



The Will

*The Potent
Force of
the Universe*

Dr. Lester Sumrall

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

The Will: The Potent Force of the Universe

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1

What Is Will?

The will is a major force in the universe. The Bible makes this clear. Over 4,000 times the word “will” and its derivatives are found in Scripture. Anytime God puts 4,000 references on any subject in the Bible it seems that He wants to get our attention.

I have spent considerable time seeking God about the will. In this book I hope to lay out for you what I have learned over the years. I trust you will join me with your heart open, with your spirit open, to discover things about yourself and about God.

Who Has Will?

There are at least six distinct creatures in our universe possessing will, or willpower. Willpower is a dominant fact regarding destiny for rational persons. You are what you are by will.

What Is Will?

Inevitably you will spend eternity in heaven or hell by your will.

God created Adam a three-dimensional person—spirit, soul, and body. The will is one-third of his human soulful personality. In this book we are reaching into a dimension of the soul. In reality the soul has three divisions, but we are reaching into just one of them. As humans we should know what willpower is, from where it generates, what causes it to function, and what it will do for us. We must learn to control our willpower.

God wants us to understand the force of willpower, to identify it as it functions. He wants us to know by divine decree that you and I can be victorious in every area of our created being; the will is an important factor in this.

We will observe that God, the Creator of all things, possesses willpower. He is the originator of willpower, and if we understand the truth of God's willpower we will better understand what willpower is to us.

Next we will observe that Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, possessed tremendous willpower as He walked the earth. Knowing this

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we can say, “The willpower that was in the Lord Jesus Christ can function in my life.”

We more fully will understand the truth of willpower by observing it first in God the Father, and then in God the Son. We also seek to penetrate the third entity of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit, and learn that He exerts amazing and mighty willpower.

Other rational creatures, such as the heavenly entities called angels, also possess willpower. Angels obey God by option. They do not have to obey God; they *will* to obey Him. They are not slaves; they are not without opinion; and they are not without decision. Whenever God gives them a command, they exert willpower to obey or disobey.

On the negative side, Satan and the demons that he leads possess willpower. They use willpower to combat the purposes of God in the universe.

Observing willpower in such a panoramic view—from God the Father, even to Satan, and all beings in between—you might say, “Well, why didn’t I know that before?” You cannot live a victorious Christian life without having some

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recognition that deep within you are forces that really make you. Those forces, if directed by God, lead you in the right direction. Those forces, if dominated by the devil, put you on the wrong road.

God Created the Will in Man

Man is the apex of God's creation, and he was endowed with sovereign willpower. This endowment was granted by divine prerogative. God said, "I will create this person and call him 'man.' I will give him willpower." In doing so, God made a creature of judgment, of understanding, of decision.

As a human being, one endowed with willpower, you do not have to go straight ahead; you can go backwards if you want to. You do not have to turn to the right; you can go to the left if you want to. God placed in you the amazing volitional strengths, anointings, and powers of will.

Now when God granted you this, He determined that He would never violate it. You may ask, "Why didn't God stop Hitler?"; "Why didn't God stop Stalin?"; "Why doesn't God stop Castro?"; "Why doesn't God stop this, that,

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and the other?" It is because God granted us decision power. He granted us willpower, and He will not violate it. God even will let you choose hell as your eternal home.

God *will not* violate your will, and the devil *cannot* violate your will. I have witnessed some of the most extreme cases of demon possession on the face of the earth. Everyone of those people told me that they did not have to obey the devil. They had a choice; they did as they pleased; they exerted willpower.

Hypnotism is demonic and dangerous. It should be avoided. With sufficient willpower determined against the mind, however, most people can be hypnotized. This is the giving over of the will that permits you to be hypnotized. If a person resists the hypnotist by his will, a message is sent to the mind that says something like, "I resist this person seeking to take over my mind and hypnotize me." Such a person cannot be hypnotized. The mind obeys the will. That shows the greatness of the will, when it supersedes the mind. The will first must be broken down before the other parts of a persons being will cooperate with a hypnotist. To be hypnotized you must decide, "Yes, I will go along with that."

What Is Will?

The will cannot be weighed on a scale; it cannot be measured. Will is different from the corporeal part of you, such as your eyes, your hands, and your feet. These can be seen and felt. Your will goes beyond that part of your being—it is used to govern yourself. It is with your will that you determine what you do with your hands, what you do with your feet, what you gaze at, what you listen to, and so forth.

Man is blessed by his Creator in possessing a three-fold personality—spirit, soul, and body. The soul itself has three parts—the mind, the emotions, and the will. As part of the soul, the will can be destroyed, polluted, and broken down with alcohol, drugs, etc; it is then that a human being cannot exercise will as God created it to function. Will, therefore, must be a protected part of your personality.

When man is operating in his soulical parts, he is using his mind, emotions, or will. He can use two or even all three parts of his soul at the same time. For example, he can function simultaneously in his mind and his will—he wills to do something, the idea then is conveyed to the mind, and the mind carries it out. If it is something personally gratifying in nature, the emotions would

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jump in and say, “Ah, I’m glad, I’m glad, I’m glad.” It is then that he would have all three of his soulful parts functioning at the same time. When man is not functioning by his mind or emotions, for sure he is operating in the area of will. When a person *wills* to do a certain thing, the rest of his total personality will follow.

