

“Don’t wait for God to change your circumstances. God may be wanting, in your circumstances, to change you!”

If the Lord were to appear to you and grant you the answer to one question, what would you ask? A leading pastor took a survey concerning the most vital questions people are asking today. Over 5,000 questionnaires were sent to Christians and non-Christians alike. It is interesting to note that the two foremost questions brought forth were: (1) “Where are we in relation to Bible prophecy?” and (2) “How can I know the will of God for my life?”

It has been said that, “Inside the will of God there is no failure; outside the will of God there is no success.” How true this is. God does have a will for your life. We must think of ourselves as individuals in relation to God. He has the ability to see you and I as unique individuals and He has a special design for every single person, including you!

God did not place us in the universe like balloons, with no particular direction. Just as airplanes are kept on course by radar, God has a plan for you and offers the guidance that you need along the course of your life. The pilot cannot always see what is ahead of him. Sometimes he is not able to see at all. But the radar guides him to his destination. Similarly, in relation to the will of God, we do not always see more than one step ahead of us, but God reveals the guidance we need for every aspect of our lives!

God is pleased when His will is accomplished. The brain consists of five areas: memory, imagination, emotions, reasoning, and *will power*. To illustrate how important it is to know the will of God, our “will power” overrides all of the other faculties of the brain. This is why God is pleased when man’s most dominate faculty becomes controlled by Him.

Understanding purpose gives meaning to everything. Look around the room where you are sitting. What is the most significant aspect about the various objects of the room? Is it the size, the color, or the quality of the chair you are sitting in that stands out to you the most? Of course not! The most important characteristic of the chair is its purpose! The chair must first of all support you, serving its intended purpose. The design or the finish would be of little significance to you if the chair was not first of all, functional. And how true this parallels the will of God. When life becomes magnetized by purpose, all other distractions lose their power and tug on us. We must come to an understanding of the purpose and will of God for our lives.

Perhaps it would surprise you if you knew how much of the scripture was devoted to this subject of the “will of God.” The Psalmist was vitally con-

cerned about knowing God’s direction. Addressing the Lord in Psalm 43:10, he says, “teach me to do thy will.” On another occasion he speaks of being delighted in the will of the Lord (Psalm 40:8). The great Apostle Paul had much to say in relation to understanding God’s guidance. Notice in Ephesians 5:17, “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.” Then in Colossians 1:9, Paul is desiring that we might “be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” Later, in addressing the Colossians, he speaks of them being “perfect and complete in the will of God.” Another reference regarding this subject is found in I Peter 2:15-17, “He that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” Notice, that the Lord has promised to reveal His will to us: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6). Another translation of this passage reads like this, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”

The Apostolic Church was extremely sensitive to the will of God. Knowing His will superceded everything else. In Acts 21, when Agabus prophesied of Paul’s imprisonment in Jerusalem, the saints tried to persuade him not to go. Paul, however, was willing to be bound and even to die for the cause of Christ. Finally, the people consented and said, “the will of the Lord be done” (Acts 21:10-14).

Did you know that God desires to reveal His plans to you, perhaps more than you want to know them? Some people feel like God is playing hide-and-seek and desires to keep His will “top secret” and a mysterious thing that cannot be understood. The Lord does not want or expect us to beg and plead, “Please God, show me your will.”

We must understand that God’s very nature is geared to reveal Himself and His purpose to us. All that God has ever done has been directed to this end. The act of creation reveals God to us. God caused the scriptures to be written to reveal Himself to us. He further revealed Himself to us through His Son, Jesus Christ, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). Today he actually continues to reveal Himself by disclosing His will for our lives. Donald Barnhouse made this statement, “It is actually impossible for a Christian who wants to know the will of God for his life not to know it.”

God has different ways of revealing Himself to us. He doesn’t always operate the same way. He spoke



where do I go from here?

Part 1 of a
3-part series on
"Understanding the
Will of God"

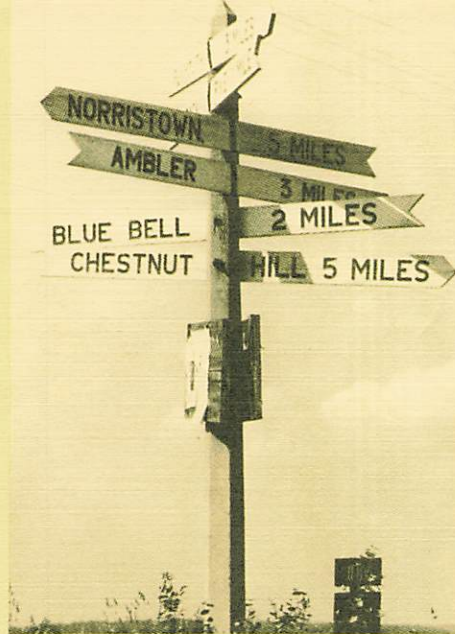
to Abraham through angels. He revealed Himself to Moses through the burning bush. Saul saw a light from heaven. To Elijah, God spoke to him through the "still small voice."

