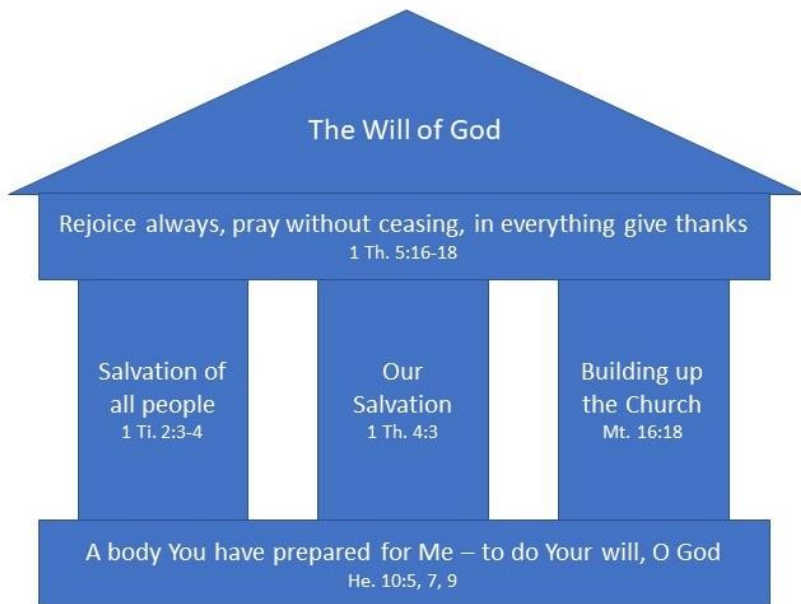


Living in the Will of God

I. The importance of God's will (Mt. 6:10)

A. God's will is particularly emphasized in the Scriptures

1. God desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth (1.Tim. 2:3-4; John 6:40)
2. The will of God is our sanctification (1.Thess. 4:3)
3. Rejoicing, praying and giving thanks - this is the will of God in Christ Jesus (1.Thess. 5:16-18)
4. God's purpose – he will build His church (Mt. 16:18; Eph. 1:9-12; 3:10-11)
5. Any personal search to discern God's will must be in line with this purpose (Eph. 5:17)



B. Jesus was the only human being who fulfilled all God's will (Heb. 10:7, 9)

1. Fallen man is unable to do so
2. God does not desire burnt offering and sin offering (Ps. 40:6-7)
3. Jesus sought God's will even unto death on the cross (Mt. 26:39, 42)
4. He always did what pleased the father (John 5:30; John 6:38; 8:29)

C. He wants to instill His will in us

1. The way of the cross (Mk. 8:34)
2. Partaking in His death and resurrection (2.Tim. 2:11; Rom. 6:4-10)
3. Looking to God, His purpose and His work for us

D. He is now looking for human beings who

1. Stand perfect and complete in the will of God (Col. 4:12)
2. Do His will voluntarily (John 7:17)
3. Consecrate their bodies (Rom. 12:1-2)
4. In the remaining time live for the will of God (1.Pet. 4:1-2)

II. God's plan is to reveal the mystery of His will in the gospel (Eph. 1:9; 3:8-11; Col. 1:24-29)

A. The contents of the gospel and its purpose

1. The gospel proclaims the person of Jesus Christ and His work (Mk. 1:1; Acts 8:35; 11:20; 2.Cor. 4:4; Rom. 8:32)
 - a. A life in oneness with God the Father (John 10:30; 14:8-11)
 - b. He does the Father's works (John 4:34; 5:17, 19-20, 36; 17:4)
 - c. His death on the cross (1.Cor. 1:23-24; 2:2)
 - For redemption, the forgiveness of our sins (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Rev. 1:5)
 - Justifying us before God, redeeming us from the curse of the law (Rom. 3:21-26; Gal. 2:21; 3:10-14)
 - Terminating our old man (Rom. 6:3-6; Gal. 2:19-20)

- Destroying the power of the devil and triumphing over him (Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:15; 1.John 3:8)
- Judging the world (Gal. 6:14)
- d. His resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:23-24, 32; 4:33; Rom. 8:11)
 - He became the life-giving Spirit (John 7:38-39; 1.Cor. 15:45; John 3:3, 7; Rom. 8:1-4)
 - We are justified by resurrection in His life (1.Cor. 15:14; Rom. 4:25; 8:10)
 - A new creation (2.Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Col. 3:10-11)
- e. His ascension and exaltation on the throne (Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:20-23)
 - All authority has been given to Him (Mt. 28:18-20; Rev. 3:21; Heb. 1:3; 8:1-2; 1.Cor. 15:23-26)
 - In Him we partake in His authority (Eph. 2:5-7; 1:20-23; Rom. 5:17; Rev. 2:26; 3:21; 5:9-10)
- 2. First and foremost the gospel is about
 - a. How God and men can come together – in Jesus Christ (John 14:6,9; Eph. 2:18)
 - b. How God can save all men – by faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:16-17; Eph. 2:8)
 - c. The outcome of God’s comprehensive work of salvation – Jesus Christ in us: the hope of glory (Col. 1:27)

