

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
KNOWING AND DOING THE WILL OF GOD
IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

Message One

The Will of God

Scripture Reading: Rev. 4:11; Col. 1:9, 18; 3:4, 10-11; Eph. 4:3-6, 11-12, 16

- I. “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created”—Rev. 4:11:**
 - A. God is a God of purpose, having a will of His own pleasure—Eph. 3:9-11; Col. 1:9.
 - B. He created all things for His will so that He might accomplish and fulfill His purpose.
- II. God’s will is God’s wish; God’s will is what He wants to do—Eph. 1:9:**
 - A. God’s good pleasure is of His will and is embodied in His will, so His will comes first—v. 5.
 - B. God has made known the mystery of His will to us through His revelation in Christ, that is, through Christ’s incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension—v. 9; 3:9.
 - C. God works all things according to the counsel of His will; God’s will is His intention, and His counsel is His consideration of the way to accomplish His will or intention—1:11.
- III. Colossians is a book concerning the great, eternal will of God—1:9; 4:12:**
 - A. Colossians reveals what God’s will is according to His desire and intention in the whole universe, in creation, in redemption, in the coming age, and in eternity.
 - B. God’s will in Colossians 1:9 is His will regarding His eternal purpose, regarding His economy concerning Christ—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11.
 - C. To have the full knowledge of God’s will is to have the revelation of God’s plan so that we may know what God plans to do in the universe—Rev. 4:11.
- IV. The will of God is concentrated in Christ and is for Christ; Christ is everything in the will of God—Col. 1:9:**
 - A. In 1:9 God’s will refers to Christ; the will of God is profound in relation to our knowing, experiencing, and living in the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, who is God, man, and the reality of every positive thing in the universe—2:9, 16-17.
 - B. Christ is the preeminent One, the One who has the first place in everything—1:18.
 - C. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the centrality and universality, the center and circumference, of God’s economy—1:15-27; Eph. 1:10:
 1. In God’s economy Christ is everything; God wants Christ and Christ alone—the wonderful, preeminent, all-inclusive Christ, who is all in all—Matt. 17:5; Col. 3:10-11.

2. God's intention in His economy is to work the wonderful, all-inclusive, extensive Christ into our being as our life and our everything that we may become the corporate expression of the Triune God—1:27; 3:4, 10-11.
- D. The will of God is that the all-inclusive, extensive Christ would be our portion—1:9, 12.
 - E. God's will is that we know Christ, experience Christ, enjoy Christ, be saturated with Christ, and have Christ as our person and our life—3:4, 11.
- V. God's will is to have the church as the Body of Christ—1:9, 18; 2:19; 3:15:**
- A. The will of God is to obtain a Body for Christ to be His fullness, His expression—Rom. 12:2, 5; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11, 22-23; 4:16:
 1. To live the Body life is to “prove what the will of God is”—Rom. 12:2, 4-5.
 2. If we are proper members of the Body, acting and functioning in the church life, we will be persons in the will of God—1 Cor. 1:1-2; Eph. 1:1; 5:17; Rom. 12:2, 4-5.
 - B. The church is the Body of Christ, which is an entity constituted with the Triune God and His chosen and redeemed ones—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4-6.
 - C. Christ is the Head of the Body, and we are the members of His Body—Col. 1:18a; 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16:
 1. To live in the Body is to live corporately with the members under the Head—v. 15; Col. 2:19.
 2. To live the Body life, we must be under the Head and take the Head as our life, the principal object, and the center of our whole being—1:18a; 2:19.
 - D. The Body grows with the growth of God; the growth of the Body depends on the growth of God, the addition of God, the increase of God, within us— 2:19; Eph. 4:16.

Message Two

**God's Need for Our Cooperation
and for Prayers That Express His Will**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 6:17; Matt. 6:10; 7:21; 12:50; 1 John 5:14-16; John 15:7