The will of God is not revealed to us like packages falling out of the sky, but it is like a scroll that unrolls everyday. It is not intended to be a hit and miss thing, with a little direction every now and then. But God's will is a progressive pathway that we walk in. I remember my father, on one occasion, relating to me how that understanding the will of God can be compared to walking down a dark pathway at night with a flashlight in your hand. As your next step is taken, the light penetrates the darkness, revealing the direction your next step should take. I remembered the words of the Psalmist David, "Thy word is a lamp

unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

Did you know that the will of God is under your nose? Sometimes, we want to see visions, feel earthquakes, hear thunder and experience miracles. But God is in the immediate, the unnoticed, the commonplace and the ordinary. It helps us a great deal, if we can understand that God is at work in our lives at this very moment. Believe it or not, the will of God is revealed through the mundane, nitty-gritty situations of everyday life.

Why is it that every ship seems romantic except the one on which I sail? We need to get busy for God in the place where God has dropped us. Bloom where you are planted! You can't start fresh with God from anywhere except where you are at



"Why is it that every ship seems romantic except the one on which I sail?"

this very moment. Quit trying to run away. You cannot start, from where you are not!

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You will never find the will of God, sitting like a ship in port. The rudder is your will. You can do anything you please with the rudder and it will make no difference unless the ship is in motion. God never guides a stationary object! You need to get busy. Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all of your might.

Knowing the will of the Lord involves body, mind, and spirit, not just spirit alone. Coming to grips with God's will means that there must be some discipline in our living.

Bring our BODY under subjection includes: going to bed at a reasonable hour, watching your weight, and being careful of not eating too much junk food. It also has to do with grooming yourself properly. It could also mean—feet hitting the floor when the alarm goes off.

We need to be careful what we feed our MINDS. Shouldn't we be as careful about what goes into our minds as we are what goes into our stomachs? What kind of literature do you read? Does it enhance your walk with the Lord? What kind of music and sounds do you allow to filter through your mind? Is it

building you up spiritually? At this point, you might be thinking, "Wait just a minute! I thought we were discussing the will of God." That's just it, we still are! We must understand that the will of God touches every facet of our living, in a very practical, down to earth way.

If you want to know God's will in your life, whatever you do, don't compare yourself with anybody else! It is possible for an individual to beat himself over the head, all of his life, trying to be somebody he is not. Many youth have been forced into situations that were not the will of God for them, because of peer pressure. It is not God's will for everyone to preach from behind the pulpit! Everyone is not called to Eastjhunga, to live under a thatched roof and eat monkey soup. But every child of God is called to be a saint, and to be involved in "the work of the ministry." God has a work for you to do and a place for you to fill in His great Kingdom.

God's will is not always "paradise." It could mean—hurt, affliction, and struggles. When you say, "Not my will, thine be done" you may not be totally aware of what you are saying. God makes thorns with the roses, and bitter with the sweet. Sometimes, afflictions are God's will. Paul had a "thorn in the flesh" and on three different occasions, he asked God to remove it. But God said, "This is best for you!"

