

Russell Kelfer

**After You've
Done the Will of God**

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Series: The Will of God



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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230 • (210) 226-0000 / 1-800-375-7778 • www.dtm.org • dtm@dtm.org

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The mountain-climbers were astonished at the view. Backpacks, cameras, and supplies intact, they had struggled up the hazardous precipice like ants crawling up the side of a rugged tree. At last they had reached a peak that contained a tablet of solid stone, from which they could photograph and simply stand in awe at the beauty that surrounded them. To them, this was the moment they had dreamed of, the heights for which their hearts had longed. What could be more beautiful than this? After hours of taking notes and taking pictures, the weary but satisfied climbers began their descent to the world below, eager to show and to tell of their conquest.

Up above, however, a small aircraft hovered unnoticed. In that aircraft was a photographer circling the canyon for long-range shots of the landscape. Breathtaking was not even a fair word to use. Awesome was a more adequate description. Some weeks later, the two groups met at a photographic fair. Both were there to show their wares, to let the world in on the "view from above." At the mountain-climbers' booth, eager eyes poured over gorgeous shots of nature's finest. "Oohs and ahhs" were the natural response. Then the people would move on to the next booth where the aerial photographers were showing their seemingly three-dimensional pictures of the same canyon, *but from a higher perspective*. It did not diminish the beauty of what the mountain-climbers had done, but it did supersede it. It did transcend it. It took the same reality, and lifted it to a higher plane.

So we have been mountain-climbing these past few weeks, struggling up the side of the jagged rocks, peering as best we could into the canyon of the will of God...desperately trying to capture the awesomeness of its grandeur without missing the practicality of its perfection. But we've only had a glimpse. We've only seen enough to whet our appetites, to motivate us to want more. Only as we crawl up into our God and let Him transport us into the heavenlies in the days to come, where we can see life more and more *from His perspective*, will we more fully understand the real beauty of His plan.

So we have only begun. But we are through. We have only touched lightly the high spots, but our time has run out. After a

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series of “almost in conclusions,” we come in this lesson to the conclusion at last. If we remember nothing else, may we leave this study with the reality firmly etched in our hearts that God *does* have a personal, wonderful, workable plan for each of our lives that is unique, exciting, productive, and complete. Finding and doing that will ought to be our consuming desire for the rest of our days.

This wrap-up lesson is entitled: “After You’ve Done The Will of God”

IN CONCLUSION...AT LAST

Two thoughts clamor for our attention as we close. They are brief reminders of where we have been. The first is that the finding of the will of God is eternally bound up in the absolutes of Scripture. The keys to life’s decisions have already been penned in eternity past by a Holy God whose Word is immutable. He knew we would need a compass, a roadmap to lead us out of unacceptable territory and into those green pastures where He alone can feed us; so He gave us His Word. Tenderly written on those scrolls of life are thousands of absolutes: statements made by God to His children which will never change. Those statements constitute the parameters by which we can make right decisions and find the will of God.

The issue, then, is whether or not we believe every word He spoke to be true, and whether we believe every word to be relevant to our lives today. Psalm 119:128 might be a good verse to memorize in this closing session. It says this:

Therefore, I esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way. (Psalm 119:128)

Now ask yourself before we go on: “Is that your perspective of the absolutes of Scripture?” Do you consider *every word* to be right, *every word about every thing*? “All precepts concerning all things” means there is not a single issue about which the Word of God does not have the final word. God’s word is final about partnerships, about unequal yoking in marriage, about financial bondage, about unfaithfulness, about slothfulness, about loneliness, about stewardship, and about discipleship. It is final. It is absolute. So perfect is His Word *that each absolute demonstrates some aspect of God’s character*, without fail. So when you obey those truths that are final, you are releasing the divine nature of God in you to work through you His will “on

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earth as it is in heaven.” But there is more. If you honestly esteem all His precepts concerning all things to be right, then you simply must *hate every false way*. Any compromise, no matter how small, becomes a side trip to Dead End Gulch, where for days or even years of our lives, we wander in the wilderness of confusion because we didn't want the will of God enough to literally abhor any alternatives.

