

WHAT IS
GOD'S WILL
HERE?

Pastor Bankie

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1. THE WILL OF GOD?

Frequently people come to a point in life where they need to make a crucial decision. As believers, or just for being religious, we know that the best thing that can be chosen at that point is what God will direct us to do. This is what we call the will of God. We know that God is all-knowing. We believe that He is also all-wise, which means that He knows the best way to use the knowledge that He has. This is the reason why most of us want to know this *will of God* at these crucial points. For example, the lady who is considering a marriage proposal is aware that God knows what the future will hold in this marriage. Will she have children? Will the man become or remain rich? Will he love her forever? She needs an answer to all these in what she calls the ‘will of God’.

The man who is choosing a carrier path knows that God knows which one will guarantee him abundant and enduring prosperity. He is aware that seasons change so that what looks good today may become bad tomorrow. He is also aware that God knows all the seasons of life and that nothing takes Him by surprise. To this young man, the will of God is that carrier that will make him rich and secure all his life, one that will not give him cause for regret in his old age. If someone could tell

him which one that is, then he would have discovered what the will of God is.

If you look carefully at the above illustrations, you will realize that what most people call the will of God is that thing that they desire from the bottom of their hearts, which they believe will give them the best of happiness or comfort. God, whose will they claim to be seeking, is therefore no more here than a wise counsellor who will tell them what they do not know. In reality what most people seek is nothing but personal desires; they only come to God because He will be able to tell them how to get it. What they really want is what they call '*the best for myself*'.

That is not what the will of God is. What those people need, and often get, is a diviner. Someone who can see into the future, someone who can produce answers that they need but which is beyond them.

What really is the will of God?

The concept of the will of God is not for everybody. It is only for those who have given their lives over to the Lord whose will they are seeking. The will of God is not a thing you come to seek only when you need to make decisions. The will of God is a total lifestyle that wraps you all the days of your life and that affects every part of it.

The will of God means that God has a plan for your life and you have come to realize that. To know the will of God means to know the path to walk in so as to please Him. The will of God is not a way of getting what you want out of life; it is rather the path that He foreordained that you should walk in.

2. THE HISTORY

God created you with a purpose in mind. Sin separated you from the purpose of God for your life and incapacitated you from accomplishing anything that will count for God in this life. The meaning of sin is that you do what feels good to you and not what is in agreement with the standard of God. Sin actually means to walk in your own will.

Anyone walking in sin is out from under the cover of God, just like when God sent Adam out of the garden. You were therefore walking under the power of spiritual death, and under the authority of the devil who has the power of death. This is why sickness, pain, fear, frustrations and confusion became your portion. No wonder you needed Jesus.

Jesus was the sacrifice of God to release the whole world from their sin.

John 1:29

Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

To be freed from sin is more than being forgiven in God's mind. It also means that you are freed from the power of the devil and death. You received this grace when you received Jesus as your Lord and Saviour. It was an exchange of your

life for the life of Christ. From that time you are no longer your own but God's property. You received the Spirit of Christ and were declared righteous from the start by virtue of your faith in Jesus.

2 Cor 5:17

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Let me point out an important practical aspect of this thing.

Remember that I pointed out that sin meant that you were doing things your own way, walking in your own will. Well, righteousness means that you are now following the will of God in *everything* that you do. It is not just obeying God in the major things but also in every minor detail of your life. This is what it means to accept Jesus.

2 Cor 5:15

and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf

As a child of God, believer in the Lord Jesus, your whole life is to be lived as the will of God. If you are walking with God, everything you do is indeed the will of God. That is what having the Spirit of Christ means. The spirit you have is the force behind all that you do. It is the underlying principle

that controls your choices, your likes, your dislikes, your priority and all such things.

Rom 8:9

But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

Having the Spirit of Christ means that the force of the will of God controls even your appetite, your values, and what you consider beautiful.

Your life is the expression of the will of God.

