

Ephesians 1:8-10 (Stanley Bruce Anstey) 173214

How To Know The Will Of God For Your Life (Part 1): The Crossroads - The Place of Decision, Will of God, The (1:8-10)

Let's turn to a couple of Scriptures for some prerequisites having to do with the will of God. Ephesians 5:15-17 says, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." We learn from this passage one great point to do with God's will; and that is, He wants us know it! We should never entertain the idea that God is not really interested in showing us His will. These verses plainly tell us that He is on our side, and He wants us to know His will. Some of you might say, "How could God be interested in me as an individual, when there are over 6 billion people in the world?" Friends, we are here to tell you that God is interested in you! He is an infinite Person Who can keep track of every single person's life in this world. And He loves each of them with a special love! The God that we are presenting to you tonight is a very personal and practical God. The Lord cares about you, and is interested in all the details of your life. He doesn't want you to make a lot of mistakes so that your life turns out to be a failure filled with sorrow and heartbreak. He wants to make the decisions in your life for you, so that your life will be a blessing, and not a failure. The One Who knows all things, Who abounds in all power and wisdom, Who guides the planets and stars in perfect order, can easily guide the life of a Christian through this world! He knows what is the best for you; and if you'll put your life in His hand, you'll prove by experience the blessedness of His will. And you won't be sorry that you did! We have never met a Christian that has put his or her life at the Lord's disposal—to be used for His service—say at the end of their life that they wished they hadn't done it! On the other hand, those who will not regard the principles of God's guidance, and choose their own way through life, usually make a mess out of it. In the end they're filled with regret.

So we want to make this point perfectly clear at the outset—that the Lord is interested in showing us His will for our lives. You might say, "Well, if that's true, why doesn't He come out and tell me plainly then?" Well, He does want to; and we are going to show you plainly from the Scriptures what His will is for you. One of the reasons why He doesn't just "come out" so to speak, and tell you what the details of His will are in so many words, is that He wants us to learn to walk by faith. He wants us to learn to trust Him. This is something that must be developed in our spiritual lives, and is essential to our spiritual growth. At any rate, let's get a hold of this one great fact—that He wants us to know His will!

Let's turn now to 1 Peter 4:1-3, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries." Here is another great point about the will of God. To add to the fact that He wants us to know His will, He also wants us to live the rest of our time doing His will!

These verses we have read in 1 Peter tell us that our lives are really divided into two parts. It is true of all of us, whether we are old, or whether we are young. The two parts are "the time past," and "the rest of his [or our] time." We can't do anything about the time past; that may have been lived to please self—as it says here— "in the flesh to the lusts of men." But we can do something about the rest of our time. And that's what we want to talk about here tonight. He doesn't want us to waste our lives living for the flesh. Those who live for the flesh are unhappy and unsatisfied with life. They feel empty and unfulfilled, if they'd only admit it. God wants us to do His will, and prove the blessedness of it.

Let's look at one more introductory passage. Turn to Psalm 40:7-8, "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." The point I want to lift out of this verse is that it is a delight to do the will of God! We want to get this across to you at the very beginning of our study on the will of God—that walking in the path of God's will is truly a happy thing! I mention this because the devil will try to tell you that giving your life to the will of God will be a dry and boring thing, and you'll regret it later. Friends, this verse tells us that there is no truth to that! It's a lie from the devil! Those who have given their lives to the will of God are the truly happy and fulfilled people in this world.

So from these three introductory Scriptures we learn that:

1. God wants us to know His will.
2. God wants us to do His will.
3. God wants us to experience the joy of walking in His will.

Now you might be saying, "Well, what is God's will anyway?" For that I would turn you to Ephesians 1:8-10. "Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence [intelligence]; having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." This is the will of God! God has ordained a day (we call it the Millennium) in which He is going to publicly exalt His Son in two spheres: in heaven, and on earth. And in that day, the Lord Jesus Christ is going to have a complement at His side—the church, His bride—a specially formed vessel of testimony, through which God will display or transmit Christ's glory before the world! Simply put, GOD'S WILL IS TO GLORIFY HIS SON!

