

"The Will of God"

Matthew 7:21-23

24:25.)

3. The ground of their appeal is (a) prophesying, or public teaching, in the "name" of Jesus, (b) casting out demons, and (c) doing "mighty works" "by thy name," none of which Jesus denies actually happened.
 4. Saul and Caiaphas prophesied, but it was when God overruled their will. The apostle Judas worked miracles but was lost. Others who spoke in tongues, healed the sick, and preached to others could be lost. (1 Corinthians 9:27.)
 5. Many persons who have acted without the Lord's authority in doing things he did not command will be surprised at the judgment. To pronounce the Lord's name does not prove it was done by his authority.
- B. **The final reply:** *"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* (23)
1. Jesus here affirms that he will be the divine judge who will declare sentence "then"--i.e., "in that day."
 2. *"I never knew you"* has the force of "I never approved you." Whatever truth they held or preached, whatever works they did, whatever pretensions to righteousness--all was held and done **in unrighteousness.**
 3. Many live now who think they will go to heaven because of faith professed or works done: They desire to feel goodish, but do as they please in religion, **and are not actually in submission to God's will.**
 4. *"Iniquity"* is the condition of one "without law--either because ignorant of it, or because violating it." -- Thayer. **Clearly then, God has a law which men must learn, respect, and obey.**

CONCLUSION —

- I. This warning against self-deception should be given serious attention by all--especially by those who by habit act without God's law.
- II. The test of man's love, submission to, and approval of God, is found in his doing that which God requires, because he requires it. (John 14:15.)
--Charles E. Crouch

INTRODUCTION —

- I. Having warned of the danger of false prophets who, by their false teaching, bear harmful fruit, Jesus closed his immortal sermon by setting forth in precept, illustration, and parable the necessity of respect for and obedience to God's will for entering the kingdom of heaven.
 - A. The leading thought in the whole sermon is the kingdom of heaven.
 - B. In the concluding passage, the Lord taught plainly that men must do something to enter it and be saved.
 - C. His final warning is against partial obedience, or presumptuous and unauthorized service and worship.
 - D. The lesson applies equally to entering the kingdom or church here on earth, and admission to the eternal kingdom.
- II. JESUS BELIEVED THAT THE ONE THING NEEDFUL IS OBEDIENCE TO GOD. (Luke 10:42.)
 - A. He always lived in this spirit. (John 4:32-34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:28,29.)
 1. He submitted wholly to his Father's will. (Hebrews 10:7.)
 2. Even unto death. (Matthew 26:39; Philippians 2:8.)
 3. Near the end he said: John 17:4.
 - B. The entire Bible is saturated with this conviction. (1 Samuel 15:22.)
 - C. In the New Testament doing God's will is supremely important. (James 1:25.)
 1. Only one thing is truly necessary in religion. (Acts 5:29.)
 2. Submission to Christ, the light of the world and the author of eternal salvation, **is to exercise the highest form of wisdom.** (Matthew 7:24-27.)
 3. It is the way to God the Father. (John 14:6.)

DISCUSSION —

- I. **THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF DOING THE FATHER'S WILL.** (7:21.)
 - A. **Lip service is not enough:** *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven."* (21a)
 1. To say, "Lord, Lord," is to pray to him, be courteous, complimentary, etc. (Matthew 22:15-18; 15:7-9; cf. 1 Corinthians 13:1.)
 2. Jesus plainly teaches that "an outward profession of religion, however remarkable, will not bring us to heaven," unless there

is a corresponding obedience of faith, from the heart. (Luke 6:46.)

3. To disregard the teaching of Jesus, while calling him "*Lord, Lord,*" is to disregard his divine authority and to disown him as Lord.
4. The hardest prayer to pray is, "*Thy will be done.*" (Matthew 6:10.)

