

John 4:27-42  
The will of God

Introduction

In the middle of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well, the disciples return and are surprised to find Him talking to a woman. Another surprise is that when they urged him to take the food they had brought, He said He was not hungry. They had left Him tired and weary by the well, but now He is vibrant with energy. They assumed He had had some food they knew nothing about. But He tells them, **My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work** (John 4:34). The thing which strengthens and satisfies Him is doing God's will and finishing His work. His ministry to this needy woman was part of that will.

Simple, profound and challenging thought. Is the thing that satisfies you the most, that you find the greatest pleasure and delight in, self-denial and doing the will of God? Or is it self-indulgence and self-will and self-pleasing? These alternatives are daily before every believer, and how many take the right option?

Going to look at the all important subject of God's will, a phrase that is often on our lips and prayers and messages, but is it being done in our lives? What did this phrase mean for the Lord? What does it involve for us and what are the consequences which follow when we embrace or fail to embrace God's will?

Commitment of the Lord Jesus to the will of God

This verse explains why Christ came, His life and ministry, death and resurrection. He reigned in eternity past with His Father and the Holy Spirit. Then at just the right time, the Father sent Him. He had a task for Him to do, a plan for Him to carry out. And that was the one thing which directed His life and controlled His choices – doing what God wanted Him to do.

Always His life was mastered by a sense of purpose and mission. This was the guiding light which directed Him every day. **I have come to do your will, O God** (Hebrews 10:7, quoting Psalm 40:6-8). Hence the reason He was so business-like and purposeful. At the age of 12 He was found by Mary and Joseph in the Temple at Jerusalem, explaining **I must be about my Father's business** (Luke 2:49). During discussions with His enemies, **I seek not to please myself but him who sent me** (John 5:30). **I have come down from heaven not to do my will but the will of him who sent me** (John 6:38). **I always do what pleases him** (John 8:29). **As long as it is day we must do the work of him who sent me** (John 9:4). **Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem** (Luke 9:51). **I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do** (John 17:4). **Not as I will, but as you will** (Matthew 26:39). **He became obedient to death, even death on a cross** (Philippians 2:8).

From day one, He submitted to God's authority, and was driven by sense of urgency. He was on a mission. He was under authority. His touchstone was "what does God want?" He was sure of God's loving and wise purpose in everything. And this is what

satisfied Him – it was His food and drink, his refreshment and delight. His pleasure was not found in pleasing Himself and in indulging Himself, but rather the will of God was the very essence, mainspring and dynamic of all He did. Though He found it difficult, discouraging and disappointing at times, He kept at it, and the result was satisfaction.

### Our commitment to the will of God

As God sent His Son into the world to do His will, so He has saved us for that very same purpose, and sent us into the world. If Christ is our Saviour and Lord – the name “Lord” implies we are under orders. Jesus taught us to pray **Thy will be done on earth** (Matthew 6:10), and that begins with us.

**As a result, he did not spend the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires but rather for the will of God** (1 Peter 4:2). It causes people to be surprised when we do not live like them, and often leads them to heap abuse on us. At one time we lived like them, pleasing self, but now that has changed and our only concern is to please Him. He is our Lord by creation and redemption, our body and soul belong to Him, and His will is the ground plan for our whole life. We only please others as far as it is consistent with pleasing God. Our end in life is not to do good, though many think so. It is not to win souls, though many think so. Our end in life is to do God’s will. If that is foremost, these other things will automatically follow.

God has a purpose and plan for every life He has redeemed. **My times are in your hands** (Psalm 31:15). **I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel and watch over you** (Psalm 32:8). To those who are willing, He will reveal that plan step by step, no matter who we are, how old we are, or where we are. Whether it involves one of life’s major decisions, the call of God to a new sphere in service, or minor problems of everyday life, He will direct us if we want to please Him.