The absolutes of Scripture. Burn them into your consciousness. Etch them into the fabric of your mind. They will never change. heaven and earth *will pass away*, but one thing will not: the Word of God. It is the rock upon which we stand; the foundation on which we build; the shelter in which we rest. If there is an absolute that says, “He who sows sparingly, reaps sparingly” (and there is), it means exactly that. It is founded on the righteousness of God, which cannot change. Therefore, if you think you can be the exception, and be “a taker” in the game of life, rather than “a giver”, you are simply deceived. And remember, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”

If there is an absolute that says, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual” (and there is), it means that God has designed an *eternal* plan for man that is spiritual in nature and if you try to build a ministry or a life using the tools and the concepts of this world, which are foolishness to God, you are once again, self-deceived. This absolute is founded on the fact that “God is Spirit.” It is rooted in the nature of God, and that will never change. If there is an absolute that says, “Let him that glories, glory in the Lord” (and there is), it means that *anytime you generate praise for man that belongs to God*, you are an affront to both man and God. Men are trying desperately to circumvent that absolute, but you cannot. It is founded in the fact that ours is a jealous God. If there is an absolute that says “Evil companions corrupt” (and there is), then mark it down, Beloved, evil companions will corrupt. No, your situation isn't the exception. Nor does the fact that you get by with it for a season indicate that God has changed His mind. That truth is founded on the reality that ours is a Holy God, and it will never change.

The absolutes of Scripture. These are the signs along the roadsides of life to show us where to go, and when to stop. Counsel, peace, “open doors”, these may give you confirmation and encouragement, but they may also be used of Satan to lead you astray. Only one thing *will never change*—the absolutes of

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the Word of God. Start today to build a library of absolutes, and start today to resist the enemy's lies that any of them are obsolete. There are no obsolete absolutes...nor will there ever be.

The second truth I pray that we'll remember from this study is that finding the will of God is not a matter of coercion, but of release. It is not a matter of conquering, but of surrendering. It is simply explained in one statement: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." God is the architect, not us. God is the builder, not us. God is the owner, not us. So we don't go to God when a decision is imminent and attempt to lay our options at His feet, and ask for a little help. We fall on our faces before the King of kings and Lord of lords and, *having been specific about the choices*, leave the decision to Him. His will may well be none of the alternatives we would have given Him. It often will not be the preferred alternative for which we have entreated Him. The secret of the will of God is bound up in the sovereignty of God and is released only upon the surrender of man.

That decision facing you may not seem fair. You may not like either option, or one choice may seem so favorable to you that you can't see how God could possibly not see it your way. Be careful. His ways are higher than yours. His purpose is higher than yours. His goal, remember, is that every decision be the one that will most benefit the kingdom of God, and thus accrue the most glory to God. We don't make decisions that way, and we don't have His perspective to know what will best benefit the Kingdom. So the two crucial words in any study of the will of God are "absolutes" and "surrender." Make your choices based on God's clear word, and yield the results to the hands of a sovereign, omniscient God, who never has, never will, and cannot make a mistake. If the choice is His, then the results are His, and the responsibility is His, to work it together for His good, which is all that matters.

ISSUES AND ANSWERS

So those are the two principles upon which this study has been based, and upon which our decisions will be based in years to come. But there are, of course, those nagging unanswered questions that surface again and again when the will of God is discussed, and which surface again and again when you are counseling or seeking counsel. We would like to discuss at least a handful of those before we close the book on this series. Let's look at them one by one:

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Question #1- What do you do when a decision apparently *has to be made immediately*, and you have no answers? This is the most common source of frustration. "I have a job offer, but I have to let him know tonight." "The owner of the house says he needs an answer by five o'clock." "They want me to teach a class next fall, and they want a 'Yes' or 'No' by Tuesday."