B. The acid test: "*But he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.*"

1. This is the key which unlocks heaven's treasures. (Matthew 18:3,4.) (a) **Key to abundant life** here (John 10:9-11, 17). Puts us in harmony with God and his laws. Our goals become spiritually sound (1 John 1:7; Acts 26:16-18). (b) **The key to unity with Christ**, forgiveness (Galatians 2:20; 3:26, 27). Also the key to religious, family, and social unity (Philippians 2:1-11). (c) **The key to eternal life** hereafter (John 11:25,26).
2. The one vital matter then, for all, is to "*do God's will.*" If we fail in this, while gaining the whole world, our entire life is still a failure. We have lived in vain.

C. The Father's will identified.

1. The will of the Father is his plan, purpose, and desire for our lives, which is infinitely better than ours. Our desire, purpose, and plan should be to fulfil God's purpose and will for us on earth.
2. His will came through Christ. (John 1:17; Matthew 17:5.) It was spoken first thought the Lord, then confirmed. (Hebrews 2:3,4.) Jesus reveals clearly in Matthew 7:22-27 and John 12:48-50, that God's will is that which Jesus himself taught.
3. It is the "new covenant" forecast by Jeremiah which became "of force" when Jesus' death abolished the old covenant. (Hebrews 8:7-13; 9:17; Romans 7:1-7.)
4. After the Father's will was sealed by the Lord's blood (Hebrews 9:12, 26), its terms were announced to the world, according to the Lord's promise, on the day of Pentecost. (Luke 24:46, 47; Acts 1:8; 2:1-47.)

D. Nature of the Father's will.

1. **Understandable.** (John 7:17; Acts 2:36; Romans 1:17; Ephesians 3:3,4; 5:17; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 2 Timothy 2:15.) We can know for sure--don't have to guess, or be in doubt. How? (Romans 10:17; John 20:30; 2 Timothy 1:12.)
2. **Rich in mercy, grace, true wisdom.** (Ephesians 2:4; Romans 10:12; John 1:17; 3:16; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 8:12.) Just what we

all need: "*He knoweth our frame.*" (Psalm 103:14; Matthew 26:41.) God's will is **gracious.**

3. **Conditional--requires obedience.** (Luke 6:46; Hebrews 5:9.)
 - a. Involves obedience motivated by love. (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3.)
 - b. It is a "law" fulfilled by love. (Galatians 6:2; Romans 13:10.)
 - c. It avails when faith works by love. (Galatians 5:6; 1 Peter 1:22.)
 - d. That the inheritance (salvation from sin and eternal life) bequeathed by the Father's gracious will is conditional does not detract from or nullify grace. Salvation is still a gift. (Ephesians 2:8; cf. Hebrews 11:7-12, 24-30.)

E. What are the conditions of the Father's will for pardoning sinners?

1. Belief in Christ, the Son of God. (Matthew 16:16; John 8:24; Acts 16:31.)
2. Repentance from sin. (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30, 31.)
3. Confession of Jesus as Lord. (Matthew 10:32,33; Romans 10:9,10.)
4. Baptism in his name for remission of sins. (Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38.)

F. Some conditions of the Father's will pertaining to Christians.

1. Growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus. (2 Peter 3:18; 1:2-4.)
2. To live a holy life: "*even our sanctification.*" (1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 12:14.)
3. To love and help one another--an active life in Christ and for Christ. (John 13:35; Romans 12:1,2; 2 Corinthians 5:14,15.)
4. To love, worship, and serve God, "*in spirit and truth*" (Matthew 22:34-40; John 4:23,24; Acts 2:42; 20:7); not forsake the assembling of the saints and help take the word to the world (Hebrews 10:24,25; Matthew 28:18-20).

II. THE TRAGIC OUTCOME OF NOT DOING THE FATHER'S WILL. (7:22, 23.)

- A. The plea of many:** "*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works?*" (22)
1. Many who travel the broad way may make no such claim but "many" will.
 2. "*That day*" evidently alludes to the final judgment scene. (Acts