

THE WILL, WORK, WORD AND SPIRIT OF GOD



**Then they said to Him, “what shall we do
that we may work the works of God?”
(John 6:28)**

Index

1. What are the works of God?
2. Christ in you and you in Christ
3. Christ in you both to will and to do
4. Working the works of Him that sent Me
5. Is it of God or man?
6. Two temples, the Christian and the assembly
7. Two kingdoms

Preface

Most people, who say they believe in God, believe they are doing His will and His works. This is as it should be. However, when the clear teaching of Scripture is brought forth, it is found that many are unaware of what it really means to live under or follow after the will of God. They do not understand that the will of God is the same as the works of God. They do not understand how the will or works of God are achieved. Furthermore the will, works, word and the Spirit of God are in one accord, they cannot be apart or seen as different from one another. This booklet will put forth some foundational truths from Scripture to show how God's will is accomplished.

1. What are the works of God?

Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent" (John 6:29).

The work of God is found in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, who came into this world to fulfill and complete the will of God. Jesus fulfilled everything His Father had sent Him into this world to do; He said, "...For I always do the things that please Him" (John 8:29). The Father's value of Him is made clear in this

verse, “*And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17).* Jesus was the only man who ever lived in full oneness with the Father (John 10:30) and died without any sin (Isaiah 53:9: 1 Peter 2:21-22).

The true will of God is found in Christ Jesus who came to die for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2), so that none should perish, but all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). Jesus came to bring to all people the offer of forgiveness for sins, through repentance (Luke 5:32), and to give the gift of life eternal through faith in Himself (John 6:47). “*... God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself through Jesus Christ... ” (2 Corinthians 5:19).* We see in these Scriptures, the will of God put into physical form and fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Jesus was the only person ever born who came into the world for the distinct purpose of dying (Matthew 16:21; John 10:17-18). Jesus said, “*Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life” (John 12:24-25).*

Jesus had to die in order to fulfill the will of the Father. He could thus give Himself over to God’s purpose for

Him because His only desire was to eat the food the Father had given Him. Jesus said, “*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work*” (John 4:34). He completed the work the Father sent Him into the world to do. As He was dying on the cross, He said, “... *it is finished ...*” (John 19:30). In completing the Father’s will perfectly, He brought eternal redemption to all who believe Him and follow Him (John 10:27-28; Hebrews 9:12).

The will and work of God found in the believer

Man is dead in trespasses and sins by reason of the one (Adam) who subjected him (man) to vanity (Romans 8:20). However, the work of God is regenerative and life giving. To those who believe God, His gift to every believer is the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who seals him to the Father eternally (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). The Holy Spirit is acquired through simply coming to faith, in Jesus Christ. The person, who believes on Jesus from the heart, becomes born of God (John 3:12-13; 3:16, 36). When a person is born of God, the Holy Spirit baptizes him into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The believer receives all of these gifts of grace entirely through the work of God.

For the believer, this work of the Spirit of God has raised him from being a dead man (Ephesians 2:2) into

new life. The believer's faith, in following the Lord Jesus, releases the Holy Spirit to work the works of God in Him.

2. Christ in you and you in Christ

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our home with him" (John 14:23).

On the day of Pentecost, something very unique happened. God's Spirit came to earth to permanently indwell everyone who believed on Jesus Christ. Some Old Testament believers and the prophets, experienced an internal work of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 2:2; 3:24; 1 Peter 1:11), which was a filling of their person with the Spirit. However, they were not baptized with the Holy Spirit; the Spirit came upon them for testimony and service. The Spirit which came upon them did not seal them for eternity.

In the dispensation of the grace of God (the New Covenant), the Christian has been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13), to dwell in him permanently. This sealing by the Holy Spirit is eternal (2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). This seal of God cannot be broken by man, nor can man undo or open this seal. The Holy Spirit is Himself the seal

which signifies security (Ephesians 4:30), a finished transaction (John 17:4) and complete ownership (2 Timothy 2:19). Jesus is the only One with authority to open the seal or seals of God (Revelation 3:7; 5:1-7; 6:1).

The believer has been assured by the Spirit of God that the riches of Christ are received when He is indwelling the believer (Colossians 1:27). This is because Christ has indwelt him, from the moment he believed on Jesus in his heart (Romans 10:9). The believer is shown the completeness of His riches in the following verse, *“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power”* (Colossians 2:9-10).