Unless you have to violate an absolute, you do nothing. But if you have been offered a job, and have none, for instance, *even though it is not the job you want*, and if, by refusing you are violating the absolute that "he that doesn't work, doesn't eat", or "he that refuses to provide for his family is worse than an infidel", then you go to the one who is offering you the job, humble yourself and find out if your commitment to that job is to be long-range or short-range. We so often confuse the difference between a job and a vocation. A job is a way to earn a living; a career is an avenue for earning a living with long-range objectives. Sometimes we need to take a job while we look for a career. To confuse the two will cause you to job-hop, or to end up in a place you don't belong because you were afraid God wasn't going to arrive on time. If God hasn't opened up the career opportunity you prayed for, *take a job... any job...*and feed your family while you wait and while you look. If you have to violate an absolute to make a decision, *no matter what the world says*, don't do it. If you do not have to violate any absolutes to wait, do nothing until you know for sure.

Remember the concept of God's timing. It is perfect. So if that house must be bought today, and you aren't sure today, either that house is not for you, or the owner simply doesn't understand the God you serve. If it's what God wants for you, it'll still be available when you're sure; and if it's not, you don't want it.

If someone wants you to commit yourself to a ministry and you're not sure that's God's will for you, then wait. That's right, wait. No, the ministry won't collapse and you won't either. Wait. Pray. Fast, if need be, until you have an answer from God based absolute-ly on what will best bring in the kingdom of God and thus accrue the most glory to God. Then, and only then, can you answer. If they need an answer before then, the answer is, "Sorry, I can't commit, yet."

Question #2- What do I do when my counsel is divided? First of all, you take a good look, not at the counselors, but at the counsel. You remove all of the extraneous "feelings" and "hunches"

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and you find *which counselors gave you absolutes from Scripture to back up their recommendation*. You scratch all the others, and you see if now the counsel agrees.

Secondly, you consider first the counsel of those in authority over you, either spiritually, or in the area of the decision.

Thirdly, if counsel is still not clear, do nothing. God may be saying, "I need more time; sit still." We're usually the ones in a hurry, not God.

Fourthly, remember: "Counsel is nothing more than confirmation." If a counselor wants to make the decision for you, he or she is not doing what is in your best interests. The job of counsel is to point you back to the Word where you can find the answers yourself. Don't use counsel as a crutch because you're too lazy to search and to pray, or too impatient to wait on God. Use counsel to verify that what God has told you to do through his Word has been properly interpreted. The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, and if you have discerned His will properly, He will see that counsel confirms it. That's why "in a multitude of counselors there is safety."

Question #3- What if I feel a peace about it, but it violates an absolute? It means you are responding to the feelings of man, not to the Word of God. The peace of God is a misused phrase. The peace of God must be true to the character of God (which is consistent) and to the Word of God (which is final). God simply doesn't move with the winds of life as we do. His will is fixed. The peace of God is not that exhilaration that comes from a sign, nor is it the absence of conflict. It is the quiet presence of God's Spirit saying, "God's will is being done." It grows and it grows and it grows with every passing hour. It increases gradually, like the blossoming of a beautiful flower. It does not vacillate nor change directions with our mood swings. That's why peace is not an adequate measuring stick to determine the will of God. Satan has access through our emotions to give us a temporary peace that mirrors the peace of God, but it will change from hour to hour and from day to day, depending on our feelings and on our circumstances. The will of God doesn't change from day to day, nor does God's peace about it. Like a quiet, steady stream it flows into our lives *and over a period of time*, gives us calm assurance that the choice we are making is God's choice. Be careful, Satan's counterfeit looks much like the real thing.

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Question #4- Can the will of God be simplified? Answer. It already is. It is man who has made the simple complex by trying to impose the standards of man upon Scripture, instead of imposing the standards of Scripture upon man. The more complex man can make his problems, the more important *he* becomes. So much human wisdom is nothing more than taking the simplicity of God's truth and compounding it by infusing it with man's interpretations. That's what the Pharisees had done to the law when Jesus came. The absolutes of God hadn't changed. Man had simply taken those simple commands and made them complex. That way man needed man to interpret them, and to regulate them. Let the world do it their way. As for us, let's just stick to the simple, unadulterated Word of God. If it says, "Don't lie", then don't. If it says, "Adultery is sin", then it is. If it says, "Be not unequally yoked," then don't. If it says, "Wrong friendships corrupt," then they do. Just accept it for what it is, and it's simple. It need be no simpler. We're the ones who make it complicated.