- I. If we seek the Lord's will but are actually inclined to carry out our own desires, we may deceive ourselves—cf. Num. 22:8.**
- II. We should seek the Lord's will without having any other desire but to know His will and do it—Matt. 7:21.**
- III. In order for His will to be done on earth and for His eternal purpose to be fulfilled, God needs our cooperation—1 Cor. 6:17; Matt. 7:11; 12:50:**
 - A. God can carry out on earth what He has planned in heaven only when He has people who will cooperate with Him—John 7:17; 15:4-5:
 1. God needs to gain people on earth who will cooperate with Him and work with Him according to His mind—Phil. 3:15; Col. 3:2.
 2. As long as there are those who are of the same mind as God and are willing to work with Him, God's work will be carried out on earth—1 Cor. 15:58; 16:10.
 - B. Our eyes need to be opened to see that God has His limitations and to see how we should cooperate with Him—Matt. 6:10; 18:18-19; 2 Cor. 6:1:
 1. God is omnipotent, but His omnipotence is subject to limitations because He must have certain conditions suitable for His working—John 7:17; Matt. 7:21.
 2. Man was created with a free will; the limitations of God began at this point—Gen. 1:26:
 - a. In creation God put His almighty power under the limitation of the human will—v. 28; 2:9, 16-17.
 - b. God wants the human will to be on His side; therefore, He accepts the limitation that this desire entails—John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; Rom. 12:2-3.
 3. As members of Christ's organic, mystical Body, we are either expressing Him or limiting Him—1 Cor. 12:12-13, 18-20, 27:
 - a. The Lord needs to bring us to the point where we have nothing to hinder Him from doing whatever He wills—6:17; Matt. 6:10; 7:21; 12:50; Eph. 1:1, 9; 5:17.
 - b. Once the Lord has brought us to a place of total responsiveness to Him, He will have a free and unhindered way to accomplish His will; then there will be nothing that God cannot do to carry out His purpose on earth—Matt. 6:10; 26:39, 42; Heb. 13:21.
- IV. God needs the prayer that expresses His will—Matt. 6:10:**
 - A. God is a God of purpose, having a will of His own pleasure, and He created all things for His will that He might accomplish and fulfill His purpose—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 3:9-11; Col. 1:9:
 1. God's will is His heart's desire, His mingling with man, and the fulfillment of His eternal plan—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 5:17.
 2. The will of God is to obtain a Body for Christ to be His fullness, His expression—Rom. 12:2, 5; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11, 22-23.
 3. The Father's eternal will is to build up the church upon Christ the Son as the rock—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:21-22; 4:16.
 4. The kingdom is absolutely a matter of God's will and completely fulfills God's will; in fact, the kingdom is God's will—Matt. 6:10.
 5. As believers in Christ, we are on earth to do the Father's will—7:21; 12:50:
 - a. Whoever does the will of the Father is a relative of the Lord Jesus—12:50.

- b. We need to pray for the Father's will to be done on earth as in the heavens; this is to bring the kingdom of the heavens to the earth—6:10.
- B. God needs us to offer prayers that are the expression of His will—1 John 5:14; John 15:7; Matt. 26:39, 42; 6:10; 18:19:
 - 1. Prayer is the union of the believers' will with God's will—John 15:7.
 - 2. The greatest use of the church is the fact that it stands for God's will to be done on earth—Matt. 6:10.
 - 3. For the church to pray means that it finds out God's will and speaks out His will—Eph. 1:9; 5:17.
 - 4. For the church to pray means that it stands on God's side to declare that it wants what God wants—Matt. 18:19.
 - 5. God's works on earth can be accomplished only when there is a will on earth that agrees with God—1 John 5:14; John 15:7:
 - a. God's will can be accomplished only when there is a will on earth that cooperates with Him—Matt. 6:10.
 - b. Whenever man's will is not one with God's will, God is limited; God must have our will in harmony with His will—John 15:7.
 - c. Even though God has a will, He wants the free will on earth to echo His will before He does anything—1 John 5:14; James 5:17-18.
 - d. After we know God's will, we can say to Him, "Lord, we want You to do this. We are determined that You should do this."
 - e. Any prayer that is not according to God's will is useless—James 4:43-.
 - f. A prayer that is uttered according to God's will is a most powerful thing—1 John 5:14; Matt. 17:20; Mark 11:22-24.
 - g. Praying in agreement with God is more important than doing anything else—Matt. 18:19.
- C. The prayer ministry of the church is God telling the church what He wants to do and the church praying on earth what God wants to do; this prayer is not asking God to accomplish what we want Him to do, but asking God to accomplish what He Himself wants to accomplish—Col. 1:9; 4:12; Eph. 5:17; John 15:7.

Message Three

**Doing the Will of God
in the Two Systems of God in the Universe**

Scripture Reading: Psa. 2; 1 Pet. 2:21-25; 4:17; 5:5-6, 10

I. God has two systems in this universe: One we call the system of grace, and the other we call the system of government—1 Pet. 5:5-6, 10:

- A. Everything related to the church, the Holy Spirit, redemption, our salvation, and our being God's children are within the system of grace.
- B. The system of government is altogether different from the system of grace and is separate from the system of grace:
 - 1. In the system of government God has an independent will, and He operates according to His own pleasure—Eph. 1:5, 11; Rev. 4:11.
 - 2. God's government refers to how God works, manages, and arranges things according to His plan and will.
- C. The system of government works on a different principle from the system of grace—footnote 1, 1 Pet. 2:23.
- D. From the beginning, God has been trying to usher in His governmental system, and He will continue this work until the end—1 Cor. 15:24-28.
- E. We must learn to acknowledge God's government; if we are oblivious to God's government, we are lawless in the eyes of God—Matt. 7:21; 12:50.
- F. God's intention is that we would respect His government; He has no intention for us to annul His government—1 Pet. 5:5-6.

II. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was under God's government and lived under God's government—2:22-25:

- A. Because the Lord lived under God's government, He committed all His sufferings to God, the One who judges righteously; judging righteously is a matter of God's government.
- B. On the one hand, when the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was the Savior to deliver men from sin; this was His work under the system of grace—v. 24.
- C. On the other hand, God's desire is for the Lord Jesus to establish His authority and heavenly kingdom through the work of the cross, with the result that heaven's reign will be brought to the earth—3:22; Rev. 11:15.

III. The system of grace perfects the system of government—Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8; Matt. 6:33:

- A. Those who are saved in this age must learn the fundamental lesson of not frustrating God's government with His grace—1 Pet. 5:6:
 - 1. We should never think that we can annul God's system of government simply because we are under the system of His grace.
 - 2. The system of government is not for the system of grace; rather, the system of grace is here to perfect the system of government.
- B. Grace always goes along with government and supplements God's system of government:

1. Because man rebelled against the system of government, the system of grace was brought in.
 2. The system of grace brings us to salvation and restoration so that we will obey God's system of government.
 3. The more humble a person is, the more experienced he will be in the system of God's government—vv. 5-6.
 4. Grace never annuls government; rather, grace makes a person yield to government.
 5. Grace gives us the ability to subject ourselves to government.
 6. These two systems of God mutually perfect each other; the more we receive grace from God, the more we will know how to maintain God's government.
- C. In the new heaven and new earth, grace and government will unite to become one system—Rev. 21:2-3; 22:1-5:
1. The system of grace and the system of government will join together and become one system.
 2. Both systems will be united in the Lord Jesus, who stands for both aspects of God's work.
 - a. On the one hand, He works on the basis of the system of grace.
 - b. On the other hand, He works on the basis of the system of government.

Message Four

Doing the Will of God Our Father for the Kingdom of God

Scripture Reading: Matt. 7:21-23; 6:10; 12:39, 42, 50

- I. In order to enter into the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens in the coming age, we must do the will of our Father in this age—Matt. 7:21-23; 6:10; 13:56; Rev. 4:11; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 5:17; Col. 1:9; 4:12.**
- II. The kingdom is absolutely a matter of God’s will and completely fulfills God’s will; in fact, the kingdom of God is God’s will—Matt. 6:10:**
 - A. As the kingdom people, we are on earth to do the Father’s will—7:21; 12:50.
 - B. In order to do the will of the Father, we need to enter in through the narrow gate and walk on the constricted way—7:13-14:
 1. The narrow gate excludes the old man, the self, the flesh, the human concept, and the world with all its glory; only that which corresponds with God’s will can enter in.
 2. As we walk on the constricted way, we are restricted by a mysterious, invisible, inward control, and we live under this control.
- III. The kingdom people need to pray for the Father’s will to be done on earth as in the heavens; this is to bring the kingdom of the heavens to the earth—Matt. 6:10:**
 - A. After the rebellion of Satan (Ezek. 28:17; Isa. 14:13-15), the earth fell into his usurping hands, and the will of God could not be done on earth as in heaven.
 - B. God created man with the intention of recovering the earth for Himself—Gen. 1:26-28.
 - C. The kingdom people must pray for this until the earth is fully recovered for God’s will in the coming kingdom age.
 - D. When the Father’s name is sanctified (Matt. 6:9), the Son’s kingdom has come, and the Spirit’s will is done on earth as in heaven, that will be the time of the manifestation of the kingdom of God.
- IV. “Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens”—Matt. 7:21:**
 - A. To call on the Lord suffices for us to be saved, but to enter into the kingdom of the heavens, we also need to do the will of the heavenly Father—Rom. 10:13; 12:2; Matt. 12:50; Eph. 5:17; Col. 1:9.
 - B. Since entering into the kingdom of the heavens requires doing the will of the heavenly Father, it is clearly different from entering into the kingdom of God through regeneration—John 3:3, 5:
 1. The entrance into the kingdom of God is through being born of the divine life—1:12-13; 3:5-6.
 2. The entrance into the kingdom of the heavens is through the living of the divine life—Matt. 7:21; 12:50.

- C. The Lord Jesus rebuked those who prophesied, cast out demons, and did works of power in His name because, as “workers of lawlessness,” they did these things out of themselves, not out of obedience of God’s will—7:23:
 - 1. There are two principles in the universe—the principle of God’s authority and the principle of Satan’s rebellion—Acts 1:7; Isa. 14:13-14.
 - 2. We cannot serve God on the one hand and take the way of rebellion on the other hand.
 - 3. We must turn away from the principle of lawlessness and reject the way of rebellion—Matt. 28:18; Jude 11.
 - 4. Serving God is directly linked to His authority.
 - 5. If we do not settle the matter of authority, we will have problems in all areas of our service.
- D. May the Lord preserve our service in the principle of submission to God’s authority and the Father’s will—Acts 1:7; Matt. 7:12; 12:50.