The will can be moved and activated by three elements:

- 1) By *divine* power
- 2) By *human* power
- 3) By *demonic* power

This means the will of man can be motivated by God, by man himself, or by satanic forces.

To properly analyze the will we must understand that it is a power manifested by intelligence, whether it is manifested by deity, angels, mankind, or devils. *Without intelligence, there is no will.*

Wish

To *will* is to *wish*, and is related to willingness, or an assent to perform. If you do not will to do a certain thing, you become *unwilling* to do it. That means your will goes into reverse. When God said to me, “Will you go to Manila, Philippines,

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and be a missionary?” I said, “I will.” I didn’t say, “I think” (use of the mind), nor did I say, “I feel” (use of the emotions). I said, “I will.” So God’s will and my will agreed with one another and I took my family to the Philippines. My reward was that God gave us the greatest revival we have ever seen. In total, 150,000 people publicly accepted Christ.

Hope

To *will* also is to *hope*. The will, then, has power to invade the future with a new and fresh experience. Hope is a strong force—it is a force used to determine destiny. When hope surges within you, through the power of your will, things begin to change around you. You do not accept the status quo. You do not accept things as they are. Your will is the determining factor in hoping for a better day, a better situation. Your will then moves soulical energy into physical action and causes a change.

At Will

What does “at will” mean? It means that an intelligent creature moves and thinks in an uninhibited manner as he desires, wishes, or feels. He

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does it “at will.” This is a category of greatness and of potential life and strength that is hard to imagine.

Did you know that much of the world today cannot function “at will”? They do not have the freedom to do so. This causes frustration because man is born with free will; God created him a free moral agent. God has given him complete charge of his willfulness, either to follow God or not to follow God, to live peacefully or not to live peacefully. God has permitted him to have this tremendous force so that he can be what the Lord has designed him to be.

Man possibly has not yet fathomed the depth of the human will.

2

The Will of God the Father

What do we truly know about will in the person of God the Father who, in divine providence and wisdom, created will itself? We know this: Jehovah God has will, and He created all the will found in the universe. There are Scriptures that can help us to learn about the will of God.

God's Will in Heaven

Jesus talks about the will of the Father in heaven. In the gospel of Matthew 6:9-10 the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. He responded, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*" (italics mine).

The Father image of God is remarkable. We should not view God as our boss or dictator;

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rather, we should view Him as our Heavenly Father. The will of our Father is done in heaven, and He has a will for the earth that Jesus prayed would be accomplished.

God's Will in Man

God the Father has a will concerning man. In 1 Thessalonians 5:18 we find these words from the apostle Paul: "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Therefore, it is clear that God has a specific will for man. In this particular case it is that the Church "give thanks" in everything.

God's Will Is Not Difficult

We must understand that *the will of God for us is not difficult*. Saying that will distress some people. They think, "My, but the will of God is so hard." It is the devil who speaks things like that to them—and they believe it.

In Psalm 40:8 David says, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." David had discovered God's will, and he wanted to perform it.

How should one go about finding the will of

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God the Father? First, you should know that because He is our Father, you do not have to scream at Him, crying, “Oh, God, show me thy will!” At one time I had three sons living at home. If suddenly in the morning they came running downstairs screaming, “What is your will, oh, Father? What is your will?” I would have said, “Right now go back to bed and get some rest!” God possibly feels that way about us sometimes when we scream at Him to show us His will. Really, knowing the will of God is simple and easy. All we have to do is gain an understanding of His Fatherhood.

My three sons, though I do not know exactly where they are at this very moment, are in my will because they are my sons. As God’s children, He being our Father, we do what He wants us to do. You do not have to worry, wondering, “Oh, am I in the will of God?” Yes, you are in His will because you are born into the family of God. All Christians are in the will of God unless they have rebelled against what they know to be His will. On the other hand, all unsaved people are out of the will of God for the simple reason they are in a state of rebellion against Him.

The Will of God the Father

David, in Psalm 143:10, says, “Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God [that is a good confession to make]: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.” We, like the Psalmist, can come to understand that God in fact has a will, and that He will teach us what it is and how to obey it.

In Romans 12:2 the apostle Paul says, “Be not conformed to this world.” When we are told not to be conformed to this world, we are at the same time being commanded to submit unto the will of God; non-conformity to the world means total dedication to Him. We subject our will to His will when we can truthfully say, “Lord, we’re going to serve you fully, completely, and absolutely.”

In Ephesians 6:6 the apostle Paul says, “Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.” That means down within us there is a will, and that will moves up through our emotions and up through our minds. We determine the will of God and function in the will of God from an inner source of power that comes to us through the new birth—as a gift from Him.

God's Permissive Will

There is something quite remarkable regarding the will of God the Father—He has a *permissive will*. He has a strong, perfect will in which He says, “Do this,” and He expects obedience. He also has a permissive will in which you make a decision based on your own will and then you ask God to bless it. It is when He permits you to have what you want without submitting to what He wants. I must tell you that *multiplied millions live in the permissive will of God*. We should want His perfect will for our lives.