God has made a new creation in the believer, creating a totally new person (2 Corinthians 5:17). The veil of unbelief has been lifted, and now the believer, as a new creation, has been born of the Spirit, becoming a new heavenly man. Unknown to him is the fact that he has been chosen to be in Christ from before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:3-4). He was predestined by the will of God to be adopted as a child of God and to be given the riches of His kingdom (Ephesians 1:5; 2:7).

Christ came into this world specifically to die for unbelievers while they were still in their sins (Romans 5:8), by taking the unbeliever’s judgment of God upon Himself. This is a mystery of the love of God. Furthermore, it is

God who chose each one of us to be His own, making clear the smallness of our understanding (John 15:16).

The purpose of God was to elect a people for Himself in Christ (Colossians 3:12), then give them the riches of His kingdom (Ephesians 2:7). These were dead men whom God made alive through His grace, then raised them up to sit in the heavenlies, seated with Christ (Ephesians 2:6), thus adding to the mystery and the vastness of the love of God. Those people who were once enemies have become the friends of God through the completed work of Christ Jesus.

They are now in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:21) and Christ is in them (2 Corinthians 13:5).

3. Christ in you both to will and to do

“For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

All mankind has one thing in common, ~~=====~~ failure. How many people can say I am perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect, ~~=====~~ none (Romans 3:23)? God’s answer to that for the believer is what Jesus stated to His disciples, *“...for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).* This forces us to acknowledge our total incompleteness before God.

Jesus said He could do nothing of Himself, but only what He sees the Father doing (John 5:19). Jesus lived a life of dependence on the Father's word. A believer is able to do the will of God by living a life of dependence on the word of God, thus allowing the Holy Spirit to lead a person into a Spirit filled life.

The believer is admonished to walk in the works of Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:10). It is the Spirit within the believer that supplies the grace and power to walk in and fulfill the works of Jesus. A life of dependence, through faith, releases the Spirit to freely work within him. The truths of these statements are seen in the Apostle Paul, *"To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily"* (Colossians 1:29).

As the believer listens to the Chief Shepherd's voice (John 10:27), and follows Him in singleness of heart (Colossians 3:22), the Holy Spirit reveals the truths that belong to Him (John 16:13-15). As Christ did the will of His Father, the Holy Spirit is re-creating the believer to do the same, *"Because as He is, so are we in this world"* (1 John 4:17). For this purpose God has given us His Spirit (1 John 4:13), that we are to be the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1:12, 14).

In other words, Christ has given His life to everyone who is without life and far from God (us), and by His

Spirit creates an entirely new being. Every person who has believed and obeyed from the heart (Romans 6:17) is being re-created, by the Spirit, into the image of Christ Jesus (Romans 8:29).

The Spirit of God, working in the inner man, strengthens him so he may know the riches of Christ (the fullness of God) and walk in the love of God (Ephesians 3:16-19). The working of faith in the believer's heart brings forth hope. This hope is the hope of the coming of Jesus (rapture) to take those who belong to Him out of this world (Titus 2:13). This hope of Christ's coming for His own also brings a work of purity in the believer who hopes in and for His appearing. *“And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure”* (1 John 3:3). This purity or holiness (separation) is a work of the Spirit, which brings people to follow only the Lamb of God. The hope of the glory of Christ gives power through the Spirit to fulfill the will of the Father (Galatians 5:5; Colossians 1:27). The Christian who abides in this hope of Christ will fulfill God's purpose for that individual. That purpose, we are taught in Scripture, is *“to be to the praise of His glory”* (Ephesians 1:12). The Christian, as he follows the Lord Jesus according to what He has told us, magnifies the glory of God. The Spirit which is working in him is manifest, and Christ is made known to all men.

Jesus said, *“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life”* (John 6:63). Jesus has made it clear in saying His words are spiritual and they are life to all who will hear and obey what He has told us.

None of the truths in this chapter can be accomplished without believing and hanging on to every word of God (Matthew 4:4).

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men”
(John 1:4).

4. Working the works of Him that sent Me

“I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work”
(John 9:4).

There is much confusion among some church people about working the works of God. Some have supposed that since Jesus was without sin, God’s goal is for every believer to become sinless. Others have assured themselves that speaking in tongues with a spiritual experience is God’s primary goal. Others would say water baptism is necessary to achieve God’s primary goal of making a person a real Christian.

