

Satan's Eden No. 256
The Sovereignty of our Will
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Let's bow our heads in prayer.

Gracious Father, we're so privileged to be here today, Lord, and I don't understand why half the people aren't here, there must be an accident on the road today. And Lord, we know that we have some that are sick in the hospital and some that are sick outside of the hospital. But Father, we just pray for people that truly, well, they know what the scripture says about it. So, Lord, we just commit the service. Actually, it will bring some light upon it. In Jesus Name we pray. Amen. You may be seated.

So this morning we're going to talk about **The Sovereignty of our Will**. Now, a lot of people, a lot of Baptists especially, think that your choice, I chose Jesus, that's the most important thing. And they don't realize that Jesus said, *you never chose Me, I chose you*. And so much for our will.

Philippians 2:13. *"It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."* So it's not about your good pleasure, it's about His good pleasure. And *it's God working in you, to will you, to do His good pleasure*.

Now, from **Who is This Melchisedec pp. 46**, Brother Branham said, *Now, in the beginning God dwelled alone with His attributes as I spoke of this morning. That's His thoughts. There was nothing, just God alone. But He had thoughts.*

Just like a great architect can set down in his mind, and draw out what he thinks it's, he's going to build, create.

Now, he cannot create; he can take something that's been created and make it in a different form, 'cause God's the only One who can create. But he gets in his mind what he's going to do, and that's his thoughts; that's his desires.

Now, it's a thought, and then he speaks it, and it's a word then. A thought, when it's expressed, it's a word. A thought expressed is a word. But it has to be a thought first. So, it's God's attributes; then it becomes a thought, then a word.

48 *Notice, those who have tonight Eternal Life, was with Him and in Him, in His thinking, before there ever was an Angel, star, Cherubim, or anything else. That's eternal.*

So you all were there in His mind. There's nothing you can do about it. You were in His mind. *And **if you have Eternal Life, you always was.***

See, the world's idea of getting Eternal Life is, well, I chose Jesus, therefore I'm entitled to Eternal Life. That's not the way it works. God chose you before the foundations of the world. That's why you have Eternal Life. *And **if you have Eternal Life, you always was.***

Brother Branham is the only person to say that, or at least the first person to say that in ages, in fact, except for Paul. I'm just sorry, but that thought escaped the entire Christendom for 2,000 years. All right, but it's brought to us by a prophet.

not your being here, but the shape and form that the infinite God... And if He isn't infinite, He isn't God. God has to be infinite. We're finite; He's infinite.

*And He was omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. If He isn't, then He can't be God: knows all things, all places because of His omnipresence. Omniscient makes Him omnipresent. **He is a being; He's not like the wind. He is a being.***

Now, just taking a minute of silence and go in your mind and just think about: God was always, never was there a time when God was not as Elohim, the self-existing one. Not only was God or Elohim always, but He had a shape, He had a form, He was a person, He had a Life.

That blows your mind because you're finite. But when you begin to realize you were part of Him, that'll blow your mind even more, when you realize that you always were in His thinking, and it was only in a specific time that you were to materialize, but you were already there. Soul and spirit were already there in God, in His mind. You are part of His DNA. That should blow your mind because you're going...

That's why you don't have to worry about your future. God has it all under control. He knows where you're going, where your destiny is in the Millennium, what you're going to do in the Millennium, what you're going to do in the New Earth. He's got it all under control.

And all things work together for the good of those who are the called and according to his purpose.

He dwells in a house, but being omniscient, knowing all things, makes Him omnipresent, because He knows everything that's going on.

Like I said before, if I sat on the top pinnacle of the church and Justin was on this side,

Michael's on this side, and Nathan on this side, and Joshua on this side, and I could look at you brothers and Brother Alphonse and Brother Christian were teamed up, and I could look down. And I'm in your presence because I'm in your sight. That's how we view presence. And on the other side of the building, I'm in their presence because I'm in their sight. But they are not in each other's presence. So they can be all around the world. But God is in a dimension that's much higher. And He can look down. He sees you all.

Can you imagine that? God who created the sun, which is many times bigger than this earth. And God, who created that big star, I can't remember. Something like Canis Majoris, which is 155,000 times larger than the Earth. It makes this sun look like a golf ball. It's huge, 1,420 times the size of the sun. And yet God created it all, and it all was in God's mind.

There can't be a flea bat its eyes but what He knowed it. And He knowed it before there was a world, how many times it'd bat its eyes and how much tallow it had in it, before there ever was a world.

God knew every breath you would take, every hair on your head. And He knew how many heartbeats you would have in this life. He knew it. So you think you can get away with anything? "Well, God won't see me. I'll turn the lights off." That is really stupid. You're not very smart if you think that. I'm sorry for saying the word "stupid", but you are stupid. Well, maybe ignorant at the very best.

That is infinite. We can't comprehend it in our minds, but that's God, infinite. That's God. He's infinite.

50 And remember, you, your eyes, your statue, whatever you was, you were in His thinking at the beginning. And the only thing that you are is the expression, Word, after He thought it, He spoke it, and here you are.

Just like the Son of God. "***God said, let there be Light, and there was Light.***" And now the Logos came out of God, and it formed a Light which was the Son of God in His theophany.