3. THE WILL OF GOD

Remember that I said also that sin alienated you from the plan of God for your life. The obedience of faith in Jesus now restores you to that plan.

God indeed created you to walk in a particular manner that is specific for you. There is a job He created you to do; there is someone He created you to marry. There is an impact He created you to have on this life. Where you will live was determined before you were born.

Ps 139:16

*And in Your book were all written
The days that were ordained for me,
When as yet there was not one of them.*

For Ezekiel, being a prophet was not a matter of what he wanted to do or what would give him the greatest comfort; it was a matter of the reason for his creation. Just like Jesus once said, “*what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour*” (John 12:27).

As you live and walk the events of your life are being orchestrated to bring you to that place of the expression of God’s eternal plan for you. It was sin that made you go away

from this plan, and the righteousness that is in Jesus is bringing you back to the centre of it.

It is clear therefore that the will of God, for the child of God, is not a way to get something that you will like but a path that was prepared for you to walk in.

Eph 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

It is not a matter of comfort but an issue of obedience to a higher call.

Now you see why this issue of the will of God cannot make any sense to the person who has not given his or her life to Christ. If you have not yet given your life to Christ, God does not have any other will for you at this point more than for you to do so now. It is only after this that the specific will of God will be relevant to you.

4. A LIFESTYLE

See, the will of God is not a decision making tool. You have to first give yourself over completely to it before it can have any meaning in your life. Let me explain something here.

The will of God is in two levels. There is a general level that applies equally to everyone, and a specific one. This latter is unique to each person. The general one is expressed simply by Paul thus,

1 Thess 4:3-7

3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;

4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,

5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God;

6 and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you.

7 For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.

This sanctification represents the general will of God for everybody. No one is exempted from it. It includes sexual integrity, honesty in business, and all forms of purity. If you are not living a life that is sanctified thus, you are definitely walking out of the will of God. You need no prophet to tell you this.

The specific will, on the other hand, has to do with you as an individual. This is the one that deals with who you should marry, what job you should take, what carrier to choose, whether to go into the ministry or not, etc. These are the things that are not written in black and white in the bible. These are the things that are written in your own book that is kept in heaven. We shall see how to know these things later.

What I want to bring out at this time is that God has said that before anyone can legitimately come to Him in prayer requesting to know the specific will of God for his or her life, that person must be walking in the general one that is clearly stated for everyone. No one who is walking out of fellowship with God is allowed to seek to know the specific will of God.

Ezek 14:7-8

For anyone ... who separates himself from Me, sets up his idols in his heart, puts right before his face the stumbling block of his iniquity, and then comes to the prophet to inquire

of Me for himself, I the LORD will be brought to answer him in My own person.

I will set My face against that man...

If you are walking in sin and living life the way you want, with no regard for God, forget Him when it is time to make decisions.

Many years ago, I was in the presence of a man of God and he was narrating how a woman had come to him with her son. They came with photographs of three young ladies and they wanted him to pray and tell them which one he should marry. As you can easily see, this young man was not really looking for the will of God but was seeking the *best* for himself.

He said that he simply dismissed them after explaining to the woman that he did not pray such prayers. He challenged the young man in question to deny that he was having sexual relations with the three girls.

I believe that young man was not a believer, but it is a fact that a lot of Christians behave in a way similar to that. They do business like unbelievers, engage in sexual malpractices like unbelievers and then come to the Lord in prayer to seek His will. It does not work like that. These are the things that Ezekiel called *the stumbling block of iniquity*. They always cause the child of God to fall away from the will

of God. Every child of God must repent of walking and talking like the world before the will of God can be manifested in their lives.

Another point that I will like to dwell on at this time is what God called '*the idol in his heart.*'

In my experience, idols in the heart is a main reason why believers walk out of the will of God. Idols are those things that we hold on to rigidly as true but which are not founded upon the word of God. Most of them are founded on human experience or are simply a generally held belief, which no one really knows where it started. A few practical examples will make it clear.