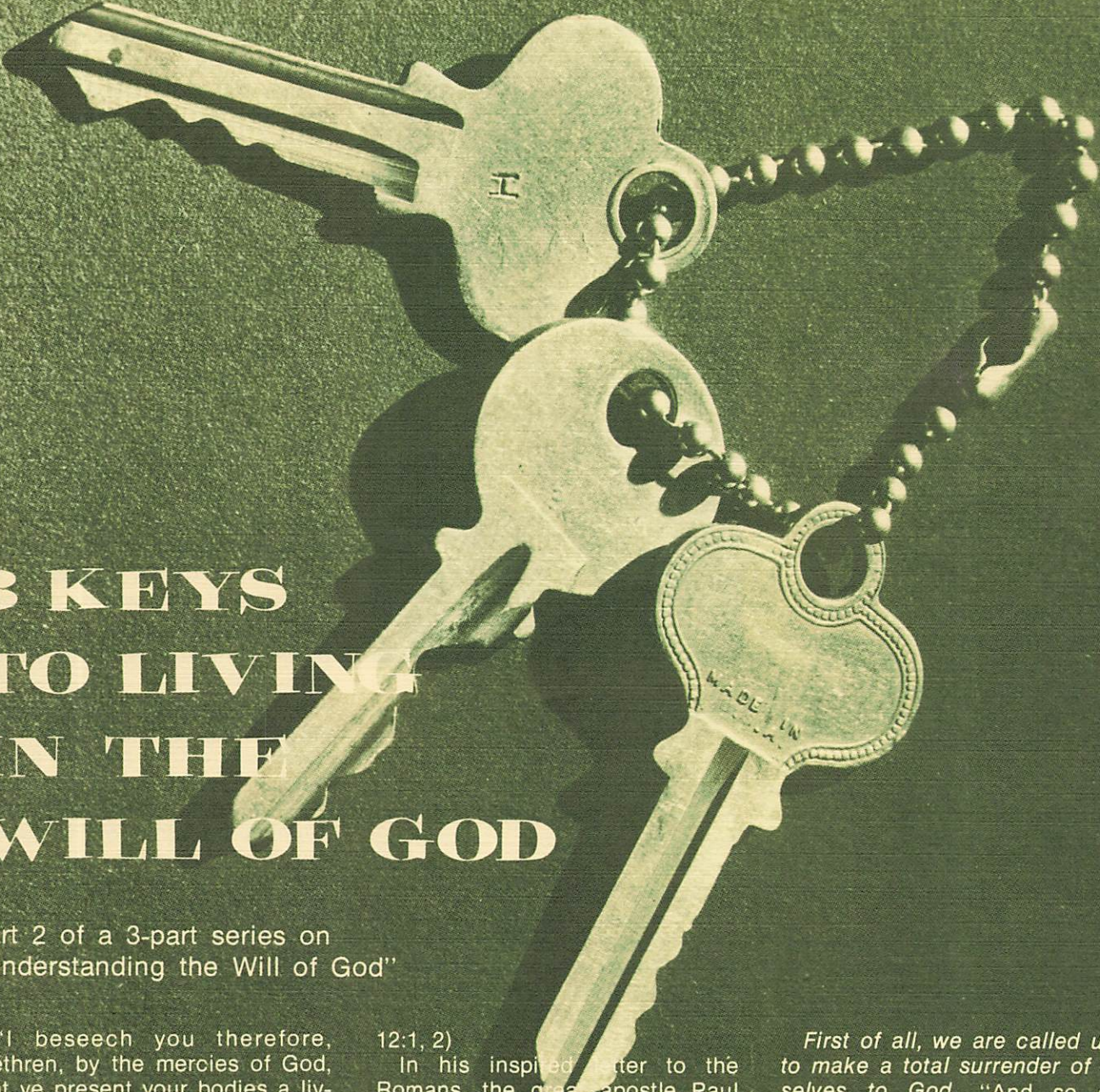
There could be a greater purpose in a particular circumstance than what you can see immediately. At times we become confused because we are only looking at one piece of the puzzle. God is much more concerned about how we RESPOND to difficult situations, than what we actually go through. It could be that God is wanting to teach us something or develop character quality in us. Maybe it is the will of God for us to learn patience. Patience has been defined as: "Accepting a difficult situation from God without giving Him a deadline to remove it."

Finally, let me conclude this first part of a continuing series, by saying that the will of God is something that you are drawn to, not driven to. You never need to worry about God forcing you to go to some horrible, dreaded field of labor, where you would be most miserable. First of all, God never violates the human will. Secondly, Christ always unites our duty with our desire. "I delight to do thy will."

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." That's my duty! "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12-13). That's my desire!

In the May issue of The Conqueror, we will be sharing with you three keys to living in the will of God!

—Stephen Judd

Three keys of different shapes and sizes are attached to a chain of small, round beads. The keys are arranged diagonally across the upper half of the page. The top key is a simple, flat key. The middle key is a heart-shaped key with a small 'H' on it. The bottom key is a more ornate, heart-shaped key with a small 'H' and 'W' on it. The background is a dark, textured green.

3 KEYS TO LIVING IN THE WILL OF GOD

Part 2 of a 3-part series on
"Understanding the Will of God"

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans

12:1, 2)

In his inspired letter to the Romans, the great apostle Paul describes the will of the Lord as being good, acceptable and perfect. As we closely examine the first two verses of chapter twelve, we soon discover that there are three keys found therein which will unlock for us the door to the good life found in God's will.