If it isn't, if you wasn't in His thinking, there's no way at all for you ever to be there, for He's the One that gives Eternal Life. You remember how we read the Scriptures, "Not him that willeth, or him that runneth, but (simply) God..."

And that His predestination might stand true, He could choose before anytime who... God's sovereign in His choosing, did you know that? God's sovereign.

Who was back yonder to tell Him a better way to make the world? Who would dare to tell Him He was running His business wrong? Even the very Word Itself, very sovereign...

Even **the revelation is sovereign. He reveals to whom He will reveal.** The very **revelation itself is sovereign in God.** That's how people pound at things, and jump at things, and hit at things, and not knowing what they're doing. **God is sovereign in His works.**

Now, this morning, I would like to speak on God's Sovereignty and the Human Will, "your will", which is not sovereign.

I want you young people to really focus on what I am about to tell you. I want you to focus on one thing this morning, and that is this: Whether you are born of black parents or white parents or both, your own will (your own desires) will take you down the path you will go.

Remember this day, that I warned you: You can choose the culture of your parents, whether they are white or black, or the culture of your friends, and even your own will, is going to take you down that path that you choose.

But if you have a parent Who happens to be God, (and there is no physical way you can know this). You can't tell by the color of your skin. You can't tell by the amount of hair on your head, even if you're living a Christian life or not. You can't tell. You don't know. Paul said, I have run a good race, but I hope that I finish. So either God is your Father or the devil is your father.

There are only two types of children in this world. They are the children of Light and the children of darkness. If you prefer darkness, you're not God's seed. I'm sorry, you're not of God's seed. All right.

But God, your Father, has already decided for you which way you will go, **if you're His child.** If you're not a child, you're left to yourself. You can say, "Well, good, my parents did this, or my parents or my grandparents did this." Listen, if you're left to yourself, you're going to make the wrong decision. Because *there is a way which seemeth right to man. But the way thereof, is a way of death.* Period. I'm talking to you children, all right? So God has already decided for you which way you will go. And it is the best way possible because:

Romans 8:23 All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called (elect) according to his purpose. That's wonderful.

So, either through your own will, you can yield yourself to live like your white parents or black parents, but if you are a child of God, **you will struggle all your life** with that decision. Your life will be filled with ups and downs.

Brother Branham drew a chart, and he showed. It was like a maze. And he showed people going up and down and down, up and down. And he says they finally make it, but their life is miserable. Then he says, a child of God that recognizes he's a child of God, as soon as he recognizes, he goes outside that maze, and just goes up, and they both finish at the same place. But one's life is miserable, and one's life is beautiful. So either through your own will, you can yield yourself to live like your white parents or black parents if you're a child of God. But you will struggle.

But the sooner you recognize that God is your real parent, (He's your Father) if you are His Elect, (and you will be better off believing that you are elect, even if you're not elect, than to not believe), because then you will yield to God Life. But when you are born again, you have heard from your theophany. And you know.

In other words, if you live the right kind of life. I'm not talking about works now, but every man will be rewarded for what he did in his body. So you come up at the White Throne, and you'll be given Life because you've lived like you're a Christian. So whether you are a Christian or whether you're not a Christian, whether you're a son of God, whether you're just a human being, okay? But if you live your life to please your Father, it shows what seed you really are. That's what I'm saying. You can live like the devil, and you're going to hell. God will guarantee it. Or you can live for God and be saved.

I mean: if you think you are God's seed and act like it, then you will live a very good godly life, and even if you do not believe you are, but you live like it anyway, you will come up at the second resurrection and be given a chance to receive eternal life, because you lived like a son or daughter of God and **"all things will work together for your good."**

And Jesus said, **"Every man will be rewarded for things he did in while he was living in this flesh."**

Don't think that you're going to get away with things and hide behind darkness or behind, "well, these are my friends or whatever." It doesn't cut it with God. Why do you think people go to bars? Is it because they all have dim lights? Because they drink, they sin in the dark, they think they're getting away with it. "Well, hopefully this is dark. But you know what? Nobody will see me."

Every place has cameras today anyway. And they think it is dark, the cameras don't work.

But they now have night vision cameras. And if you're not seen by people, you'll be seen by God. You see, that's where America has made their big mistake. They think, "*if I wear a mask, I can commit violence.*" And the Government thinks, well, we can keep people in line by having cameras all over the place. You don't need cameras if you're a Christian. All right. But Jesus said every man will be rewarded for the things he did while he was living in this flesh.

Luke 14:26 *If any man come to me, and hate not (it actually means, 'who loves more') his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, (and let them influence them rather than Me) yea, and his own life also. (In other words, your opinion is better than God's opinion, you think,) he cannot be my disciple.*

27 *And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*

I really like the way **The Message Bible** says it, **26** "*Anyone who comes to me, but refuses to let go of father, mother, spouse, children, brothers, sisters - yes, even your own self interests! - can't be my disciple.*

27 *Anyone who won't shoulder his own cross and follow behind me can't be my disciple."*

You think you're going to get in because your parents did, you got another thing coming. You think you're going to get in because your grandparents did, you got another thing coming. I don't care if my parents were in the message. My parents followed Brother Branham since, who knows when? (Since the beginning.) That doesn't matter. He's talking about you, individuals.