What God is doing today is calling persons out of both the Jews and the Gentiles by the gospel; they are the material that will compose that vessel of testimony—the body and bride of Christ. When we get saved we become part of that specially fashioned vessel that will ultimately

be used to display Christ's glory. That's really what He saved us for—to glorify Christ! However, He doesn't want to wait for that coming day of display to have us to glorify Christ; he wants us to glorify Him now while we are here in this world. And if we live our lives in the will of God we will glorify Christ!

Many Christians take up the subject of the will of God from the wrong end. They look into the Scriptures to find out what God has to say about them—they look to see their blessings, their privileges, and how things pertain to their lives, etc. Certainly there is surely much in the Word that speaks to that end, but I'm afraid that that perspective is a little selfish and immature. The higher and more blessed way is to look into the Word of God to see what God's will is concerning His Son. We want to look for Christ in the Word, and see what glorifies Him; and then be found doing those things! As mentioned, God wants His Son to be glorified in this world now through the lives of those who comprise His body! All of the details in our lives are to be subservient to that objective! They are but components in the big picture of glorifying His Son. This is the key to understanding the will of God in our lives!

Everything to do with God's will in our lives ought to ultimately point to the exaltation and glorification of His Son. In every decision that we make we want to factor in that great objective of God. Its practical application in our lives will filter right down to the kind of car we're going to buy, where we're going to live, who we will marry, etc. Those things, I say, are only components to the ultimate objective of God's will to glorify His Son. If we get a hold of this great point, we will be greatly helped in discerning God's will for our lives.

So we've had before us the "crossroads"—the place of decision. We hope that you will make a decision here tonight to let the Lord guide your life, so that you'll have the positive effects of His blessing in your life. The Christian life is really pretty simple—just do the will of God! The Lord has a plan for every one of our lives; and if we live in it, we will prove that "His way is perfect" (Ps. 18:30). That plan will be slightly different for each of us; because what He has for you to do will be something slightly different from the next person, but the basic elements of God's will are the same for all of our lives. I want to look at those basic things now; and then tomorrow night look at some of the specific ways in which He leads us.

Now let's look at some Scriptures having to do with the basics of the will of God for our lives, because the Word of God tells us very clearly what those things are.

1) To Believe on Him

Let's turn to John 6:38-40, "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise Him up at the last day." We have here the first great thing to do with God's will. As far as knowing what the will of God is for our lives, this is where it begins. Very simply, it is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. God has made it very plain; He wants you to believe on His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And how wonderful that the Lord Jesus says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out!" Every person that has heard the gospel call, and has responded by coming to the Lord Jesus, has never been turned away! Regardless of what kind of person they are, or what kind of sins they have been engaged with, or what kind of a life they have lived—none have been turned away. He has said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The Lord Jesus is inviting every person to come to Him in faith, and enter into a relationship with Himself, and thus begin a path through this world of doing the will of God.

This, friends, is where knowing and doing the will of God begins—in having a relationship with the Lord Jesus. May I ask, "Do you know the Lord Jesus as your Saviour? Has there ever been a personal transaction of faith with Him in your life? Have you ever asked Him to wash your sins away, and save you?" If you have never been to Him for salvation, you cannot expect to have the will of God in your life—this must come first! What we have to say through the rest of this meeting will have very little significance to you, if you're not saved—except that you might witness what you are missing in your life. There is no better time than right now to heed the Lord's call, and come to Him, and be saved. It is the will of God that you do this. So if you want to know what the will of God is for your life, it is firstly, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ!

2) To Thank Him

Let's turn to 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Here we have a second thing that would indicate the will of God for our lives—it is to give thanks in everything. What a privilege that is! And one of the first places where you can begin giving thanks to Him is for dying for you on the cross. Have you ever thanked the Lord Jesus for taking your place on the cross and suffering for your sins, and dying for you? That's a wonderful place to begin! It's something we should do every day of our lives! It's the will of God.