Question #5- "Why does God seem to 'open doors' if they are not His will?" Why did that job come up, if I wasn't supposed to take it? Why did that house become available if I wasn't supposed to buy it? Why did that person call *the very day I had prayed for a sign*, if what he was offering was not answered prayer? Why doesn't God just "close all the doors" but the right one? Answer: For the same reason He did not make us robots without a free will. It is through the process of making right choices that we grow. Why don't you, as a parent, simply make all the decisions for your children, instead of teaching them principles, then exposing them to situations so you can see how they respond? Because your goal is maturity. First of all, God doesn't open doors to tempt you. "God cannot be tempted, neither tempteth He any man." Secondly, Satan is allowed to tempt you, even as he tempted Jesus in the wilderness with three "open doors", so that we will respond as Jesus did, with the Word of God.

An "open door" only means one thing. *Somebody* arranged circumstances to affect your decision. It could have been God, but it is often Satan, teasing you into compromising by making a decision based on the situation at hand and your feelings, rather than the simple, clear Word of God. Basically, doors usually open the way we, in our subconscious minds, want them to. We buy what we want to buy, go where we want to go, and do what we want to do, and we use the "open door" principle to justify our

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choices, and we have an ironclad alibi with which to blame God when it doesn't work out. We shouldn't.

An open door is a question mark to be answered by an absolute, not an exclamation mark that tells us what to do. If it is a confirmation of a Scriptural decision, praise God for it. Otherwise, walk carefully through unmarked doors.

GOD'S GREAT ALLY; MAN'S GREAT NEED

There is one last ingredient in the decision-making process that is so often left unexplained in studies on the will of God, yet it is God's greatest ally; and it is man's greatest need. That ingredient is time. It is something God always has enough of, but man never seems to believe Him. And so the heart of man strives with God, and gets frustrated with God, is even filled with unbelief at God, because he or she has prayed and nothing has happened. At least nothing has happened that is visible, and not in the time frame in which we have given God to work.

There are two vital aspects concerning the will of God and time.

1- God will always seem slow. He is simply not in a hurry. His goal is character, and character takes time. He made Moses wait 40 years in no-man's land for His will to be unfolded. He made Abraham wait until he was an antique before he received the promise. He let Job stew in his own juices interminably, until He was able to purge the dross and reveal who He is. God is *never in a hurry*. Satan, on the other hand, *always is*. It's his trademark.

Satan's in a hurry;
Christian, can't you see?
He's calling you to rush ahead
Before God sets you free.

He loves to give you deadlines,
Saying, "Time is running out."
(But that's the kind of counsel
That you can do without.)

Satan's in a hurry,
A case of overkill.
He wants to get you hurried,
So you can miss God's will!

So if you think God is dragging His feet in showing you what He wants you to do, you're right. Because every day you wait, your

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faith grows. Every day the heavens are silent, you have to trust Him more. Isn't that what He's really after? So stop badgering God, and rest. He will never be late. He is not so interested in time, as He is in timing. The timing of His revelations gives Him glory. So He will often work at the very last minute, when the flesh has long since given up.

2- The second aspect of time that is so important is the "AD" time: After Decision. It is the often inexplicable delay that occurs once we have found the will of God, and think we've done it, before God gives us any visible recognition. We pray and pray over a decision to take that job. We turn it down because we are certain it is not God's will. It was a hard decision, but if we were going to please God, we had no other choice. Taking the job would have meant violating an absolute. So we said, "No." We were just certain that once we did that, God would honor our obedience by giving us what we needed.

Days go by. Weeks go by. Months go by. Doubts arise. Friends chide us. We've had to get a "job job" to make ends meet. We had to sell one car to make the payments on the other one. Satan whispers in our ear, "*You missed the will of God. Look at the circumstances.*"

God answers from Hebrews 10:36-39a:

Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

For ye have need of patience, that *after ye have done the will of God*, ye might receive the promise.