Matthew 16:24 *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

25 *For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.*

26 *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

That's the most important thing that you have, is your soul.

27 *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works.*

Every man, every man, every man, good or bad.

The Bible teaches us.

“Proverbs 16:9 A man shall choose his path, but the Lord shall direct his footsteps.”

If you're a child of God and want to go in the ways of the world, God's going to hit you with a 4x4. Not a 2x4, a 4x4. And put you on your back or do something. But the Bible teaches us, ***“a man shall choose his path.”***

I chose mine as a young man, and I was going to be an athlete, and this and that. And God said, it's not for you. And He took me out from the midst of that.

And he has instructed us how to live. And those of you who were in his mind, He is as we are told in:

Acts 17:28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also his offspring.’

Therefore, the sooner you realize there are no white or black in God's family, the sooner you will turn your eyes upon Jesus. And the sooner you realize that unless your friends are also living for Christ, you will only know them for a short time here on earth, and believe me, life is very short. In my dreams, I'm still 18, but that's 50-some years ago, almost 60. I hate to admit it.

And had I known what I know now, I would have conducted my entire life to please my Father, and then I would have nothing to be sorry about. I would have lived my whole life just to please my Heavenly Father.

The Bible says in ***1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit,*** which is one Life, God Life.

It doesn't matter if you're Jew or Gentile. You know, Gentile covers the whole earth besides Jews. Doesn't matter what you are. But if you drank from that Spirit, in other words, if you are anointed and living the anointed life, you've got God Life. You can't die. This flesh might die, but your soul and spirit won't.

Now, when you go from this body into that, you're immediately in a body which you're fellowshiping with the ones that have gone on, believers that have gone on. There's nothing can harm you. You don't even... Brother Branham said he actually hugged those people. That meant that there was something there that was not just a spirit body. It was actually a corporeal body, like a theophany.

There is only one promise for the Jew and Gentile, which covers all races. Actually, there are a couple.

There's the day you eat thereof, the day you die. That's like I think Benjamin Franklin said, you know, we have a promise. Death and taxes, but actually, the Bible only has one promise. And for whatever you are, it says, all that live on the earth, will receive the mark of the beast if they were not God-Seed, and in the mind of God before the foundation of the world. That's it.

Acts 13:8 *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

Revelation 13:16 *And he causeth **all**, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:*

So, guess what? All your so-called friends are going to receive the mark of the beast if they're not Christian, all of them. Wow. You will not spend eternity with them unless you want to. That means you're not a son of God, you're not a child of God. You're a son of the devil. And if you want to spend eternity with your friends who are not Christian people, guess what? You're going to hell. I'm sorry. You want to go there? Go there. They all think they're going to have a big party. Everything's going to be great. They don't realize the misery. The Bible says it's filled with burning fire that lasts until they are completely destroyed. So it's not eternal fire because you would have to have eternal life then. "Well, at least I'll have my friends." You might think so, but no, you won't. Because one by one, they will disappear into ashes if you don't go first.

So, Jesus has a word for you in **Luke 16** if you are among those, those who want to live like the rest of the world in un-right-wise-ness.

Luke 16:9 *And I say unto you, **Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of un-right-wise-ness; that, when ye fail,*** (because you're going to fail. Listen, this body is predestinated to fail. It is. Just like you buy a car. It's what do they call that?

Planned obsolescence, yeah, it's planned obsolescence. God was the first one to plan obsolescence with your body. He said, "*The day you eat thereof, that day you will die.*" You're going to get old, you're going to get wrinkled, you're going to get crippled. But you think, "Oh, I'm pretty now, and so I can live now, like I can attract the boys." I mean, what do you want to attract those kind of boys for, huh? I'm Sorry, but that shows that you're just a juvenile in your thinking. You haven't grown up.

*And I say unto you, **Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of un-right-wise-ness; that, when ye fail,*** (Not if you fail, but when you fail because you certainly will fail if you live in un-right-wiseness) *they* (all your friends)

*may receive you into everlasting habitations. **10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.***

Listen, what is that saying to you? It says, look, if you're living in unrighteousness, not only will you fail, but you know you'll go through life thinking you can pull one on somebody. And it says, if you're unfaithful in that, you're going to be unfaithful in much. But he that is faithful in that, doesn't pull deals. He's living right. He's going to be faithful in much. And what does much mean?

It means in the Millennium. It means in the New Jerusalem, your life is Eternal. Isn't that beautiful? Now, I don't know what kind of house you're going to have, but it's going to be better than what you live in now. I don't know what kind of food we'll eat, but it's certainly going to be much better than what we have now. I don't know what kind of air you'll breathe over there, but I tell you what, it'll be much better than what you have now. And the water you drink will be so pure, and the streets will be lined with gold, the Bible says. Can you imagine that? Man kills one another to collect gold.

And God says, I think of gold, I'm going to just use it for pavement. Oh, brother, can you imagine living... Oh, I just. My goodness. Nobody on earth even knows. "**No eyes have seen, nor ears have heard what He has in store for those who love Him.**" Oh, my goodness. So it says, if you're going to be unrighteous, he said that they,

*may receive you into everlasting habitations. **10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.***

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon (the normal things of this life), *who will commit to your trust the true riches?* (Who will commit you to the millennium and the New Earth?)