God’s primary purpose as shown in Scripture is for a person to hear Him (Matthew 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35)

and to believe Him in Jesus Christ (John 6:28-29). His secondary purpose is for us to live and walk in the sanctifying life of the Spirit, “*For this is the will of God your sanctification...*” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). Sanctification means to be set apart; for the Christian it means putting away the world, the flesh and the devil. The person who does this and separates himself unto Christ alone will work the works of God.

In Ephesians 2:10 we are told a Christian is God’s workmanship, and that he is created for good works. Furthermore, we are told that God prepared these good works beforehand and the believer is to walk in them. In other words, they are not the believer’s good works but God’s. These good works are produced in the believer by the Spirit as he believes and follows what God has told him. No natural man (saved or unsaved) can do the works of God, only the Holy Spirit can do them. Jesus made it clear, “...*for without me you can do nothing*” (John 15:5).

Jesus was the second Adam, God’s perfect man. The reason for His perfection was that He was 100% God living in this world, both as a dependent man, and a spiritual man. He was a perfect mirror of His Father (John 14:9). He was a man totally dependent on His Father’s every word (John 8:28-29, 38).

The Christian who responds in faith to the Father's every word is being formed into the same spiritual life that Jesus had with His Father. Jesus perfectly worked the works of God. The believer who responds to every word of God (Matthew 4:4), whether it is through the Holy Spirit or Scripture, will see the works of God being done through him. The will, work, word and Spirit of God all four are in perfect agreement, identically the same.

As the believer walks by faith in every word of God, setting his face like a flint as Jesus did on the Father (Isaiah 50:7, Jesus is our example 1 Peter 2:21), the Holy Spirit will do every good work through him.

As the believer continues to walk in full dependence on the Father, his growth in the truths of Christ will abound. He will come into, "... *the stature of the fullness of Christ*" (Ephesians 4:13). In this place of a dependent life on the Father, through following every word of God, the Spirit will have freedom to work the works of Christ in him and through him (Philippians 2:13).

Romans 12:1 admonishes the believer to present his or her body as a living sacrifice unto God. We are told that it is their reasonable service. Verse 2 tells him not to be conformed to the world, but to be transformed by the renewing of his mind. It is only by doing this that the good, acceptable and perfect will of God can be known to him. Without doing this, a believer cannot come into or experience the fullness of the riches of Christ.

The riches of Christ, dwelling in the believer, produce the works of God. In implementing these truths the believer will, “... *stand perfect and complete in all of the will of God*” (*Colossians 4:12*).

5. Is it of God or man?

“... *I praise thee, Father, Lord of the heaven and of the earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them to babes*” (*Matthew 11:25 JND*).

The question in the church is whether some doctrines, teachings or practices are from God or from man. This is a major problem today, confusing many church people as well as the church itself. Satan’s deception has been able to come into the church because; the general condition of the church is void of light and truth. In many churches the light of God is very dim, but those taught of God will follow the Lord Jesus, and reject the darkness. People who follow only the Lord Jesus are given discernment by the Spirit to divide truth from error and light from darkness as this verse shows us. “*But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things*” (*1 John 2:20*). Those who earnestly follow only the Lord Jesus (not pastors, clergy, hierarchy, denominational doctrines or any other man-made religious

direction), will receive the anointing from the Spirit of Truth.

The Apostle John gives a believer spiritual direction on how to discern light from darkness. *“We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error” (1 John 4:6).*

John is telling every person the apostles are of God, and he who follows what they taught (Apostles Doctrine) is of God. Following the Apostles Doctrine, a person will discern truth from error.

Those who respond to the Chief Shepherd’s voice follow only the light of Christ (John 10:3-5, 27-29). Christ’s words are His Father’s truth (John 8:28-29; 17:7). Truth (light) always dispels error (darkness), which opens up the kingdom of Christ to the believer.

There are many spiritual voices (spirits) vying for our attention. The traditions of men, (which are of the world, the flesh or the devil), have in many cases replaced God’s foundation of truth (Mark 7:9, 13). The result is that the word of God is set aside.

To avoid this path, a person needs to ask how one may develop eyes to see and ears to hear (Matthew 13:16). Scripture tells us that faith, *“... comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).*

Faith is an active word in the believer; it produces a positive response to truth shown us from God. The believer's positive response to truth opens up a lighted pathway for him to follow. "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*" (Psalms 119:105). The Psalmist shows a man how to cleanse his way by avoiding fleshly or religious snares, "... *by taking heed according to Your word*" (Psalms 119:9).