For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.

Now the just shall live by faith...

Patience. That's what God is after. Patience leads to faith; and the just shall live by faith. God hasn't forgotten you, anymore than He forgot Moses. He knows what you're going through, and he knows you have asked for and are doing His will. So, just be still. As you wait, the God of Eternity is, through the use of time, infusing you with His Likeness. Every day you wait, you are becoming more like Him. Don't push Him. Don't complain. And above all, don't doubt. Don't doubt that it pays to do things God's way. His ways are higher than yours. Let Him alone to finish His work in you...whatever it takes, however long it takes. It will be worth it, Beloved, when you behold His face in Glory and see the

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likeness of His image engraved on your heart as you waited.

Satan has a field day whenever God is silent. He whispers lies and arranges circumstances to cause us to doubt God's love, and to question God's sovereignty. And that is the last principle about God's will that we will discuss in this series. *Once you have decided in favor of the absolutes of Scripture*, and done what perhaps the world sees as foolish, hold on to your spiritual hats, my friend, there will be unleashed from the gates of hell a barrage of spiritual warfare the likes of which you have never seen. Hang on. That warfare, just after a big decision, *is proof positive that it pays to serve the Living God*. And it is proof positive, as well, that the choice you made was right.

Once the decision has been made,
And that stake is in the ground,
One thing's for certain, Christian,
Satan *will* come 'round..

He'll badger you with doubts and fears,
He'll question what you know;
And when the storm clouds gather
He'll say, "I told you so!"

Hang on to your hats, Beloved,
Lest Satan tear you apart;
For once you have done the will of God,
Then the battle will start.

Obedience breeds warfare; but warfare is the gateway to victory. And *once you have done the will of God*, whatever it is, start praising Him at every evidence you see of the enemy's onslaught. It means you have entered into that choice piece of real estate called the center of the battlefield, where Satan and God are vying for control of your life, and control of your future. You are there because you *have done the will of God*. You are now only one step away from the victor's circle. Stand firm as the onslaughts come, and let your heart be filled with praise.

The will of God. It is good. That is, it is an expression of the nature of God, as it is revealed in His Word. It is acceptable. That is, the doing of it brings joy unspeakable to the heart of God. And it is perfect. That is, it is complete and without need for anything else. When you do His will, you have revealed His character, brought joy to His heart, and allowed Him to perfect you into His likeness. By standing on the absolutes, and surrendering to His

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sovereignty, you have found the heart of God.

Isn't that what you *really* want? If the will of God for you were a life of poverty, or sacrifice on one of life's mission fields, or one of life's testing grounds, but the end result was a life of godliness, a heart of joy, and crown of Glory, wouldn't that be worth it all? If the will of God for you were a life of pain or loneliness or suffering in order that you might develop the kind of heart that others come to when the sky begins to fall, wouldn't that be worth it all? If the will of God for you were to forego the plaudits of men and spend your life in a prayer closet, lifting to the heavens the needs of those who were visibly receiving the accolades, knowing that in heaven there awaited you a crown so beautiful, that to offer it at the feet of Christ would thrill your soul, wouldn't it be worth it all? That's the will of God from the higher vantage point of God's perspective.

The issue, then, isn't *where* God takes us, or *what* God does with our lives. The issue is that we are His, and that *whatever He does*, is perfect, and it is beautiful. Which brings us full circle, back to Romans 12:1,2 where this series all began. There the Holy Spirit tenderly calls to us, asking us to let God make us living demonstrations of His precious will. Remember? He said this (and He is saying this to us, even this moment):

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 (that is, be a demonstration of) what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (Romans 12:1,2)

That's what the will of God is all about. It is about you and me giving up the title to our lives so a living, loving God can take us, and break us, and make us into His likeness...until we become living demonstrations of how wonderful His will really is.

What a God! What a plan! What a life! To Him be praise and honor and glory forever and forever and forever. Amen.

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10602 Mossbank, San Antonio, TX 78230
210-226-0000 or 1-800-375-7778

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