In other words, why would God put you in the Millennium? Give you Eternal Life and the New Earth and everything that goes with it. Why would He trust you with that, if you've been unfaithful in the smaller things?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

Proverbs 14:12 *“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”*

So go ahead and choose your own way, and it will lead to death, or yield yourself to God's way and live. That is your choice. But I want to tell you something.

And I'll just stop right here. Brother Branham told a story about some little uppity reporter from the New York Times or wherever it was. And she went to one of his meetings and made fun of the Holy Ghost-filled people in the meeting, put in an article in her paper, I think, and a few weeks later, she was dying. And the little freckles on her face were all puffed up like pimples. And she was dying. Why? She made her choice. She made fun of God's elect. *“Choose you this day.”*

Joshua said, **Joshua 24:15**, *‘Choose you this day,’* William. *“Choose you this day, whom you shall serve, but as for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord.”*

And if you have parents or grandparents who are serving the Lord, they realized some time ago that they are the seed of God, and not just the seed of man. They have chosen God's way because it is in them to become what they were ordained to become.

And they have yielded themselves to let God make their decisions for them because they are elect and know that *“All things will work together for the good, to them who love the Lord and to them who are called (elect), according to His purpose.”*

But yielding to Him, produces a life that will reflect Eternal life.

I wish I had known Him before my college days. I mean, I wish I had known Him before my teenage days. I wish I had known these things. Somehow, I remember as a child, and I think my picture was taken at sixth grade or something. And I would stand there, and my brothers all called me a ‘holy roller’. And I knew I was really feeling God's presence. But, you know, as soon as I got to about 8th grade, I wanted to fit in and let the hair swoop on my forehead. I want you to listen to this. Is Beau awake? Ok, I see you there? When I got bangs on my forehead, you know what happened to me? I went the way of the world. That's right. That spirit gets on you. And I went the way of the world. And it wasn't until I was about 20, 21 years old, that the Lord got a hold of me again.

I got baptized. And then on campus, in football games, I'd see these cheerleaders. You know, I never used to think anything of them. And now, all of a sudden, they were so vulgar. I didn't know what happened to me. And I felt that I become perverted since I became a Christian because I see this wickedness? Or did God just open my eyes to see the

wickedness all around me? You see, that's how different night and day can be. One day, I was blind to what those things were, their costumes and everything else, and the next day, I just. Oh, my. I couldn't take it.

So you pray that God gets a hold of you, sooner than later. Because listen, in this flesh,... why did Jesus live such a perfect life? He didn't bypass His theophany. But we bypassed our theophany for testing. But Brother Branham said, when you heard from your theophany, that's when you change, when you are born again.

I want you to pray every day that God speaks to you. Your theophany, he said, that's your guardian angel. Did you know that? That's your other body. We have bodies terrestrial and bodies celestial. And when we leave this place, when we die, we go to that body. That body is already there. It's already in the heavens, all right?

It's already standing in the presence of the Lord. And it's already... It's the way you're supposed to be, it's God's thoughts expressed. But this flesh, well, we got genes of our parents. And I'm sorry, I don't mean to speak evil of your parents, but they all had to go through the same thing, so, you know what I'm talking about. There are certain hormones and things in this body. That's why Paul calls it the body of this death. That's why I can't wait to get out of here. And don't cry for me when I'm gone. Be thankful that I got to go, because I know where I'm going.

But with many, it's like the woman down, I think she was in Texas. Her husband had just died, and there was another man in Kentucky. And he had made some plans to go with his wife to Florida, but she had some things to do, and so she was to go the next day. So he said, *"I'll email you when I get down there. Then you plan to come?"* So he went down to Florida ahead of her. And so he typed in an email, "I've arrived". But he got her name wrong by one character when he was typing. You've heard the story, okay?

And he got the other woman whose husband had just died in Texas the day before. And he wrote, *"I've arrived today, and I am looking forward to see you tomorrow, your loving husband, ps It's hot down here."* And the woman in Texas, knowing her husband had just died yesterday, got the email and almost had a heart attack herself. So anyway, not to joke, but you know what? I want you to think about where you're going. Think about where you're going to end up. All right?

So, they have yielded themselves to let God make their decisions for them. That's what I did. And I'm so thankful that I yielded myself to God to let Him make my decision. Oh, I could have made big money playing football, no problem. And you know what? The average guy lives out his career for five years. Yeah, it's not too long, is it?

And I look at these guys, these friends of mine from college that played pro sports, and many of them have had hip replacements or elbow replacements, and they're miserable. And they still got to live in their old age with those hip replacements and elbow replacements. But they celebrated life for about five years, and where are they now?

But we want to yield ourselves to God's decisions because *all things will work together for their good, to them who are the elect according to His purpose*, and that yielding to Him produces a life that will reflect Eternal Life.

I remember as a young man, I used to love to talk to my grandfather because I wanted to avoid the pitfalls of a young man. And so I would talk to my grandfather a lot. And I enjoyed talking to older men. That's why when Brother Vayle and I met, it became like a father-son relationship. My dad had passed, his son had passed, and we joined because I needed that. I never thought of myself as being so independent in life that I could go through. And I realized that I need someone to talk to, someone to help me avoid mistakes that I would make.