When I was a boy, I often lived in the permissive will of my parents—not in their full will, not in their delightful will. I would want to do something and they would say, “We do not want you to do that.” I would say, “I want to do that.” Their answer was, “Well, go ahead and do that.” Sometimes it brought troubles, sorrows, and problems because my will was not subjective. The human will is untamed until God brings it under control.

God's Perfect Will

It is God's will that you be saved. It also is God's will that you have health; it is not God's

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will for you to be sick. It is His will that we be strong right up to the time we go to heaven. Moses was a beautiful example of the will of God in regard to health. He lived 120 years, and the last day of his life he climbed a mountain. From that mountain he beheld the treasures and other beautiful things that God would soon give to Israel (Deut. 34:1-4). Moses then died and angels took him to heaven. It is said of him: “And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: *his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*” (Deut. 34:7, italics mine).

It also is the will of God that you make quality decisions in your business, your family, in all areas of your life. It is God’s will that you be a very successful person upon the face of the earth. This is clear throughout Scripture. The book of Proverbs, for example, gives many principles for successful living.

As far as I know, I have walked in the will of God since 17 years of age. I have wanted *His* will. I have done my best all these years to subject my will to His. I did not go to the Philippines because I wanted to go. I did not come to South Bend, Indiana, to minister because I desired to do so. I was born in New Orleans, Louisiana,

a city in the Deep South, and I much prefer to live in a southern city. But God's will is to be accomplished. I can teach these things because I have been comforted by walking in the will of God these many years. And by walking in the will of God, I can understand what God's will is concerning me and what my will is concerning God. It is a resourceful life. It is a happy life. It is a blessed life.

Living in God's Will

We receive position through the will of God. The apostle Paul understood that he received his apostleship ministry through the will of God. First Corinthians 1:1 says, "Paul, *called* to be an apostle of Jesus Christ *through the will of God . . .*" In 2 Corinthians 1:1 he says, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ *by the will of God . . .*" (italics mine). The Father had a will for Paul—to be an apostle of Jesus Christ—and Paul became subservient to it. That was his position.

All spiritual leadership and position should be according to God's desire and the knowledge of human need. We should fit into the proper place of ministry, doing whatever our nation needs the most according to the will of God.

The Will of God the Father

The problem with the word “will” is that it has been used so much that people have forgotten what the will really is and where it originated. To many people, it is an unknown area.

Will originated with God. Man has the power of will because God gave it to him. By knowing this we will better understand how to function in it. We must be born-again and learn to function in a will that has been made new, dedicated and set apart to carry out the will of God, joyfully saying, “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”

Thankfulness Is God’s Will

As said earlier, it is God’s will that we be thankful. First Thessalonians 5:18 says, “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” You would be amazed at how many people sit down to eat without giving thanks to Him. Many people go to bed at night without thanking God for the day; most people begin their day without thanking God for the night. People receive wonderful things in their lives without saying, “Thank you, God.” The will of God concerning you, the Bible says, is that you give Him thanks.

Being Subject to the Will of God

In Matthew 7:21 Jesus says, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but *he that doeth the will of my Father* which is in heaven” (italics mine). The will of God has a relationship with your eternal destiny. You cannot just do as you please! You cannot just let your will run riot and expect to reach heaven. What gets you to heaven, Jesus says, is doing the will of the Father who is in heaven.

There are people living now whose lives are not subject to the will of God. Those who do as they please are living in their own will and in their own desires. Those people find themselves not in the proper relationship with the Most High God. The will of God the Father is that you know what He wants and to perform it.

Knowing God and His Will

It is the will of God that all men have a keen knowledge of God. First Timothy 2:4 says, “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men,

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the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

It is the will of God that we accept the Great Commission: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils . . .” (Mark 16:15-17). You and I are to be pioneers throughout the earth in our generation, delivering the message of truth, the message of power, the message of eternal salvation.

Your willpower to serve God must rise up from within. You must be determined to say, “*I will walk in the will of the Lord!*”

3

The Will of Jesus Christ

In studying the will of Christ, we should go back before His birth because it was at that time that He willed to be born of the virgin Mary and dwell among us. His will, therefore, began before His appearance on earth.

The Lord Jesus possessed divine free will. Being the Son of God He possessed royal free will. In the Gospels it is recorded that Jesus said, “I will” at least sixty times. Something within Him had a determining factor. Something within Him had a guiding force. That “something” was *will*. Jesus did not have to do the things that He did. He did not have to heal the sick and He did not have to feed the hungry. He freely chose to do those things.

Jesus Christ went to the cross freely. When they came to arrest Jesus and Peter put up resistance, Jesus said, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently

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give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. 26:53). When Pilate said, “Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?” Jesus responded, “Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above” (John 19:10-11).

It was the will of Jesus that gave Him a source of energy to achieve world redemption. He *willed* to save the world. By will He drove His body to the cross; by willpower He drove His spirit to the cross. Jesus said in Luke 22:42, “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” Jesus lived in the will of the Father.

Christ revealed God’s will in His life. This is first found in Luke 2:49 when He said to His parents, “How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not [or didn’t you know?] that I must be about my Father’s business?” When Jesus was young, He wanted His parents to know there was a will beyond that of His own.