There are those who have in their minds that they *must* marry someone from their ethnic group or even close to their native home. They want to be accepted in their native community. There are those who claim that they can never marry someone who is from a broken home. Their reason is that research has shown that those people tend to end up with broken homes themselves. They hold on to this thought and so never give any such person a chance. If the ordained wife from God for them is of this kind of background, they will definitely miss her.

The truth is that the word of God says "*henceforth know no one after the flesh; if anyone is in Christ, she is a new*

creation and old things have passed way.” We are only what God has created us to be in Christ Jesus. It is the blood of Jesus and the cleansing word of God that will cause us to become successful in marriage. Most of the people who will end up with broken homes are not from broken homes. Cleanse your head of such nonsense and fill it with the power of the word of God. It is the power of God working for you that will give you a stable and happy home.

I see books teaching people on how to choose a marriage partner encouraging the children of God to continue in this error. If you look at those things with a view to cleansing them with the word of God it is okay, but to use them as criteria for choosing a mate is nothing but consolidated unbelief. With that attitude you can *never* get the plan of God.

Here is another example of this idol. Many years ago, people used to tell me that before you go into ministry, you should have a business running or something else that will be giving you money so that you can preach the gospel without problems. They felt that those who go into ministry without this are unable to do a good job of it. They hated the idea of receiving offerings from people. They looked, in effect, not to God but to material things for supplies. I also believed it then but the Lord has since corrected me.

I have discovered that such doctrines are often born out of pride in the heart of the people. They do not want people to think that they came to the ministry to get money. Well, when Jesus was going to send out His disciples at a time, He told them to take no provisions (Luke 10:4). Paul said that those who work in the gospel have a right to feed from it. I am not saying that it is wrong to have resources coming to you on the side; it is okay if the Lord chooses to give that to you, but you cannot make it a doctrine that you will store in your heart. It will prevent you from doing the will of God.

Another common idol is found with those who believe that God can never bless them in one country but that they must go on to another. Many people labour and walk straight out of the will of God just because they will not accept the counsel of God that He can bless them anywhere. They have decided where blessing is. Many times I have encountered such people and it can really be sad. I know people, some of them believers, who have spent many years pursuing a visa to what they consider a prosperous nation; in this period they do nothing that could bring them promotion. They change their names, tell lies, do anything just to get there. I don't know how more stupid a person can be; if you claim to be praying to God for blessing, the least you should do is to walk pleasing to Him in small things. By the time you lie and change your identity

just to get to America, the angels of blessings may just not recognize you there.

God opens doors for people in many places but once it is not that place that they have decided that the blessing is, they will not walk into it. “I can’t live anywhere but Lagos”; “Port Harcourt is where money is”. Such statements are the reasons why God cannot bring them into His will.

See, money is in the place where God will place you. Prosperity will come to you where God ordained for you to be. If you are a blessed person you are a blessed person; that blessing can manifest anywhere. Trying to tie the manifestation of blessing to a place of your own idea is the very thing that will hinder it. To be choosing where to go because of where you think money is *is* nothing but idolatry. You cannot be pursuing after money as a child of God; it is not right.

For many people it is this covetousness of their hearts that is pushing them out of the will of God. They have seen that the other company pays more money and that is all that matters. God may have ordained for a major breakthrough to meet them where they are now and all the signs and sound principles of life are in keeping with their staying there, but there is this bigger cash that has prevailed over the will of God.

Idols in the heart and stumbling blocks of iniquities actually grow out of a life that is separated from God. I have found out that the more believers distance themselves from fellowship and from the word of God, the more the idols and stumbling blocks are seen in their lives. Many times men become too busy to put the word of God first in their lives. They have become too prosperous; they have become important. There are too many things demanding their attention. The word of God looses out and the devil fills their lives with chaff and they are wondering why they cannot follow the will of God.

Reunite with God. Cleave once again to the word of God; let that word cleanse you of all idols. Repent of your iniquities and you will find out that the will of God is natural, as natural as breathing.