But because of this pull towards the flesh, there has been a debate going on since time began. You know, you've got the flesh pulling you one way, the soul pulling you the other way, and that is the idea that man is a free moral agent, and that debate concerns the power of man's will.

Even today, after that great debate between Martin Luther and Erasmus concerning the power of man's will and Luther's total annihilation of Erasmus and the humanist's philosophy of "the power of the human will".

And let me just tell you this. We've got not only debate, but a warfare taking place between the liberal and the conservative. And I'm not even saying the conservative is all right, but there's a war going on. It's all over the will. They will this and they will that, and they don't realize God wills otherwise.

We see that even today, we still see a great confusion concerning the so-called "power of the human will". And the most erroneous views are held, even by many who call themselves believers today. Oh yes, even message believers.

I remember sitting down in Tennessee preaching for a minister down there. And one of the people in his church, they were from Georgia, they didn't believe in predestination.

They listened to Jimmy Swagger. The man who was found to be pretty, pretty perverted. And he said, "oh, predestination is a lie from the pits of hell." And a preacher.

Well, you know what, you find hundreds of places in the scripture talks about it, and then the word "ordained", you find other places, and you find if you want to take it out of your Bible what Paul said about that, then you might as well chuck the whole New Testament.

The most popular idea seems to reign supreme, which is taught from most pulpits today, and that is that man has a "free will". I'm a Baptist. I got a free will. I chose Jesus. No, you didn't choose Jesus. He chose you, and that salvation comes to the sinner through "his willing cooperation with the Holy Spirit." If I just cooperate with God, I'll be all right.

To deny the "free will" of man, and his power to choose that which is good, and his innate ability to accept Christ, is to bring yourself into disfavor with most Churches and be considered a heretic amongst them. So I am a heretic amongst those kind of thinking.

And yet God's Word plainly teaches in **Romans 9:16**, "*It is not of him that willeth*, (Oh, there's your will. Your will's just gone down the tubes. Because that scripture says *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth*, (Oh, if I can just do good deeds,) *but of God that sheweth mercy*".

And Jesus said, **John 15:16** *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*

So much for the Baptist theology. Ella knows that.

So, who do you want to believe? God and His Son, or some preachers without the Holy Ghost?

Yet some will say, Did not Joshua say to Israel? **Joshua 24:15** *Choose you this day whom ye will serve*. And as a matter of fact, yes, he did; but what else did he say in this verse that these churches refuse to hear?

"He adds, "*whether the gods that your fathers served which were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell!*"

Choose you this day whom you're going to serve.

Then why do men attempt to pit scripture against scripture, when they have no understanding of them? **1 Corinthians 2** tells us, "*No man without the Holy Ghost can even understand them,*" the Scripture. The Word of God never contradicts itself, and the Word expressly declared in:

Romans 3:11 *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.*

Listen, the only understanding we have is because God, in His grace, came down with a Shout and delivered to us an understanding so that **Malachi 4** *would make the hearts, or the understanding of the children, to the understanding of the Pentecostal fathers.* He says,

12 *They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

Did not Jesus say to men in **John 5:40** *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life?* And the answer is, yes, he did, but we also know that many did come to him, just a few received him. True, and who were they?

And **John 12:13** tells us: *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power* (In other words, it's not your choosing. I'm going to receive Him as you were made to receive Him. That's the difference.) (That word is Exousia – and it means the ability to make a right decision where they come from. It came from God) *to become* (or grow into what we already are) *the sons of God, to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will,* (Will, will, will. Baptist Will. Baptist people out there "will".) *nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God!"* Born of God. Oh, boy, that answers a lot.

But you may argue, "Does not the Scripture say, '*Whosoever will may come?*'" And I, the answer is, yes, it does, but what if not everybody has the will to come? What of those who will not come?

"Whosoever will may come" no more implies that a sinner has power (in themselves) to come, than *"Stretch forth thine hand"* implied that the man with the withered arm had ability (in himself) to comply.

No more than when William Branham said stand to your feet and accept your healing that the person could stand to their feet on their own to comply. Or when William Branham said, stand to your feet and accept your healing. Well, what if the person was on a cot and couldn't stand? He couldn't do it. But see, if God gave him the power to do it, he did it. All right. So it only comes from what God can do.

It is God who healeth all thy diseases, and He alone is the Great Physician. William Branham just told them what God already told him to tell them. If God told him, then that's God doing it. If you can only see *"that it is God working in you to will and to do."* Do what? His Word.

The truth of the matter is that in and of himself, the sinner does have power to reject Christ; but in and of himself, he has not the power to receive Christ. So why is that? Let me explain why.

The Bible says in **Romans 8:7**, "*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed **can** be.*" And so, why is that?

Because he has a heart that hates God.

John 15:18 *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.*

19 *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

20 *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*

Man chooses that which is according to his own nature, and therefore, before he will ever choose or prefer that which is divine and spiritual, a new nature must be imparted to him; in other words, he must be born again. You hear that, William? I'm watching. Listen, I did this to my own kids, so don't worry about it. You remember.

Proverbs 14:12 teaches us, *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.* So, although he might choose to do what he in his carnal mind thinks is right, it will always, always, always lead to death, unless God causes him to repent first.