A very special way to thank Him is at the Lord's Supper—the breaking of bread. The object there, of course, is to remember Him in His death, but we cannot think of His love in giving Himself for us in death without having our hearts lifted up in praise and thanksgiving. What a wonderful privilege that is—to respond to His loving request to remember Him in His death, and to give thanks in that most blessed way. Have you answered that request of His to remember Him in that way? It's His will that you do (Lk. 22:19).

But God doesn't want us to thank Him only for what He did on the cross to save us. This verse says, "In everything give thanks"—that means in all the details of our lives, even those things that we may not understand. God is working toward a divine end in our lives, and whatever He allows to come to pass is according to His will, and He wants us to thank Him for it. For "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

There are many perplexing things that happen in our lives that we have a hard time understanding why the Lord would allow them. But we need to have confidence to trust Him for whatever He allows, and to thank Him. Just remember that Scripture in John 13:7 that says, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." He knows the very best; and whatever He has allowed, it must be for our good in the end. That verse that I quoted in Romans 8, doesn't say that all things are good; it says, "All things work together for good." That means that He could use literally anything to work to that end. In fact, He may even use bad things—things that are unpleasant—tragedies, sorrows,

etc. To get a broken leg certainly isn't good, but it can "work together for good" in your life if you accept it from His hand of love. If we are exercised about it, it will "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Heb. 12:11). When we see that it is the will of God that has allowed it for our good and formation of our character, and that He has a blessing for us in it, we can give thanks to Him for it.

3) To Give Yourself to the Lord

Let's turn to 2 Corinthians 8:4-5. "Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." Here we have a third thing that is plainly the will of God for our lives—it is to give ourselves to the Lord! Paul was extolling the graces of the Macedonian saints because they had given themselves to the Lord. He was telling the Corinthians that they had unreservedly given themselves to the Lord; and one of the practical results of such devotion was that they had given a monetary gift to the service of the gospel.

So if you want to know what God's will is for your life, it is to give yourself to the Lord Jesus and His service. This is what is called dedication. It reminds us of Proverbs 23:26, which says, "My son, give Me thine heart." When we first come to the Lord and get saved, and have our sins forgiven, there is an initial joy that is wonderful. But to have sustained joy and happiness in our Christian life necessitates the relinquishing of the captaincy of our wills and the surrender of our lives to the Lord. Dedication should happen at the time of salvation, but often there is a time gap in Christian's lives before they surrender their lives to the Lord. You may say, "I want to know God's will for my life." Well, that is God's will for your life! Those Christians who have given themselves to the Lord are the happy and fruitful Christians!

Now this surrender would involve giving our time, our energies, our money—whatever we have, we turn it over to the Lord and say, "Lord it's no longer mine; I'm only holding it for Thee as a steward! I want to do Thy will in my life by giving myself and all that I have to Thee, to be used for Thy glory."

One time after an evangelical meeting many years ago where Mr. Moody had been preaching, he was asked if he knew of any who were converted by the preaching. He said, "Yes, two and a half." And the person who asked him said, "By this, Mr. Moody, I suppose you mean that there were two adults and one child." He said, "No, two children and one adult!" The reason why he called the adult a half, was that adults have lived half their life already. Have you ever thought about that? Middle-aged adults have half their life gone already! The best or most they can give is the latter half—the only part they have left. But what about you, dear young person? You can give all your life to the Lord, if you do it now when you're young!

Now you might say, "I don't understand what the Lord would want with my life! I'm just an average Christian. I don't have any special gift. I'm even afraid to pray in the prayer meeting!" Dear young person, I would say to you, don't worry about that. What God wants you to do is to give your life to the Lord Jesus; He'll direct it as He sees fit, and you'll see what He can do with it—you'll be surprised! Every one of us have been given a gift, and grace to fill our place in the body of Christ. Your gift will manifest itself as you devote yourself to the Lord. In time it will become evident. He will lead you, and make your life a blessing. But it all begins with you giving yourself to the Lord.