B. The impact of preaching the Gospel

1. God needs men who preach the gospel despite the opposition of the enemy
 - a. A battle against the power of darkness and for the kingdom of God (Acts 26:17-18; Phil. 1:27-30; Col. 1:24-29; 2.Cor. 4:1-6; John 3:3, 5; Mt. 24:14)
 - b. Making known God’s full purpose and the unfathomable riches of Christ (Acts 20:27; Eph. 3:8-11)
 - c. Not turning away to a different gospel (Gal. 1:6-16)
2. Meant for all men, especially for the believers (1.Tim. 2:3-4; 4:9-10; Tit. 2:11)
3. Revealing the power of God to save us to the uttermost and to build up the church with us (Rom. 1:16; 1.Cor. 2:1-5; Heb. 7:25; Eph. 3:14-21)
4. The impact of the gospel is manifested by the church (1.Cor. 14:23-25; Eph. 3:8-10; Col. 3:8-11)

III. Faithful ministers dispensing God's riches

A. Our ministry for the gospel

1. Gaining and dispensing Christ in His fullness
(Mt. 4:16; John 1:14; Acts 8:35; 11:20; Rom. 1:9;
Eph. 3:8; Col. 1:26-29)
2. Christ and the Church: His body and His fullness
(Eph. 1:22-23; 4:12-16; 5:32; 1.Tim. 3:15; Heb. 12:22-24)
3. The gospel of the kingdom – preparing for His coming

B. Faith working through love (Gal. 5:6)

1. Hearing and speaking by faith (Gal. 3:2,5; 1.Cor. 2:5; 2.Cor. 4:13)
2. Achieving the unity of the faith (Eph. 4:13)
3. Supporting God's dispensation in faith (1.Tim. 1:3-4)
4. The goal of our faith: Love from a pure heart and unfeigned faith (1.Tim. 1:5)
5. Good ministers of Christ Jesus, nourished with words of faith (1.Tim. 4:6)
6. Serving the Lord, not men (Eph. 6:7)

C. The joy in dispensing Christ

1. Joy for your fellowship unto the gospel
(Phil. 1:4-5; Acts 11:22-24)
2. Our food – dispensing Christ and doing the will of God (John 4:32-34)
3. The joy of our children walking in the truth (2.John 4; 3.John 3-4)

IV. Our sanctification – that is God's will

(1.Thess. 4:3; Heb. 12:14; 1.Pet. 1:15-16)

A. We cannot see God without sanctification

(Heb. 12:14; Mt. 5:8)

B. Sanctification is God's nature worked into us: He is holy, he is light and love

(Gen. 19:2, 18; 1.Pet. 1:15-16; 2.Pet. 1:4; 1.John 1:5; 4:8, 16)

C. Sanctification is separation from sin, flesh (self), and the world

1. We need enlightenment about sin (Ps. 19:10-14; 2.Sam. 12:7-13; Mt. 5:21-22, 27-28; Acts 5:3)
2. Sanctification doesn't come from external conduct or the following of rules (Mk. 7:1-18; Gal. 5:13)
3. It begins in the heart (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6; 2.Cor. 6:11-7:3; Gal. 5:6; 6:15; 1.John 2:15-17)

D. Sanctification requires a revelation from the Father about his plan in Jesus Christ

(2.Cor. 4:7; Phil. 3:7-8; Col. 2:3)

E. Our active cooperation on the path to true sanctification

(Phil. 2:12-13)

1. The experience of the cross frees us from sin, from self, from flesh, from the world (Ex. 33:20; Gal. 2:19-21; Col. 3:1-5)
2. Do not become drunk with wine, but be filled in the spirit (Eph. 5:15-21)
1. Constant fellowship with the Lord in prayer brings about sanctification (Mt. 6:6-13; Lk. 21:36; Eph. 6:17-18; 1.Thess. 5:17; 1.Pet. 4:7)

V. Sanctification for the Church, his bride

(Eph. 5:25-27; Mt. 6:9-15; John 17:19-21; Lk. 1:74; Rom. 1:9; Gal. 6:10; Heb. 6:10)

A. Christ coming to earth – as savior and as bridegroom (John 3:16-17, 29-30)

1. He brought salvation for those who accept his work in faith (Tit. 3:4-7)
2. He awaits his prepared and holy bride (Eph. 5:25-27; Heb. 12:2)
3. He seeks an abode, a resting place (Mt. 8:20 ff.)