Christ already was coordinating His will with the Father’s at twelve years of age. I do not think a person can be too young to function and work in the will of God. He knew that the Father in heaven had a will greater, more magnificent, more

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wonderful than the will of man. Jesus chose that His will coordinate with the will of the Father.

Jesus knew that He had come to earth to perform the will of the Father. John 5:30 says, “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: my judgment is just; *because I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me*” (italics mine). That is about as strong a verse as you can find in the Bible. It shows that Christ had a will, and it could have been opposite of the plan of God. He was determined, however, to seek not His own will, but the will of the One who sent Him.

It is clear that the superior will in the universe is that of the Father. For us to do the will of God is the greatest achievement on the face of the earth. We must seek the will of God, we must find the will of God, and then we must coordinate it with our own will. However, we should *want* to do His will, and not have the attitude that leads us to say, “I do not want to do this, but I will do it anyway.” That is not what God wants at all.

The perfect will of God flows out of us spontaneously, like an artesian well flowing with living

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water. God desires that you have His ultimate will come joyfully out of your heart, even as it did with Christ.

Christ entered human history to teach mankind—you and me—how to perform God’s will. That is the reason He was born. Hebrews 10:7-10 says,

Then said I, Lo, *I come* (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) *to do thy will*, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, *I come to do thy will*, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (*italics mine*).

Jesus Lived by God’s Will

From His birth in Bethlehem, His life in Nazareth, and His travels throughout Israel doing good—bringing healing, love, and all kinds of blessing to those people—it is evident that He was exhibiting not mere human will, but a divine mission. John 10:10 says, “For I am come that

they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” He said in John 9:4, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.” Jesus had within Him, instilled deep within Him, the desire to perform only the will of God the Father.

It was the will of Christ to heal the sick. Matthew 8:1-4 says, “When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.”

Here was a man who sure misunderstood Jesus. He came up to Jesus and said, “Master, I know that you *could* heal me *if you will*.” He believed in Jesus’ power but not in His love. In reality he spoke in unbelief. But regardless, Jesus turned and said, “*I will*, be thou cleansed.” The human will was desire. The divine will poured forth its life.

Direction of Jesus’ Will

What functioned in directing the will in Jesus? First, I believe it’s His *love*. Christ came to reveal

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a divine attitude. God is love, so He came to reveal God. Will in the life of Jesus functioned through this spirit-life within Him. He willed to show *compassion*. Christ suffered with humankind; He hurt with humankind; He cared for humankind. This is compassion. So His will functioned out of compassion, out of love. Christ was the moving, walking, talking, and living will of God, and He demonstrated that will to others.

Christ demonstrated the will of the Father in labors. He slept at night on the ground—He had no bed. He walked many miles over rough terrain—He had no animal to ride. There were times He was hungry. There were times He was thirsty. He did not have to go through that; He willed to do it. That desire came from within.

His mind could have said, “Do it”; and His emotions could have said, “Do it”; yet the will could have stopped and balked. On the other hand, His will could have said, “Do it”; His emotions could have said, “Oh, it’s too hard”; His mind could have said, “Hey, this is too much work”; yet His will would win the battle because the will is the strongest force in the human person.

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Jesus demonstrated the great will of heaven, the will of God the Father, and He revealed it through His life, love, and labors. He revealed the will that is now on the inside of His people—the Church—rising up in strength, in blessing, and in health.

Forgiveness was one of His greatest demonstrations of the will of God. He willed to forgive people. It is divine to forgive. Christ harbored no grudges; Christ harbored no hates; Christ harbored no unforgiveness. When Judas kissed Him, which was the kiss of betrayal, Jesus said, “Friend, what can I do for you?” Jesus knew what Judas was about to do. He had already gone through the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. After Peter cursed and said that he had never heard of Jesus and did not know Him, Jesus said, “Call Peter back and I’ll forgive him.” He also would have forgiven Judas if he asked forgiveness, but Judas didn’t want to come.

Will is demonstrated when you are a baby. The wildest of tantrums is a demonstration of willpower. It is not mental power; it is not emotional power; it is willpower. We often talk about “having to break his will.” I do not think that “break” is a good word. You do not want to break the will—you want it to flow in God.

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Jesus came to earth to demonstrate that a human can walk the earth and be in the will of God at the same time. Christ's actions indeed expressed, "I will be the perfect example of living and working in the will of God."

4

The Will of the Holy Ghost

In John 14:16 Jesus said He would send *another Comforter*: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” That meant that Jesus recognized Himself as a comforter. The Holy Ghost also would be a comforter.

In John 14:26 Jesus said that He (the Holy Ghost) would teach us all things and bring to remembrance all things that Christ had said: “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

In John 16:13 Jesus said that the Holy Ghost would guide: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew

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you things to come.” That speaks of a person, not of an “it,” or an influence. So we are dealing with the will of the *person* of the Holy Ghost.

In John 3:8 the Lord Jesus said, “The wind [speaking of the Holy Spirit] bloweth where it listeth [or “where it ‘wills,’” meaning, the Holy Spirit blows where He wills], and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.” Here, Christ was instructing a man by the name of Nicodemus, who was very learned. Nicodemus came to Jesus to understand the way of salvation. In the exchange with this man, Jesus expressed that there was in fact a place in God where the Holy Ghost did what He wanted.