You know, when we speak of surrendering our lives to the Lord, we can hardly speak of it without referring to the cross. The motivation for turning our lives over to the Lord comes from the love and grace that He showed there. It is in the shadow of the cross that we make decisions to surrender our lives to Him. If the significance of the cross came home to our souls—realizing what the Lord Jesus has done for us, we would have no problem surrendering our lives to Him. We'd have no problem trusting Him when we see love like that! I think that it is five times in the New Testament that it says, "He gave Himself" for us. Now that should move us to give ourselves to Him!

May that be the prayer of every one of us here tonight—that we ask the Lord to do whatever it takes to make our life molded to His will! Dean was talking about those who are "one-mile Christians" (Matt. 5:41). Then he spoke about those who are "two-mile Christians"—those who go further than what they are asked. Afterward, Dave said to me, "What about those who are half-mile Christians—who only go halfway?" I thought about it—yeah, I know about that! And I suspect I'm not alone! Tonight, God would have us to be out and out Christians; and that's where the happiness and fulfilment comes in the path.

4) To Walk in Holiness

Let's turn to 1 Thessalonians 4, "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, Who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit." Here we have another part of the will of God for our lives—that we would walk in holiness. He wants you to live a life of practical holiness. The sins that He is talking about here are immorality—fornication, and in verse 6, I believe he alludes to adultery. These are sins that are everywhere in this world, and God does not want His people to be involved in that sort of thing. He wants us to have a sanctified life—practical sanctification. That is, perfecting holiness as we walk in the path to glory.

You may say, "Well I've never done that kind of a sin." However, it says in verse 5, "Not in the lust of concupiscence," which is lustful passionate desire. You may not have gone into the act of immorality, and we thank God for it, but what about the lust that is behind it? There are many that have the lust, but just lack the opportunity for the act. He shows here that these things ought not to be in the life of the Christian. He would have us to know how to possess our vessel in sanctification and honour. And that means that we not only abstain from the act, but also the lust that goes on in the heart!

In verses 6 to 8 he gives the reason why these things absolutely must be avoided. There is such a thing as the government of the Father. He judges His people by bringing discipline into their lives, if need be, so that they would be taught to not persist in a course of sin. The governmental judgment of our Father is something we should fear in our lives (1 Pet. 1:17). We need to remember that every such act of discipline He allows in our lives comes from a heart of love that cares for us so much that He will not let us go our own way. He also speaks of

the fact that we, as Christians, have a divine Guest—the Holy Spirit—dwelling within us. Our bodies are “the temple of the Holy Ghost” (1 Cor. 6:19), and, therefore, must be held in practical holiness. If we are careless as to our walk and ways, we will grieve the Holy Spirit. We will miss the working of the Spirit of God in our life for our blessing. His work rather, will be to occupy us with our willful course, to bring us to a judgment of it.

Now practical sanctification applies to every aspect of Christian living—not just to great sins. It is God’s will that we live a sanctified Christian life. If we are going to have power with those to whom we would witness to, we need to have a life that backs it up! Gideon’s men had two things in their hands; one was a trumpet, and the other was a lamp. It is a type of the child of God’s two-fold testimony—the testimony we speak, and the testimony we live. The trumpet answers to the testimony we speak, and the lamp speaks of the testimony we live. There has to be a consistent balance between the two. The lamp doesn’t make any noise, but it produces light. Our lives should be a bright and shining light. It was Augustine that said, “Preach Christ always—if necessary use words!”

So we have a two-fold testimony, but we can spoil it by getting into sin. Let us then be exercised about having a life of practical holiness so as to bring glory to God—it is His will for our lives.

5) To Come to the Knowledge of the Truth

Let’s turn to another passage, 1 Timothy 2:3-4. “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” Here we have another thing that is the will of God for our lives—He would have us to not only be saved, but also to come to the knowledge of the truth. He would have us to learn the truth! How important this is! If we don’t we will be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine that comes along (Eph. 4:13). The enemy of our souls could easily take us off into some line of things where we could be taken off track. Furthermore, we cannot be of much use to the Lord to stand for the truth—to defend the faith, if we don’t know it ourselves!