So, the Bible tells us in **Proverbs 16:9** *A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.* Isn't that beautiful?

I wanted to go be a pro football player, whatever. And God said, no, you're not going to do that. He opened my eyes, and I saw the filth associated with it.

So, we tend to ask, "Doesn't the Holy Spirit overcome a man's enmity and hatred when he convicts the sinner of his sins and his need of Christ"? And doesn't the Spirit of God produce such conviction in many that perish?

You know, that kind of thinking betrays a mind that is confused in their understanding: If a man's enmity really had "overcome", then he would have turned to Christ as well; But since he does not come to Christ, it demonstrates that his enmity is not yet overcome.

It's like the hundreds and thousands of people that went to Billy Graham Crusades, and they gave their lives to the Lord, and a week later, you couldn't find them in any church. They just went back to the world. That shows they were never converted.

But many are convicted by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Word, yet nevertheless they die in their unbelief. We just look at a Billy Graham crusade, where hundreds come to the altar, and a week later hardly any one of them has yet to go to church.

Yet, we should never lose sight of the fact that the Holy Spirit does something more in each of God's elect than he does in the non-elect: For the scripture says in **Philippians 2:13, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of God's good pleasure."**

But he doesn't do that for the non-elect. He just lets them alone. How many of you actually mother and father, children who are not yours or not of your lineage? You, taking strays off the road like people taking stray pets? Do you get involved when there's a family dispute that's not your own? No, you don't. You sit back and let it happen.

Therefore, we understand that God does not work on behalf of non-elect. He leaves them alone like it says in **Psalm 1:6 "For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous:"** (that word knoweth is a Hebrew Word **yada** - and it means: God watches over with an active participation.)

And it also says, **"but the way of the ungodly shall perish."** That word **Perish** is also a Hebrew word **'abad**. And it means they are left to themselves.

But the Christian who bases their salvation on works thinks, "the Spirit's work of conviction is the same both in the converted and in the unconverted".

But how is it that each class is different from the other? Jesus said, ***you'll know them by their fruits***. The Elect yields to God's strivings, whereas the non-elect resist God's urgings. They don't yield themselves. Doesn't that show their wills differ one from another?

But we read in the Scriptures, **"God is working in one to will and then to do"**, while the other is left to themselves to decide what to do, and we know that **"there is a way that seems right to man and that way is the way of death."**

1 Corinthians 4:7 *For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"*

Therefore, if the will compelled all men to act the same, whether they are a believer or an unbeliever, then the Christian would have grounds for boasting over his cooperation with the Holy Spirit, which would flatly contradict **Ephesians 2:8**, "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*".

And what about your actual Christian experience? Was there ever a time when you were unwilling to come to Christ, before you were a Christian? Yes, there was. But since that time, you have come to Him. So why is that? Because God knew you before the foundations of the world and has actively watched over you.

Why, when you and your friend listen to the same word, you went with God, and they went with the world. God was watching over you and actively participating, but He didn't watch over them.

The attitude of the real born-again Christian is best seen in:

Psalms 115:1 *Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.*

2 *Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?*

3 *But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*

As a real born-again Christian, we acknowledge that we came to Christ because the Holy Spirit brought us from unwillingness to willingness. As the Bible teaches us, "***It is God Who is working in us to will and do.***"

And you should be so thankful that He is. If you think that you've arrived, you're lost. Period.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit doesn't do in non-elect what he's doing in you! Granted that others heard the Midnight cry, and they've been shown their need to repent, yet, why are they still unwilling to repent and believe the doctrine of this Message?

In the same sense, why has God worked more in you than in them? You might answer, "I still remember the time when the Message was presented to me, and my consciousness testified, and my will acted, and I yielded myself to Christ". And that may be true.

But before you "***yielded***", the Holy Spirit overcame the carnal enmity of your mind against God, and this "***enmity***" He does not overcome in everyone.

Look, there are none that receive God's will based on their own nature, until God puts forth His power and works a miracle of grace in their hearts.

So then, what is the human will? Is it a self-determining agent? Is it, or is it, in turn, determined by something else? Is it sovereign in itself? Or is it just really a servant?

Think about that. You take pride. I'm going to do what I'm going to do. I don't care what you say. And God says, okay, but you know what? Your will is just a servant. It's not sovereign.

Is the will superior to every other faculty of our being so that it subdues them, or is it overcome by impulses and subject to their pleasure? Does the will rule the mind, or does the mind control the will?

Is the will free to do as it pleases, or does it only render obedience to something outside of itself? "Does the will stand apart from the other great faculties of the soul?"

Is there a man within a man, who can reverse the man and fly against the man and split him into segments, as a glass breaks into pieces? Or is the will connected with the other faculties, as the tail of a dog is with its head? So that where the head goes, the whole creature goes. Does the dog wag his own tail, or does the tail wag the dog? Is your will guide you, or is your will guided?

The Bible teaches, "*As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he*". So first he has a thought, then his heart (his desires or aversions), and then he acts out what he thought first. Is it this way? Does the dog wag his own tail? Or, is it the will (the tail) what wags the dog?

Is the will the first and chief thing in the man? Or is it the last thing to be kept subordinate, and in its place beneath the other faculties? In other words, does the will act first or is it subject to his mind?