The Will of the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament

The first place in Scripture where we see activity of the Holy Ghost is in Genesis 1:2. It is remarkable to me that in the very first chapter of the Bible, in the second verse of the Bible, we already have an activity of the Holy Spirit. It says, “And the earth was without form, and

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void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

Here we have record of a volitional decision of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. He brought cosmos, beauty, and loveliness out of chaos. The earth was without form and void. God was involved in creating a masterpiece and the Holy Ghost moved in to help Him. The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. The dynamic will of the Holy Ghost challenged the condition, succeeded, and brought into fruition the masterpiece. This is the first record we have of the Holy Ghost functioning.

The Holy Ghost has worked since the beginning of time and will do so in eternity. But in these last days we are in the Dispensation of the Holy Ghost; you and I, therefore, should know more about the Holy Ghost than those who lived in previous dispensations.

Jesus said, “If I go away, I will send Him unto you.” The Holy Ghost is special to us and we should understand His will clearly. His will is the same as that of the Lord Jesus. The Holy Ghost is absolutely and completely, wonderfully

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and gloriously, submitted unto the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Genesis 6:3 says, “And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man” Here we see the Holy Ghost by His own will creating limits in which He would beg or persuade man to walk in the ways and commandments of Elohim, the mighty God. God said, “I want you to live right, I want you to live good, and I send My Holy Spirit to guide and to direct.” Volitionally, the Holy Spirit said, “I will not always beg, I will not always strive, I will not always urge men to serve God.” This goes along with what the apostle Paul says in Ephesians 4:30: “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” He can be grieved; both verses make this clear. Genesis 6:3 shows us that the Holy Ghost *by His will* limited His convicting action. Ephesians 4:30 is *an appeal to the human will* not to grieve the Holy Ghost.

The Bible is unlike any other book in the world. It’s the inerrant Word of our infallible Creator. It teaches us truth and should be the source of our study on will.

The Will of the Holy Ghost in the New Testament

Acts 5:1-3 says, “But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?”

The Holy Ghost willed capital punishment upon Ananias and Sapphira for lying to deity, for lying to the Most High God. He knows everything; they could not lie to Him. The incident brought great respect to God and to the church in Jerusalem.

I have witnessed the judgment of the Holy Ghost. I was conducting a meeting in a town in Arkansas. I especially urged one particular young man to give his heart to the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit tugged at his will. There were tears in his eyes, but he refused to do it. He said, “No, I will not do it.” He became very angry in church. Because his sister became a Christian he abused her. He led her out of the church roughly, saying,

The Will of the Holy Ghost

“Come out of this place; you do not need this kind of religion.”

A couple of days later he was plowing in a field when lightning came out of a clear sky and hit him and drove his body into the ground. They found his shoe thirty yards away and it was completely torn, as if someone had taken a knife and cut it to pieces. You cannot forsake God and get away with it, because the Holy Ghost has a ministry of bringing people *to* God.

The Holy Ghost wills to guide the Church. The Bible says that as the disciples were fasting and praying, “The Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them” (Acts 13:2).

The Holy Ghost volitionally endorsed the missionaries to go forth. It was His will for them to go; therefore, they were sent forth by the strength and the power and the guidance of the Holy Ghost. That is what God desires in His Church today; through His Spirit He wants to guide the Church. The Church in rebellion against the Holy Ghost can get into big trouble, with sorrow and heartache. He is a person who has a will, and that will is to be obeyed.

The Will: The Potent Force of the Universe

The Holy Ghost wills to anoint people with gifts. First Corinthians 12:11 says of the gifts, “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally *as he will*” (italics mine).

The will of the Holy Ghost is to carry out the desires of the Father; His will is whatever the Father says is to be done. His will is to carry out the words and desires of the Lord Jesus; His will is to enrich and anoint the Church, to come down upon the total Church. It is the will of the Holy Ghost to come down upon missions.

You say, “But can’t the Holy Ghost perform His will without me?” Not against your will. There are denominations that do not desire the Holy Ghost to work; they are afraid of the Holy Ghost. It is a sad situation to live in the dispensation of the Holy Ghost and yet be afraid for Him to operate, to function, to do the things that He has been sent to do. We all need to say, “Holy Ghost, my will is flowing with your will because your will flows with the Father. I am flowing with the Father through you.”

5

The Will of Angels

Did you know that not all angels have been perfectly obedient? Angels have volitional powers just like you do. Some angels have transgressed just like humans; they were able to do so because they have a will.

Angels Were Created with Will

In the Old Testament book of Judges, it says, “And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread . . .” (13:16). This is clear indication that the angel had a will. He could will *not* to do this or that.

Angels are created beings; they have no navel; they were not born of a woman. The Bible says, “For by him [Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible . . .” (Colossians 1:16).

The Will of Angels

Almighty God, in His select wisdom, created angels as servants and messengers. They are for Him and they possess willpower. They do not have to serve God. They can serve God or they can rebel, whichever they will.

Angels are super-intelligent creatures, beyond man. They have the knowledge of two worlds, the spirit world and the physical world. They are two-world creatures. Sometimes the wall of partition is broken down and humans can see angels. Angels can talk with God and they can talk with man. God designed angels and gave them superpowers of decision, to decide on special factors. He did this because He wants to merit their love.