The body of Christian knowledge that has been given to us needs to be understood and practiced. To learn the truth takes time and diligence. We must apply ourselves. We learn from Proverbs 22:17-21 That we have to apply our hearts unto wisdom and the learning of the Word of God.

Jude tells us that we are to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” Notice, the faith (the body of Christian knowledge) has been delivered to the saints. The saints of God are the custodians of the truth, not the apostles. God did not deliver the truth to the apostles to keep; He delivered it through the apostles, but to the saints. The point I’m making here is that God wants every one of us to have the truth. We mustn’t have the idea that learning the truth is only for those that minister the Word publicly—for the brothers that teach in the meetings. No, the truth is for all the saints to have and enjoy! That means that we all need to diligently search the Scriptures (Acts 17:11-12).

You know, there are many misconceptions regarding learning the truth—some of them, I suspect, are just excuses for laziness. There are some that will tell you that you don’t need to be concerned about studying the Scriptures; that coming to the meetings is enough—you’ll absorb the truth by just being there—sort of by osmosis. However, I know people that have been going to the meetings for years and years, and they still know very little of the truth that was once delivered to the saints. It’s possible to be like the young man who, regarding the meetings, said that he was “present in body, but absent in mind!” He was there, but his mind was in the ozone! And I suspect that he is not the only person that has ever been like that. Coming to the meetings is not enough; we have to apply ourselves in the things of God. We shouldn’t look at it as work; it’s a privilege! How wonderful learning the Scriptures is! “How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” (Ps. 119:103)

Another misconception some have about learning the truth is that it’s really only attainable to a select few that have a “gift” for it. You might be thinking that, and saying, “Some of these brothers here have a gift for it, but I don’t; therefore, there’s no sense in me trying to apply myself to that kind of a thing.” Let me tell you, there’s no truth to that! There is no such thing as a gift for learning the Word of God. Gift is for giving out what God has given to you. It will come out of you in a little different way than the next person, because we all have different gifts. All that’s needed for learning the truth is diligence and obedience. And that’s something that is within the reach of every one of us!

I’ve heard of another excuse someone made—and it really makes me sick. This person said, “Since the truth won’t keep you, I don’t concern myself too much with it. And those that do seem to make a mess of raising their families anyway!” How sad that is! It excuses laziness. Furthermore, it’s simply not true. That kind of thinking is a product of an expression among us that is deficient in meaning, and I’ll tell you what it is— “The truth won’t keep you.” Have you ever heard that? I’m sure you have. I’ve never found it in any of the old ministry books. The older brethren used to teach, “The truth alone will not keep you!” But somewhere over the last number of years we have lost a little of that truth, and have reduced the statement to, “The truth won’t keep you.” Unfortunately, the present generation hears that and says, “What’s the point of having the truth anyway? It won’t keep me!” The result is that they don’t see any need to apply themselves in learning it. Really, the point is that the truth alone won’t keep us, because communion must be coupled with it. We actually have a number of Scriptures that tell us that the truth will keep us, if we hold it in communion. Psalm 40:11 Says, “Let Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth continually preserve me.” The Word of God can preserve you in the path by giving you principles that will guide your feet. We will be preserved in the path if we practice those things in communion with the Lord. Psalm 17:4 says, “By the Word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.”

6) To Obey Every Ordinance of Man

Now let’s turn to 1 Peter 2:13-15, “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.” Here again we have the will of God for our lives. And what is it? It is to submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake! This could be any ordinance that constitutes the laws of the land. It could be paying our taxes, keeping within the speed limit, whatever it may be—God would have us to keep every ordinance of man. It’s His will. So if you want to do God’s will—don’t go over the speed limit! And I’m not talking about when you accidentally float over the limit, I mean when there is an intentional disregard of that ordinance. My uncle used to say, “When you notice that you’ve floated over the limit,

what do you do? Do you just keep driving at that speed? Or do you bring it down?" You know, it's been said, and it's probably true, that the last member to get sanctified is the right foot!