5. THE RENEWED HEART

Yes, the will of God is actually to be as natural as breathing. As we have seen earlier, the will of God has more to do with your person and lifestyle than it has to do with making one decision after another. If your life is united with God, your rational common sense decisions will be in agreement with the will of God.

Let me explain this point I have just made in another way. See, the Lord is not trying to make people who do not think but only follow instructions. What He is rather doing is to make you be like Him so that your own dispositions will be like His; you will love what He loves and hate what He hates. His aim is that you will become an exact representation of His nature. In the life of Jesus, you will notice that many of the miracles He performed were initiated by the compassion that He *felt* for the people (see Matt 14:14, 15:32, Mk 1:41). It was not that the Father *spoke* to Him to do them; He had the nature of the Father and that was the compassion that moved Him to do those things. This is the essence of the New Covenant in Christ Jesus.

The Old Covenant told men what to do; they had commandments. Under the New, the hearts of people are being

transformed so that their natural desires will be in agreement with God's own desires. It will no longer be a case of "thou shall not steal", but that I do not have a stealing nature and I love my neighbour. Even without the commandment I would not steal. This was what the Lord meant when He said, "*I delight to do Thy will O My God; Thy law is within My heart*". That law was the force of divine nature that was within Him. It is the same thing that God has placed as a seed in the Christian.

Jer 31:33

"...I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

Let me explain again with a few practical examples.

I have had people ask me how God spoke to me about the wife I married. The truth is that I married the woman that I liked. She was attractive to me, when I got to know her I liked her and she agreed to marry me when I asked. All other things flowed with us and we got married.

'Spiritual' people want to hear how I prayed and God spoke in an audible voice or by a dream and a vision. Well, I had none of that but I married in the perfect will of God. The truth is that many of us just love spiritually romantic stories. God did not make us to live by goose pimples and unusual manifestations; He wants us to live a normal life. What He

wants is for that normal life to be united with Him and to be constantly improved by increasing knowledge of God.

For my choice of a wife, my understanding of the ways of God and the desire in me to please God had already placed a lot of things in place. No matter how pretty a woman was in my eyes, if she was not a believer that loved the Lord and His word, no dice. I couldn't marry an unruly, disrespectful, neither-hot-nor-cold Christian. To me, that was common sense. Many other things that people consider were unimportant to me because the Lord had said nothing to support them. She is not from my tribe. So what? We are both from the tribe of faith in Jesus. I had placed my life in the Lord's hands and I knew He was directing my steps. With all these in place, I simply married the person that I felt like marrying.

Do not let us make it appear like a godly lifestyle to live by impulse, which is what many who are claiming to be led by the Spirit are doing. To be led by the Spirit of God does not at all mean to hear voices. It simply means that the force of your life that guides everything you do is the Spirit of God. It becomes a natural part of you.

Note therefore that your talents, abilities, passions are guides to what God wants you to do in this life. He had wired your inside to make you fit into certain places. Some are gifted to sing, some to teach, some to write, some to buy and sell.

Some are astute administrators. And some are just excellent taking care of and teaching children. Each one has his proper gift of the Lord, and with this you can identify what your calling is.

Do not forget that the will of God implies that God has a path prepared for you to walk in on this earth; He has an assignment for you to do. For this reason He created you with those special abilities, which we call talents or gifts, so that you can effortlessly outdo any other person in that area of your assignment in life.

Ps 139:13

*For You formed my inward parts;
You wove me in my mother's womb.*

Just by looking at the inside parts of a machine you can tell what it is supposed to do; the manufacturer prepared those inside parts to be in keeping with the purpose of the equipment. The good Lord did the same thing with you and so by carefully looking at your gifts you can have a clue to what your calling in life is.

When all the above are in place; that is, you are walking everyday in the general will of God, cleansing your heart continually of all defilement of flesh and spirit and having identified what your gifts and passions are, then at every point do as the occasion will cause you to decide and

you will find yourself in the will of God. If you are confused pray, and the good Lord will help you by various means. A common method He uses is to supply you information that you were not aware of. The advice of godly people who have understanding is also often so precious.