Angels Will to Worship

A beautiful look into the angelic world is found in Isaiah 6:1-6:

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy,

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holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.

Here we find angels in worship before the throne, crying, “Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts.” They worshipped because they wanted to, because they liked to, because they enjoyed it. Isaiah saw them singing magnificently unto the Lord. They did this with their will—they willed to do it.

Angels Will to Protect

Psalms 34:7 says, “The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.” Here we find that an angel by his willpower protects good people, righteous people, holy people. Do you want to have angelic protection? We must serve the Lord. I could

relate stories of how angels have protected missionaries. Wicked men have come to destroy missionaries on the field and the next day would say, “We would like to see the army that was around your compound last night. We saw men ten feet tall walking all around your place and we were afraid to hurt you.” If God opened your spiritual eyes you might be amazed at what is there and thank God for His protecting power by His angels.

Angelic Will and the End of the Age

Matthew 13:41-43 says that angels will gather the things that are contrary to God and cast them into a furnace of fire:

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Revelation 14:6 says that an angel will go forth to preach the Gospel:

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And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

These verses reach into the future, and they too show that angels will to obey God.

Angelic Will and Prophecy

Here we find Gabriel, an angelic being sent by God, about to reveal unto Daniel future events:

Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. *At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee;* for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision (Dan. 9:21-23, italics mine).

The Will of Angels

Through his will, Gabriel obeyed the voice of the Lord by coming to Daniel.

Angelic Will and Humans

We also find that angels can be entertained by humans. My mother believed we entertained angels in our home. Hebrews 13:2 says, “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” Abraham was unaware that the visitors that came to his tent were angels. He thought they were ordinary people. He made a feast for them but later discovered that they had a message from God.

Angels have been, and are, very influential beings that function by will. They will to do what God commands.

6

The Will of Demons

Demons are intelligent beings and have wills. They do what they do very deliberately. Many times there is a battle of wills. This was true not only with the Lord Jesus in His battle of wills against the devil, but it also is true in our lives. There is a battle of wills when the devil says, “Do this,” and you say, “No.” Your mind might say, “I want to do this,” and your emotions respond, “Oh, that’s nice.” But when your will says, “No,” it is all finished. *Your will is the strongest part of your soulical being.* You must learn how to yield it to Christ. Your will, like your mind, must be renewed. If the will is to be what Jesus wants it to be, it must be born again, along with the rest of your soulical being.

Willpower and Demons

An amazing area of willpower in our universe is that of the devil and demons. They are evil

The Will of Demons

because of will. God did not make them that way. They got that way because they chose it. Until you know that there is a battle of wills between you and the devil, between you and the world, and between you and the flesh, you are in danger of losing every battle. But when you know about the battle of wills, you are well armed to be a winner.

Demons understand the positive and negative aspects of willpower. They know what it's like to follow God, to live for God, and to sing in the heavens. They also witnessed Lucifer's rebellion and took part in it. In Isaiah 14 Lucifer said, "I will" five times:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, *I will ascend* into heaven, *I will exalt* my throne above the stars of God. *I will sit* also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: *I will ascend* above the heights of the clouds; *I will be like* the most High (Is. 14:12-14, italics mine).

He lost his divine relationship by doing that. It was a choice that he made; it was an act of will.

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It is history's masterpiece of arrogance. Nowhere in the universe will you find arrogance equal to that. Here was a created being who, through his own will deep within, said, "I will be greater than the One who created me." But nothing in creation can be as great as the Creator. That is not possible. A wristwatch will never be as great as the man who made it, no matter how precise that watch is. Isaiah 14 reveals that Lucifer made five astounding statements of will. He was moving forth not in emotion or even in intellect. He was moving in willpower. You, too, are God's creation, and you will never be as great as He. He created you; He conceived you; He designed you; He made you. It is not intelligent to think that one day you will be bigger than God.

Demonic Will in Eden

The second great battle of wills took place in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:1-6 says,

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

The Will of Demons

And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Why did Adam willfully eat of the tree, knowing God's will? He desired to eat of the tree and made a volitional choice to do so; he willed to do it. He could have refused to accept the fruit that the woman offered, but he didn't. So he willfully decided to be like someone else when he could have been like God. We can see that in the first encounter of will on Planet Earth, Satan by his own will entrapped and caused man to leave the will of God and to serve him.

Demonic Will Today

How does the devil come against believers to hurt them today? In John 10:10 Jesus says, “The thief [that is the devil] cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy”

When the devil comes against you, he comes to steal from you. That is what he did to Eve and Adam in the Garden. *He stole from them their willpower and their desire to walk with God.*

Not only does the devil come to steal from you, he also comes to kill and to destroy you. The Bible says that he was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). He is a destroyer of life. However, the only way he can destroy you spiritually is by attacking your willpower. If he can break down your will, then you will be like Eve. His system has always been the same. It is a battle of wills.

You may not realize it, but you are engaged in a battle of wills every day. When it's time to go to church, for example, there is a confrontation of wills inside of you: “Will I go to church or will I stay home?” It is not a battle of your emotions. It is not a battle of your mind. It is a battle of wills. If you do not obey the divine and spiritual part of your will, you will be like Satan. The devil seeks to hurt and even destroy your will.