First of all, we are called upon to make a total surrender of ourselves to God. "And so dear brothers, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a sacrifice, holy—the kind He can accept. . .when you think of what He has done for you, is this too much to ask?" (Living New Testament)

In this verse, Paul admonishes

"The will of God is not something that we add to our lives; rather, it is a course that we choose."

us to present our bodies "a living sacrifice." Or, in other words, we are to make a gift of our bodies to God. We must give ourselves away, bringing all of our faculties unto God for His purpose.

The will of God begins at the altar of sacrifice. A total commitment of ourselves must be made to God. It is vital that there be an unreserved, unqualified surrender on our part to Him!

The will of God is not something that we add to our lives; rather, it is a course that we choose. It is either "thy will be done," or it is "my will be done." The choice is ours to make. Before we can pray—"thy kingdom come," we must first learn what it means to pray—"my kingdom go."

There is one thing that God cannot do. He is limited in that He simply cannot violate the human will. He never superimposes His will upon our wills. Within the heart of each of us, there is a God created throne that was intended for God alone...yet the fleshly kingdom within us has a tendency to enthrone itself. Truly our wills must surrender to His supreme will. If He is to be the Lord of our lives, we must abdicate the throne room of our hearts to His reign and dominion.

Living in the will of God necessitates a "no strings attached" agreement. It can be compared to signing a blank contract, handing it over to God, and telling Him to fill in the details. This unconditional surrender is a vital first step in understanding God's purpose in our lives. It is essential for us to, first of all, be willing to do the will of the Lord, regardless of what that might entail, before He will reveal the divine purpose or direction that we desire to know. A



surrendered heart is the basis for an understanding mind.

Secondly, we are admonished to live a separated life from all worldliness. After Paul calls for a total surrender of ourselves to God, he goes on to write, "and be not conformed to this world."

God's will can only be discovered and understood by those whose hands are clean and whose hearts are pure. Known or unconfessed sin always blocks our clear preception of what the purpose and will of the Lord is in our lives.

In I Thessalonians 4:3-7, we find these words, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification. . .For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

Notice in I John 2:15-17, that there is set forth a scriptural contrast between the love of the

world and the will of the Lord—

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

What is worldliness? The other day I ran across this definition of worldliness that I would like to pass on to you for your consideration—"Worldliness. . .is anything that stains the heart and separates me from the joy of communion with my creator. Worldliness. . .is anything that stings my conscience or caters merely to the fashions of this world. Anything that stimulates desire for material possessions is worldliness. Worldliness aims only to please men and win their approval. It puts a cloud between my soul and Christ and shuts out my vision from the glory of heaven. Worldliness is. . .anything that fosters pomp and pride, clipping the wings of the soul so that it grovels in the dust of the earth instead of soaring heavenward. Worldliness is. . .anything that sets my affection upon the things of earth rather than upon the treasures of heaven."

Thirdly, if we are to live in the will of the Lord, we must have a Spiritual mindedness. Paul continues by instructing us—"be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Carnal minds cannot perceive the things of the Spirit. To assure our place in God's divine purpose and plan, it is necessary for our minds to be spiritually renewed daily.

Spiritual renewal comes through meditation and study of the Word of the Lord. Of course, the all important place of prayer and communion with God should take top priority in our living. Develop the art of practicing His presence and you will have no difficulty hearing His voice and fulfilling His desire in your life.

If your need today is to know God's will, why not make that total commitment to Him as Lord of your life. Do it now! Break away from all impurity and worldliness and continue in the joys and blessings of Spiritual renewal.

—Stephen Judd



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It is our desire to provide a magazine for you each month which will be both entertaining and spiritually beneficial. If you have some questions and need some answers, or have a subject you would like for us to address in a future issue, please drop us a line. We welcome the suggestions and comments of our readers.

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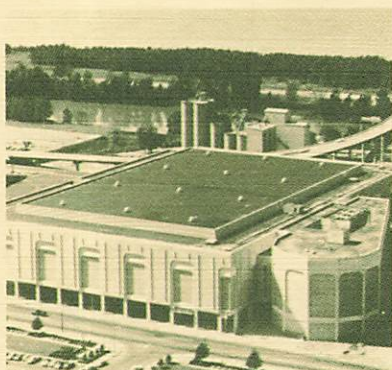
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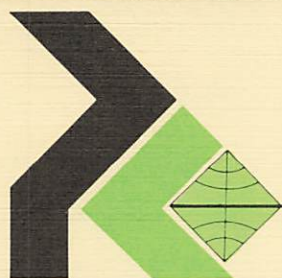
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