If ruled by ambition, love of comfort or desire for praise, then He will not lead us. But if we are totally surrendered to God, He will instruct and counsel and watch over us. He does it through His Word, through ordering our circumstances, the advice of spiritually minded people, and by inner conviction in the heart.

### Blessings which follow from commitment to God’s will

There is safety and peace and blessing in God’s will. One of the devil’s biggest successes is to persuade people that God is an ogre, bent on making life miserable, curbing, restricting, limiting and spoiling us. But God is not a harsh tyrant who will exploit us. He is a loving Father, and His plans come from His wise and loving will. **My yoke is easy and my burden is light** (Matthew 11:30). **His commandments are not burdensome** (1 John 5:3). It is a most unreasonable and insane thing to distrust God.

This does not mean that God does not take us by difficult and demanding ways. But His way is always the best way. **His will is good, pleasing and perfect** (Romans 12:2). **He knows how we are framed. He remembers that we are dust** (Psalm 103:14). **As for God, His way is perfect** (Psalm 18:30). He is not waiting to pounce

and rob us if we let Him have His way in our lives. Christ gave Himself for us – how can we doubt He has planned the very best for us.

It is clear that in God's will there is rest and peace and joy and freedom. When self has stepped down, and the King has taken the throne, then we experience blessedness. Even trials are permitted for our deeper experience of His grace.

When F.R.Havergal fully surrendered to God's will, she listed the wonderful effects it had on her life. [unclear from notes if the following list is Havergal's list]. When we leave everything to Him, life is so inexpressibly sweet and He does arrange things so much better when we leave it all to Him. When we lose life, we find it. When we give self away to the will and work of God, we find ourselves. When we deny self, we discover self and fulfil self.

There is no misery like being out of God's will, and no joy like being in it. Out of God's will, like an eagle in a cage, like a fish out of water. Eagles were made for the air, and fish for the sea. So the child of God finds fulfilment of personality and satisfaction in the will of God. He was created and redeemed to love and obey God; therefore he fulfils his destiny when He acts in obedience. When he is out of God's will, he is impoverished of life's greatest riches, fleeing from his true destiny for which he was born.

All of us, all of the time, to be all God wants – not life of strain and stress, but peace, rest and security. Out of that will, we get into difficulty, perplexity and bondage.

#### Summons to be committed to the will of God

Where are we in relation to the will of God? Not interested? Never think of it? Then you are not a Christian. Out of the will of God, but weary of managing own life and longing to get back to there you ought to be? Then be assured you can get back. You have not been cast off. God can take even our mistakes and disobedience, and overrule for good. God can take us into His purposes again.

Or are you finding it difficult to surrender to God's will? Is there one particular point where conscience is speaking? Are you determined to get your will in one particular thing? Is there some work you do not want to do? But that voice is telling you that you are not where God wants you, not doing what God wants? Are you waiting and hoping that God will come round to your way of thinking? He won't. You cannot bargain with Him. You must go His way. No conditions are allowed or entertained. You must leave that thing, and ask Him to turn your will to go His way, to show you the blessedness of obedience, and the folly of being in a dead end which will only lead to further disappointment and frustration. Take your hands off life, and hand control over to Him. End the controversy. God loves with the highest love, and He wants your highest good.

God calls on all to make definite and deliberate act of surrender. So you did it yesterday? Then do it today. And do it again tomorrow. The act must lead to the attitude. Seek Him earnestly and daily. We do not enter God's will accidentally or by chance, we do not just drift into it. We must deliberately denounce and deny and reject our own will, and deliberately choose His. Take a definite step. Get near to

God. He cannot guide those who are afar off. There is an African proverb – “Truly to hear you must get near”. He will guide us with His eye, but first He needs to catch our eye.

**My food is to do the will of him who sent me (John 4:34). In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your path (Proverbs 3:6).** If we truly believe God is concerned with our life and has a purpose for it, we will pull up the anchor and let the winds of God carry us where they will.