7

The Will of Humankind

God created Adam, the first person, the first human, the first earthling. God formed him from the dust of the earth, so when he dies he goes back to the dust.

Three Dimensional Man

God made man, at the time of creation, a three-dimensional personality. Neither psychology nor psychiatry realizes it yet; humanism will never understand it at all.

Everything in this universe initially perfect is indelibly stamped with a three. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the three function as one. Man is a spirit, soul, and body—the three function as one.

The will is one-third of the human soul, and the soul is one-third of the total human personality.

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Your soulical parts consist of your mind, your emotions, and your will, and by them you relate to other humans.

When God created man and placed him in Eden, He said, “There is one tree here that belongs to Me. The other trees and their fruit belong to you.” In every home it is the same. The father says, “This is mine.” Mama says, “This is mine. Son, that is yours.” Inevitably, the little boy wants Papa’s, Mama’s and still keep his own. This was the problem in the Garden of Eden. God said, “We are partners. I built the whole scheme of things. I’ll make you the president and you are in charge. There is one tree here, though, the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, that you are not to touch.” *That tree was to build character in Adam.* Adam had a choice: operate positively with his will and obey God, or operate negatively with his will and disobey Him.

First Corinthians 15:45 says, “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” This Scripture describes the difference between the Adam of the Garden of Eden and the last Adam, Jesus, who was born to be the Christ.

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You and I are naturally the seed of Adam. We are supernaturally the seed of Jesus Christ, the seed of God. The Bible says that when you believe upon the Lord Jesus you become a son of God (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1). You *immediately* become a son of God when you believe. You move into another realm and your total abilities—spirit, soul, and body—relate to God, to things spiritual. When your will is obedient to God, the emotional and mental areas of your life will fall in line, because the will has power to discipline.

But the will first must be regenerated. In Adam we become a living soul, and in Christ we become a quickened spirit (alive to God). So we are twice sons; we are sons of Adam naturally and we are sons of the Spirit supernaturally. As the sons of God, our wills have been cleansed, purified, and renewed.

The Bible is the solitary source of knowledge in which to draw truth about the mystery of the inner workings of the human person. I am sorry that philosophers do not know this. They go everywhere except to the source of truth to find out about man. Hebrews 4:12 says, “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the

dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Human Life Dominated by Will

The human will functions from the time of birth. Possibly you did not realize this, but doctors know it. When a woman is in labor the baby assists in delivery; he actually brings himself out. In childhood when a child says, “No, no, no,” he is exercising willpower, not physical power, and not emotional power.

At the time of spiritual conversion, when he’s born-again, man comes into a dramatic change in his will. He chooses to receive Christ as his Savior and becomes a new creature. His process of will is changed; it is different that it was before he was born-again.

Will is involved in your receiving the Holy Spirit. There are some people who have the will to be saved but do not have the will to go further in God; it ceases at salvation. But the Bible explicitly tells us in 1 John that there are three witnesses to God in the earth: the blood, the water and the Spirit (v. 5:8). Some people stop at the *blood*.

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Some people stop at *the blood and water*. Some get *all the way through to the Spirit*. When you apprehend all three, you inevitably will be that which God desires.

Not only is the will an important factor in receiving the Holy Spirit, but also in receiving and operating in the gifts and ministries of the Holy Spirit. Willpower is already there, and if you do not will to have them they will not function through you. *Will is a source of desire. It is a source of hope.*

The human will is a decision maker. In reality, a non-decision is also a decision. When your will refuses to function and make a decision, it is making a decision. An unconscious decision is a fruit of the will also. If you do things unconsciously, it is because your will has been disciplined to respond a certain way under certain circumstances and influences; therefore, an unconscious decision is still a fruit of the will.

It was Eve's will that caused her to fall. It was not Eve's body—her five senses. It was her will. When the tempter, Satan, said, "Listen, you will be great and you will be equal with God if you will eat this," her very own will deep within

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responded, “I will be as great as God. I will be like the Most High.” Lucifer (Satan) said the same thing, as recorded in Isaiah 14.

Will Is a Gift

The human will is a gift from God, and the greatest experience of human achievement is in performing *His* will. Further, *The human will is immortal*. It is something you retain after this life, whether you go to heaven or hell. If you go to heaven you will possess a will to serve God and to enjoy heaven forever. You still possess will if hell is your eternal home.

Sovereign Will

The human will is sovereign. God will not violate it. He created you and made you a responsible person. You cannot blame God for the actions of your will. You are the one in charge. You are the one who holds the wheel and does the driving. God will not stop your will. If He did, you would not be a human being anymore.

Satan cannot violate your will because he does not have the proper power to do so. God

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made the human will so strong that Satan must ask your permission before he can have it; you first must grant it to him.

Regarding your will and your guardian angel—you first determine your decisions and then your guardian angel can act for you. You first must stress your own willpower and move in a certain direction before your angel can act on your behalf. Angels are not permitted to control human will. Only *you* can control your will.

Demons seek to control your destiny by your will. In their attempt to control the human will or to weaken it, demons can make sin attractive and desirable. They try to break down willpower by saying, “This won’t hurt you; that won’t hurt you; this won’t take you to hell.” They seek to break down your will to serve the Lord Jesus. Demons use deceit and trickery against the human will to bring it under their subjection.