B. Christ's willingness on the cross brought us God's forgiveness (Phil. 2:8, 12)

1. Through Jesus' death we are dead to sin (1.Pet. 2:21)
2. His forgiveness leads to forgiveness among one another (Mt. 6:12-15; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13-15)
3. Our old man was terminated on the cross (Rom. 6:4-6; 2.Cor. 4:14-15)

C. Sanctification for the sake of the saints and the building up of the Church (John 17:19-21; Ps. 93:5; 133:1)

1. Christ's sanctification leads to unity of the believers (John 17:17)
2. The reality of unity leads to an increase of faith (John 17:21)

D. Building up the Church is furthered by transformation, renewal and salvation of the soul

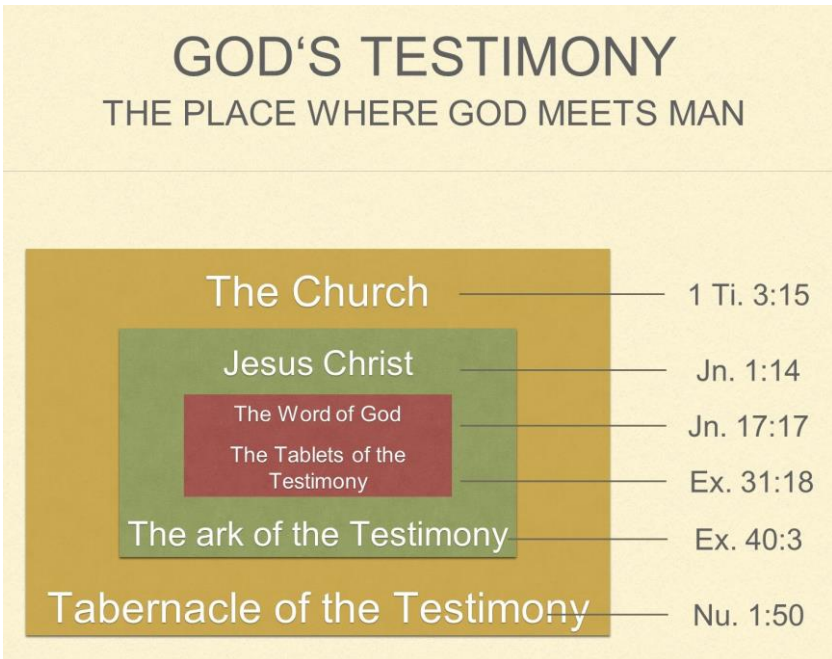
1. Regarding service: Serve God without fear (Lk. 1:74), spread the Gospel, (Rom. 1:9), serve all people and especially those of the household of the faith (Gal. 6:10; Heb. 6:10)
2. Stand in prayer for the will of God and for the saints (Acts 12:5; 12, 24) – then the Word of God will flourish and bring forth fruit

3. Remain steadfast in the truth and in the Church (Eph. 6:14; 1.Tim. 3:15-16)
4. Perseverance is necessary (Heb. 10:36; Rev. 22:11)

VI. Christ will build the Church in his likeness and as His counterpart (Mt. 16:18)

A. God created man as His counterpart

1. Man is created in God's likeness (Gen. 1:26-27)
2. Eve as the appropriate partner for Adam – a illustration of Christ and the Church (Gen. 2:18, 23-24; Eph. 5:27, 31-32)



B. God seeks in his people a counterpart to himself

1. God gave his people the tablets of Testimony, the ark of Testimony and the tabernacle of Testimony (Ex. 31:18; 40:3; Num. 1:50)
 - a. The ark and the tent were built exactly according to God's directions (Ex. 25:40; 31:1-6; 39:42-43)
 - b. An illustration of Christ and the Church
(John 1:14; 1.Tim. 3:15)
2. David's consecration to the ark and the tabernacle (Ps. 132:1-8; Acts 13:22)
 - a. The transport of the tabernacle to Jerusalem
(1.Chron. 15:1-2; 12-15)
 - b. The prophecy that his descendant will build God's house
(1.Chron. 17:1-14)

C. Christ the true descendant of David came to build the Church (Lk. 1:32-33)

1. He is zealous for God's house and wants it to be suitable for God (John 2:13-22)
2. We are indeed chosen stones for the building, but we must renounce our fleshly thinking and let our minds be renewed (Mt. 16:18-19, 21-24; Rom. 12:2)
3. Don't be discouraged even if the Lord must pass judgment occasionally (1.Pet. 4:17)

VII. Praying in the Father's will (Mt. 6:10)

A. Be joyful always, pray incessantly, give thanks in everything (1.Thess. 5:16-18; Eph. 5:20)

1. Steadfastness in prayer helps us to persevere in God's will (Col. 4:2; Rom. 12:12; Phil. 4:6-7; 1.Tim. 2:1-8; Lk. 18:1-8)
2. Recognize God's greatness in everything and trust in His goodness (Job 1:10-11; 2:9-10)
3. "Christ, therefore, having suffered in the flesh, you also arm yourself with the same mind" (1.Pet. 4:1-2, 12-19)

B. Striving in prayer

1. Strive to become one with the Father's will
(Mt. 26:39-42)
2. Learn to deny the soullife in prayer
(Lk. 13:24; Mt. 16:24)

C. Praying earnestly

1. Pray not to impress others
(Mt. 6:5-6; Eph. 6:6; Phil. 2:3)
2. Don't repeat empty words. Pray earnestly from the heart and in spirit, before the throne and in fellowship with the Father
(Mt. 6:7-10; John 4:23-24; Rom. 8:26-27)

D. Praying in oneness

1. Praying in unity for one another and remembering one another in prayer (Col. 1:3; 1.Thess. 1:2; Phil. 1:3-6, 19; Eph. 6:18)
2. Persevering with one accord in prayer
(Acts 1:14; 4:24; 12:12; Phil. 1:27; 2:2)

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