6. DREAMS, VISIONS AND SUCH

The last thing that we should examine is the issue of supernatural manifestations.

A lot of Christians believe that what they call inward witness and still small voice of the Spirit is the normal way by which we should learn to walk in the will of God. We have tried to show that it is not really so. What I want to emphasize here is that those things do happen but are not what we should look for when we are walking everyday. There are those who I see that go around ‘checking their spirits’ before they do anything. This is only a little better than relying on impulse for living.

It is important that I point out that God uses special manifestations when what He wants us to do will not come to us naturally in the normal course of our godly walk and with the rational use of our sanctified minds.

God leads in diverse ways and He chooses for you what He knows will work with you. You cannot *train* yourself to see visions; you cannot learn how to dream dreams. All you can do is to receive them with a good heart, trusting the Lord to show you what is really from Him. In the same manner, inward

witness, audible voices are not things you look out for; if the Lord wants to, He will send them your way. People have been visited by angels, but only demons answer those who are *looking* for angelic visitations. All you can do is learn to obey God in the things that you can personally understand.

I often hear preachers teach as if the Lord is trying to hide His will and so you need to go and find it out from where He hid it. Well it is not so; He desires to have His will done in your life and if He needs to communicate it to you He will choose the way that He knows you will recognize. He arrested Moses with the burning bush. Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Isaiah had terrifying visions; things they could not ignore. Nehemiah, on the other hand, just followed the passion of his heart while Mordecai and Esther simply responded in the best way they knew to the crisis situation that had come upon them. Yet, all these people did the will of God.

Special manifestations are personal; no one can teach you how to have them. If you do have them and do not understand, then you should seek godly counsel. With time you will know how God communicates things to you. This is a very personal thing that cannot be taught to you by anybody. For example, Demos Shakarian, founder of the *Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International*, said that he found out that disagreement between him and his wife on an issue was a

sure sign that the thing was not the will of God. As for me, there is a way a thought will come to me that I will know it is the plan of God; it is difficult for me to teach you that. Just relax in God's hands.

7. CONCLUSION

Having said all we have thus far, let us summarise everything.

It is possible to walk in the will of God all the time. The will of God is not a burden to bear at critical points; it is rather a life that we live at all times. The will of God is not a serious matter for the person that is habitually walking in it.

God leads through various means, including the circumstances of your life. There are times that events in life will leave you no other course of action but one. That one way left will be the will of God. Someone once said, “do the right thing, and the consequences are the will of God.

To live in the will of God at all times, simply do what is right as far as you know. When the time will come when you will not know what to do at all, then the Lord will give you direction through any of the many means that He uses, including supernatural things like dreams and visions. There is no way of predicting the one He will choose at each point.

All the Lord is asking for is a heart that wants to walk with Him and which wants to please Him at all times. He will lead you in the path of righteousness for His own name's sake.

Follow the general will of God, and the specific one will take care of itself.

PS

The contents of this book have been presented in a short, simple, matter-of-fact manner. A more detailed examination of the facts and more are presented in my more voluminous book, *Grace to live by!* Please do watch out for the release and be sure to read it.

Pastor Bankie



Dr. Bankole Olusina, fondly called Pastor Bankie, is a teacher of the Word of God. The emphasis of his teachings is the separation of the Church from the world by obedience to the truths of God. He is a member of the Light of Christ Alumni Fellowship (LOCCAF) Ministers Forum, and the Pastor-Teacher of Kingdom-Word Ministries which he founded with his wife and partner in ministry, Ufuoma.

Kingdom-Word Ministries is a non-denominational teaching ministry based in Enugu, Nigeria. Activities of the ministry include weekly Bible classes at the ministry office, publication of free teaching tracts and books, radio/TV broadcasts and organizing teaching seminars in various towns and cities.

Pastor Bankie's audio message digital catalogue includes hundreds of messages which are available on CDs and MP3 CDs.

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