The Scriptures are God's foundation of truth; the Spirit gives unction to them. All church practices, doctrines, prophecies, teaching, understanding or any other thing presented as truth must be weighed by the Spirit (Matthew 4:4; John 16:13; Romans 15:4). Colossians 1:9-10, tell the believer to, "... *be filled with knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God*"

Scripture gives the test of who is, or who is not following God's words, "*He who is of God hears God's words ...*" (John 8:47).

6. Two temples, the assembly and the Christian

The Church that Christ is building is a temple built on truth and light.

“ ... I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15).

The first temple

The Christian

In the New Testament, the epistles teach how the New Covenant is to be implemented in the church where the two temples of God are revealed. The first temple is seen from the day of Pentecost till the Lord Jesus comes for His own, every Christian's body has been made a temple of God. Every Christian has the Spirit of God living in him. *“Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).*

Whether a person is indwelt by the Holy Spirit or not is the defining point between a person being a sheep of Christ (a Christian) or a non Christian, *“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit*

of Christ, he is not His” (Romans 8:9). Because a Christian is the temple of God, he or she is to separate from evil. Possibly a person has had a long close fellowship with unbelieving or evil friends. Separation unto Christ is the first truth a new or long time believer is called to follow; it is not optional (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). God has made the believer’s body a temple to reflect the light of God (Matthew 5:14-16).

The body Jesus lived in was the temple of God (John 2:19-21). The body of Jesus was filled with all fullness of God (Colossians 2:9), and all truth (John 10:27; 14:6; 18:37). Jesus as God’s Temple, was without blemish (Matthew 3:17), He is the complete and total revelation of God for all time (John 14:9). He always obeyed His Father in all things (John 8:29).

“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:19).

Jesus is the example for every Christian to follow. His life reflects the true temple of God which was filled with all goodness. The temple of God, the Christian’s body, is a dwelling place of God. As such, that believer is complete in Him (Colossians 2:10), lacking nothing of the Spirit of God.

The believer's part in this work of God is to submit in faith unto His grace and become a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2).

The second temple

The assembly

The second temple is spoken of in 1 Corinthians 3:16, *“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you”* (literally, in your midst)? We again read of the assembly being built together as a holy Temple, and being for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. *“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit”* (Ephesians 2:19-22).

When the Apostle John received the book of Revelation he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day (Revelation 1:10). What he saw was One like the Son of Man in the midst of seven lamp stands (churches). This signifies His dwelling place among His churches, watching

over them and judging the evil within and commending the good (Revelation chapters 2 and 3).

The temple in Jerusalem in Solomon's day was filled with the Holy Spirit (2 Chronicles 7:1-3). It is shown as the dwelling place of God by prophecy (Habakkuk 2:20). The evil committed by Israel (594 B. C.) brought the Spirit of God to leave His dwelling place, the Holy of Holies in the temple (Ezekiel 9:3; 10:4, 18; 11:23). The Spirit of God departing from the temple left Israel open to her enemies within and without.

In the prophetic timetable for the church age, Laodicea is the last church. Most people who study Scripture would agree the present day church is in the Laodicean era. The Laodicean era has corrupted itself to the point of Christ vomiting Laodicea out of His mouth (Revelation 3:14-16). (This cannot be said of those assemblies that follow Jesus according to His Word and Spirit). Christ then tells those with an ear to hear to repent, so that He may give them white raiment (His robe of righteousness). However, as Scripture reveals to us, because of the corruption in the professing church, He is no longer dwelling in the midst of the churches of this age. Those who follow the Laodicean spirit are outside of where He dwells. Jesus stands at the door and knocks (Revelation 3:20); He states if any person will open the door (of his

heart), He will come in and indwell that person and fellowship with him (1 Corinthians 1:9; Revelation 3:21).

7. Two kingdoms

“... Lord, I believe; help my unbelief” (Mark 9:24).

In this fallen world ruled by the prince of darkness, it is evident that the strong dominate the weak. This can be seen in war, sports, business, religion, politics, crime and many other ways. Someone once said, ‘in the world of business it is dog eat dog.’ In Hitler’s program of eugenics, the weak, handicapped and infirm were maligned, treated as of no value, destroyed and disposed of.