To be protected, the human will must live in the Word of God and in the worship of God. It must be humbled before the Lord. Then the human soul certainly will be victorious. To say, “Thy will be done” is a spiritual act and not an Adamic one. Adam actually put his will against God’s will.

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First Corinthians 15:22 says, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

Adam willfully *rebelled* against God, but the Lord Jesus Christ willfully *submitted* His will to God the Father. That is the difference between the two.

The Redeemed Will

In the new life of the second Adam, we see the stratagems of spiritual life and spiritual warfare. We are taught from the Bible about the Lord Jesus, and we are taught by the Holy Spirit. We learn how to battle successfully against the devil in the world of will. We also learn how to worship God in the world of will. There has been very little teaching on the will, and this is dangerous.

The unconverted will of a child who screams, kicks, etc., is willpower that is uncontrolled and undisciplined. The child is not using his mind. There is no pain in the child’s body, yet he wills to scream uncontrollably. His ego simply wants attention. The child must be taught to bring his will to God.

The converted person is just the opposite. The will and the total soulical parts of a person

undergo an amazing and miraculous change at conversion. The rebellion against God ceases.

Discerning Will

Possibly the supreme message of this hour is the comprehension of God's will, man's will, and the devil's will.

The devil wants to take us all to Armageddon and kill us.

Man really does not know what he wants to do. He flutters around like a butterfly. He mistakenly thinks he wants sensual accomplishments of all kinds to be pleased in his senses. That does not satisfy him. Man is an immortal creature and cannot be fully satisfied without loving, praising, and honoring God. Only by spirit can man know the reality of God's will. Most people have no idea of God's will. We say so quickly and flippantly, "What is God's will?" And we say the word "will" itself so quickly that we really do not even hear it, much less comprehend its significance. We need to say it a lot slower, W-I-L-L, because it is so important. It is impossible to have spiritual development and maturity without an understanding of the different functions of the human will.

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Sadly, *many Christians today live in the rebellious, soulical part of their will.*

Until a Christian can differentiate between God's will and his own, he most likely will live in the lower realm of his own will and not in the spiritual realm—the upper realm—of God's will. It's impossible to walk in God's will continually until we actually know His will. To the natural man it is a mystery. In Matthew 11:25 Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." You and I know truth that others do not know. We understand things about the human person that others do not understand. We recognize that man is not just clay and air, but possesses divine qualities; implanted within him by God are mysteries, such as the human mind, the human emotions, and the human will.

Doing God's Will

Ephesians 5:17 says, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, *but understanding what the will of the Lord is*" (italics mine). What does God will for your natural life here on earth? God has a

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plan for your life, one dominated by a will that is strong in Him, in His great power.

Ephesians 6:6 says, “Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, *doing the will of God from the heart*” (italics mine). Man can do as he pleases. God is not going to overwhelm him. If you do not will an action a certain way, it will never be that way. However, God is asking that your will be submitted to Him. We know it is the will of God for the gospel to be preached in all the world (Mark 16:15). If you wish to do the will of God, accept the challenge of the Great Commission. Your mind and emotions may not want to, but your will is the dominating factor. It is your will that can cause you to rise up and be the person that God wants you to be.

Man worships by his will. In Matthew 6:10 Jesus said that when you pray say, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” One day this will be fulfilled. The Lord Jesus shall reign for a thousand years upon earth and perform the will of God. The earth will function as God originally intended it. Christians will reign with Him and perform the will of God.

If you today will say, “God, I am interested

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in performing your will in my life, in my family, in my church, and in my country,” it will be revealed *to* you and accomplished *through* you.

The Will: The Potent Force of the Universe
Prayer of Salvation

If Jesus should come today, would you be ready? If you say the following prayer from the depths of your heart and surrender to Him as the Lord of your life, He will come in instantly and forgive you of all your sins. As you trust Him, you will be filled with hope and peace that only Jesus can offer.

If you are ready to make this commitment, please pray the following out loud:

Dear Lord Jesus, I am a sinner. I believe that you died and rose from the dead to save me from my sins. I want to be with you in heaven forever. Please forgive me of all my sins that I have committed. I here and now open my heart to You and ask You to come into my heart as Lord of my life and to be my personal Savior. Baptize me in your Spirit. Amen.

Now that you have given your life to Christ, it is important to pray and read the Bible on a daily basis. It also is important to attend a Bible-believing church regularly. Doing these things will help you to walk in continual fellowship with the Lord.

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Dr. Lester Sumrall

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The voice of Dr. Lester Sumrall remains prominent in the Christian world today. More than 65 years of ministry in over 100 nations made Dr. Sumrall a respected source of wisdom and understanding. He was an author, teacher, missionary, evangelist, and the pastor and founder of Christian Center Church in South Bend, Indiana.

Throughout his lifetime, Dr. Sumrall worked tirelessly to fulfill the Great Commission by carrying the Gospel to the ends of the earth. In 1957 he founded LeSEA, a multi-faceted global outreach. Today, with the help of our faithful partners and friends, the ministry continues to blanket the world through television, satellite, FM and shortwave radio, LeSEA Publications, and LeSEA Global Feed the Hungry®.

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