Genesis 3:6 "*And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food*" (in other words, her 5 senses, told her, it's good for food, eye perception, said, hey, that's lovely, then it registers in her mind, through her intelligence), "*and a tree to be desired*" (her affections), "*she took and ate thereof*" (That's her will)." Her will was guided by her five senses. See, taste, touch, smell, and hear. It was then a servant of her five senses.

So, we then want to understand the Nature of The Human Will.

What then is the Will? We answer, the will is the faculty of choice, the immediate cause of all action. But choice necessarily implies the refusal of one thing and the acceptance of another. So if your will makes a choice between two things, is it really the master and the sovereign, or is it following which of those two things do I prefer?

The positive and the negative must both be present to the mind before there can be any choice. In every act of the will, there is a preference - the desiring of one thing rather than another.

The Bible tells us they loved darkness rather than light. They loved it in a greater measure. Oh, they loved light. They did sacrifice, they did things, but they loved the other more.

The Bible tells us they loved darkness rather than light. It should read they preferred darkness to light, just like nightclubs where people go to sin in darkness.

Can you imagine trying to eat something, and you don't even know what you're eating? So dark. Yeah.

Where there is no preference, (but complete indifference), there is no choice. **To will is to choose, and to choose is to decide between two or more alternatives.**

But there is something which influences the choice; something which determines the decision. Hence, the will cannot be sovereign **because it is the servant of that something.**

The will cannot be both sovereign and servant. It cannot be both cause and effect. The will is not causative, because something causes it to choose. Therefore, that something, it must be the causative agent. As Jesus said, *"I came to do Thy will, oh God." Thy will, O God. I didn't come to do My will, I came to do Thy will, oh God.*

Choice itself is affected by certain considerations, and is determined by various influences brought to bear upon the individual himself, so choice is the effect of these considerations and influences.

And if it is the effect, it must be their servant; and if the will is their servant, then it is not sovereign, and if the will is not sovereign, we certainly cannot derive absolute "freedom" from our will.

Acts of the will cannot come to pass by themselves - to say they can, is to accept an uncaused effect. -In other words, nothing cannot produce anything.

In all ages, however, there have been those who contended for "absolute freedom or sovereignty of the human will". Men will argue that the will possesses a self-determining power.

They say, for example, I can turn my eyes up or down. This case supposes that I choose one thing in preference to another, while I am in a state of complete indifference.

It's like I saw an interview of a millionaire the other day, and they said, well, what did you do to make your millions? And he says, listen, two people can do the exact same thing. But the circumstances around me allowed me to make millions, while the circumstances around them kept them in poverty. It wasn't something I did. It's those circumstances that were around me.

But the moment indifference vanishes, choice is made, and the fact that your indifference gives way to preference, it overthrows the argument that the will is capable of choosing between two equal things.

That is why "*God must work in us first to will first, and then we will do*". As we have said, choice implies the acceptance of one alternative and the rejection of the other or others.

That which determines the will is that which causes it to choose. If the will is determined, then there must be a determiner. So, what is it that determines the (our) will?

Jesus said, *I have come to do thy will, O God*. And before we're Christians, we do our own will. But when we become Christians, we say, I have come to do Thy will, O God.

That which determines the will is that which causes it to choose. If the will is determined, then there must be a determiner. So, what is it that determines the will?

What determines the will is the strongest motivational power (force), that is brought upon the will. What this motive power is, varies in different cases. With one, it may be the logic of reason. With another, it could be the conscience.

With some, it might be their emotions. With still others, it might be the tempter, the Devil. With another, it will be the power of the Holy Spirit;

Whichever of these presents the strongest motive power, or I should say, influence, and exerts the greatest influence upon the individual, is that which impels their will to act.

In other words, the action of the will is determined by that condition of the mind (which in turn is influenced by the world, the flesh, and the Devil, as well as by God), which has the greatest degree of tendency to bring on an action.

In **Matthew 4:1**, we read, "*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil*"; Jesus was led up of the Spirit. What is His own will?

But in **Mark 1:12-13** we are told, "*And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. (There's your four x four.) And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan*".

His will to go, He was driven. Okay, one verse of Scripture said, well, He was led. It sounds like, oh yeah, He made up His mind, He wants to go. Oh yeah, He did, because God drove Him to do it. But in Mark, it's like Jesus. Well, I'll just say before I get to Mark, Jesus said, Father, my Will is that you take this cup from me. I don't want to go through this. ***But nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done.***

But in **Mark 1:12-13** we are told, "*And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan*".

It is utterly impossible to harmonize these two statements by a works-oriented conception of the will. But really, there is no difficulty. That Christ was "*driven*", implies it was by a forcible motive or powerful impulse, such as was not to be resisted or refused;

That he was "*led*" denotes his freedom in going. Putting the two together, we learn that the leading was very powerful in its own right. So, there is the liberty of man's will and the victorious efficacy of God's grace united together:

It's like brother Branham said, "*I don't obey God because I am afraid of what He will do if I don't obey, I do what He wants because I love him, and I would not want to hurt Him in any way.*" You see the difference there.