I knew of a brother that was coming home from meeting one time, and the police pulled him over for speeding. When the cop looked at him, and noticed that he had a suit on, he asked him where he had been—because people don't usually dress like that on Sundays. The brother told him that he had been at a Bible meeting—actually he had just come from the breaking of bread. So the cop said to him, "Well, you haven't learned anything, have you?" Even the world knows that we, as Christians, ought to abide by the law. It's the will of God.

7) To Serve Him

Now one last passage before we close—Acts 13:36, "David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption." The point here is that David served his own generation by the will of God. In this passage we have another thing that tells us what the will of God is for our lives—to serve the Lord! When we surrender our lives to Him, it is in view of Him using our lives as He sees fit. And the Lord has something for every one of us to do. It is a happy service. He said, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matt. 11:30).

Some may have the idea that serving the Lord is going away to some far country to live in a hut among snakes and spiders. If you have some aversion to that sort of thing, you may be inclined to not want to surrender your life to the Lord for fear that He'll send you there. But I have something to tell you, friends; missionary work is not the only service the Lord has for His people to do. The call to service that many of you young sisters here may have will be to get married and bear children—to raise godly men and women of the next generation that will carry the torch of the Christian testimony. And to have your home at the disposal of the Lord so that He may use it to strengthen the fellowship of the saints in that local assembly where you'll be is a service indeed! What an important service that is! It's households that support the testimony, more or less. For you young brothers here, it will be to hold down the responsibilities in the local assembly, so that the testimony of the Lord as to the truth of gathering would continue in your community. God wants you to be a stalwart in the assembly. That's a service for the Lord. So you can see that service for the Lord is not all traveling hither and yonder, though that's a wonderful and needed aspect of service.

Now it says here that David "served his own generation." There is a work that you can do better than I can; and that is to reach your own generation with the truth. Mr. Hayhoe used to say that often. Those of your age group can often make more of an impact on one another than those of us who are older. The Lord wants you in His service. He has much for you to do toward your generation. Now you might say, "I don't think I could do it! I couldn't preach." Remember, not all service is preaching. But God may want you to preach; and you need to be willing to let Him use you in that way. Your gift will be developed by reason of use. So exercise it every chance you can.

As far as preaching is concerned—this may seem a little odd, but the brothers here will be able to identify with this—a thing that was very encouraging for me was what happened while brother Albert Hayhoe was preaching. I dare say that He was the most eloquent man that was among us in those days—he probably could have made a lot of money in preaching if he had sought it, by going into those circles in Christendom where one can make a name for himself. We are thankful that he didn't. Anyway, one time I heard Him preaching at a conference, and he said, "Now I want to quote you a verse of Scripture that is very dear to my heart—this is the very verse that I got saved by, and have long committed it to memory; it's John 5:24. He began, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him...'" then he stumbled and lost his train of thought, and couldn't finish quoting the verse! Finally, he said, "Well let's turn to it." He was the most eloquent man I knew, and he couldn't finish quoting his favourite verse! Now, strange as it may seem, I got encouragement from that! I thought how good that is to hear! If he can falter in speaking, so can I. I won't feel so bad or self-conscious if I mess up a bit. Sometimes we think that good preaching is saying everything "word perfect," but good and powerful preaching is preaching that the Spirit of God identifies with! And what Albert's father used to say is surely true, "What comes from the heart goes to the heart!" That's far more important in preaching.

Now to summarize what we have had as the will of God for our lives, it is:

1. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To be thankful for all that He has done for us.
3. To give ourselves to Him.
4. To walk in holiness.
5. To come to the knowledge of the truth.
6. To obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.
7. To serve the Lord in His vineyard.

After looking at these verses, none of us can really say that we don't know what the will of God is for our life. His Word has laid it out pretty plainly, and it's really "in our court" now to do the will of God, and prove the blessing of it. May God give us the grace to do it.

B. Anstey(Adapted)

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