God’s order and model are seen in Jesus; as He walked on this earth and made known and dispensed the kingdom of God in Israel. He was the prophetic King who came to bring the kingdom of God to His people, Israel. John the Baptist’s disciples came to Jesus and asked Him, *“Are You the Coming One or do we look for another” (Luke 7:19-20).* *“Jesus answered and said to them, go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Luke 7:22).*

Two things can be seen in these passages. People who are of no faith (Deuteronomy 32:20) are directed or swayed by the kingdom of darkness which rules in this world. It's source is the prince of darkness (Ephesians 2:2). Destruction and death are the end results of his leadership and ways.

The kingdom of God can be seen in the life of Jesus. His words describe His life and purpose. “ ... *I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly*” (John 10:10).

All men on the earth follow one or the other of these kingdoms. Those who are children of God's wrath (Ephesians 2:2), do not enter into the kingdom of God and they have no eternal inheritance. Those, who through God's grace have come to faith in the Lord Jesus, have an eternal hope laid up for them in heaven (Colossians 1:5).

Those weak in faith

Unbelief in the Creator and His word is in the natural nature of all men, and following the kingdom of darkness is the result. This is true of a person (even if he claims to be a Christian), who does not allow the truth in Christ (Scripture and the Holy Spirit) to lead him. It is a major aspect of weakness in church people who do not yet know the voice of the Chief Shepherd. If they have faith in Christ, it is built only on a small part of what God has told them. The whole counsel of God is unknown to most

church people, yet knowing Gods whole counsel is mandatory for Christians to build faith on the unchallengeable truths it proclaims (Malachi 3:6; Acts 20:27).

Some (but not all) of the more readily seen weaknesses in Christendom are the practices of denominationalism, sectarianism (1 Corinthians chapters 1-4), and Nicolaitanism (clergy/laity system 3 John 9-10; Revelation 2:6, 15). Church people who are fully following the world through humanism in their own life and in the church are causing a major deterioration from the Scriptures (not following the order of God as in 1 Corinthians 1:12-13; 4:1-5; 11:1-16; 14:34-37; Colossians 2:8, 14-23 and 1 Timothy 2:9). The eating of the bread and drinking of the cup in communion, without discerning the Lord's body (an assembly allowing unbelievers to partake), is a spiritual offense, and is a primary example of deterioration from the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 11:26-30). The God given freedom of the priesthood of every believer is not allowed to function in a "church" setting (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6).

The fruit of the weakness among church people is shown by their willingness to follow the world and its philosophy, giving the devil full access to influence church teachers and pastors. Religious flesh (errors taught as truth) is accepted as truth by the professing church. The results are a total weakness of the transforming power of

the Holy Spirit. Broken homes and families as well as children without protection from the devil's destroying methods, are major results of this refusal to believe what God has told us.

God's answer

“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).

God is true to His word; He has told us that all of His testimonies are forever (Psalms 119:168). Furthermore, it is written that God does not lie, *“Has He said, and will He not do?” (Numbers 23:19).*

God has given man the knowledge of Himself through creation, conscience, and His word. He has made clear His intentions, through His promise of blessing to all who believe Him and follow His Son.

It can be said that the greater the apprehension we have of our sin and distance from God, the easier it is to see our need of the Savior (Luke 7:36-50). God sent His Son into the world to fulfill our need, *“to seek and to save that which is lost” (Luke 19:10).* He not only has supplied the answer to our needs, but He has opened our eyes, and given His Spirit to all that believe. He has given the riches of His kingdom to all who follow His Son (Ephesians 1:18). Furthermore, God has given His Spirit, with the power of God, to dwell in every believer. *“In*

Him (Christ) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power (Colossians 2:9-10)

This is the answer and grace of God to every person, to receive what God has done in Christ and to live and walk in this new life according to His grace. Into this place of fellowship with the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:9), the believer has been made rich and given all things (2 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Timothy 6:17; 2 Peter 1:3).

It is through the believer's weakness in himself and his acknowledgement of his weakness that he can replace it with a faith in God's word and enter into God's power (Hebrews 11:34). Thereby a growing dependence on the Father releases the Spirit to work in the believer. A dependant faith in the word of God brings forth the works of God in the believer. This is the key for the release of the Spirit.

“For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13)

D. Neely
11/24/10