will. **This should give confidence to us to do the same, and not run from it.**

B. Jesus gave the order to free the disciples. In so doing, He willfully offered Himself that others might go free.

1. He was our substitute. The Good Shepherd gave his life for His sheep.

2. Jesus was concerned **1** about others, **2** in fulfilling the will of God, and **3** the Word of God. **Shouldn't we be also?? Are you embracing His Will?**

The year was 1988. It was a wonderful afternoon in Soviet Armenia as Susan Petroyson and her four year old daughter, Gany, were trying on a dress on the fifth floor of their nine story apartment building. Without any warning, the floor and building began to shake like Jello. Susan grabbed Gany, took a few steps and the floor opened up like a plate. Like falling boulders bouncing down a mountain slope, they helplessly tumbled to the basement below, being showered by concrete, dust, and steel from the collapsing building. In the black void of the basement, Susan and Gany were surrounded by tons of rubble and debris. It was a miracle they survived the fall and crashing rubble. Next to them laid the lifeless body of Susan's sister-in-law. She was one of 50,000 people that died that day from the worst earthquake to hit Soviet Armenia. The quake registered 6.9 on the Richter Scale. In the darkness, little Gany pleaded for water, but Susan couldn't do anything. They were trapped.

For eight days in the dark, Gany cried, "Mommy, I'm thirsty! Mommy, I'm thirsty!" Each day her little voice grew weaker. Susan was having difficulty keeping track of time in the darkness and she started hallucinating. The cold caused her to lose feeling in her hands and feet because she had removed her clothes to keep Gany warm.

On the seventh day, Susan sensed she was going to die soon. She wanted with all her heart for little Gany to live. She knew Gany had to get something to drink soon, but there were no liquids at all. Then she thought of an idea. She would keep Gany alive by giving her daughter her blood to drink. Susan found a sharp piece of glass in the debris and sliced open her left index finger and let her daughter drink. "More Mommy more!" she said. Susan sliced another finger and again her daughter begged for more. Susan sliced her hands, her wrists, her arms, and her legs in order to let her daughter drink. Susan willingly gave her blood that Gany might live. Had she not shed her blood, Gany would have died of thirst.

C. This is what Christ willingly did for us. He willingly gave His blood and life for us that we might live.

1. The agony of that decision took place in the garden of Gethsemane.
2. The severity of Gethsemane was powerful, the Savior, however, was victorious.
3. He conquered His will to do His Father's will and save us! He cares for you and me.

3. *Do we care enough about others, and **the will of God** to embrace (accept, welcome, take up) **it** with all our heart by witnessing, working, and sacrificing; **that they too might be saved?***

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