A sinner may be "*drawn*" and yet "*come*" to Christ - the "*drawing*" presents to him the irresistible motive, but his "*coming*" signifies the response of his will, just as Christ was "*driven*" and "*led*" by the Spirit into the wilderness.

Human philosophy insists that it is the will that governs the man, but the Word of God teaches that it is the heart that dominates our being. Therefore, will is motivated by love and not the other way around.

Many scriptures might be quoted in approval of this. "*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life*" **Proverbs 4:23**.

In **Mark 7:21**, our Lord traces these sinful acts back to their source and declares that their fountain is the "heart", and not the will! "*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, etc.*

Again, in **Matthew 15:8**, we read, "*This people draweth nigh unto me with their lips, but their*

heart is far from me". So their lips might be saying one thing, but their will is saying something else.

If further proof were required, we might call attention to the fact that the word "*heart*" is found in the Bible more than three times more often than the word "*will*", even though nearly half of the references to the word will refer to God's will!

Go back from effect to cause. Why does the sinner choose a life of sinful indulgence? It's his nature. He prefers it, he enjoys it, though of course he does not enjoy the effects of such a course. In other words, he might be loved while he's sinning, but he doesn't want the consequences of it.

Why does the sinner continue in his sin? Because he prefers darkness over light.

So why does he enjoy sin? Because his heart is sinful. The same alternatives, in like manner, confront the Christian, and he chooses and strives after a life of piety and virtue. Why?

Because "*God has given him a new heart or nature*". Therefore, we say it is not the will which makes the sinner impervious to all appeals to "*forsake his way*", but it is his corrupt and evil heart. He will not come to Christ, because he does not want to, and he does not want to because his heart hates Christ and loves sin:

Like I've always said. Is a man a thief because he steals? Or is he a thief, and therefore he steals. Brother Branham said, sin is not drinking, smoking, these things. He said, You're a sinner because you believe not, then you do those things. All right.

The prophet, **Jeremiah 17:9**, said, "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*"

In defining the will, we have established "**the will is the faculty of choice, the cause of all action.**" We say the cause, but the will is not the primary cause of any action, any more than the hand is.

Just as the hand is controlled by the muscles and nerves of the arm, and the arm by the brain; so, the will is the servant of the mind, and the mind, in turn, is affected by various influences and motives which are brought to bear upon it.

But, if the fundamentalist will ask, "But doesn't Scripture itself make its appeal to man's will? Isn't it written in **Revelation 22:17**? "*And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*"

Then why don't they all do it? If every man has the same will, why don't they all do the same thing?

But did not our Lord also say in **John 5:40**, "*Ye will not come to me that ye might (or will) have life*"?

The appeal of Scripture is not always made to man's "will"; other faculties are also addressed. For example: "*He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*" *He that has ears to understand, let him understand.* It is speaking of the mind.

Yet Paul told us that "*those that are carnal cannot understand the things of God.*"

The scripture also says, "*Hear, and your soul shall live*". That means understand, *and your soul shall live*, and "*faith cometh by hearing*," or understanding, and "*Look unto me and be ye saved.*" And "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved.*"

And "*Come now and let us reason together*", and "*with the heart (the understanding) man believeth unto righteousness*", etc., etc.

The sinner is born with a will that is ruled by a heart that is "*deceitful above all things and desperately wicked*", and this gives him a bias toward evil. And yet Jesus said, "*I have come to do thy will, oh God.*"

Jesus never bypassed His theophany like we did, so He knew who He was. We, on the other hand, had to learn who we are. Is that correct?

Before He was born into this world, it was said to Mary, "*The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore, also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*" **Luke 1:35**.

So the Holy thing, He was Holy to begin with, we weren't.

We say that the will of the Son of Man was not capable of turning toward either good or evil. The will of the Lord Jesus was biased because he never bypassed his theophany and knew who he was.

Now, in contradistinction from the will of the Lord Jesus, which was biased toward God's will, and Adam's will, which, before his fall, was in a condition capable of turning toward either good or evil;

The sinner's will is biased toward evil, and therefore is free in one direction only, namely, in the direction of evil. The sinner's will is enslaved because it is in bondage to and is the servant of a depraved heart.

Jesus said, "*I always do the will of Him that sent me.*" So, Jesus understood what causes the will to act.

And He chose to do God's will, for he understood that doing God's will, "*all things will work together for His good.*"

So, what does the sinner's freedom consist of? The sinner is "free" in the sense of being unforced from without. God never forces the sinner to sin.

But the sinner is not "free" to do either good or evil, because an evil heart within inclines him toward sin. Remember, every seed must project the life it has. Every seed after its nature. A Wheat seed can't will itself to become a tare.

A donkey can't will itself to become a pig. The Bible says, "*Every seed after its kind,*" So it must come forth according to its nature.

Let's use an illustration. I hold in my hand a book. I release it; what happens? It falls. In which direction did it fall? Downwards; always downwards. Why? Because of the law of gravity, its own weight sinks it.

Suppose I desire that book to occupy a position three feet higher; then what? How did it get there? Did it rise up out of my hand? Did it levitate itself? I must lift it; a power outside of that book must raise it. Such is the relationship of fallen man towards God. While divine power upholds him, he is preserved from falling still deeper into sin; let that power be withdrawn, and he falls - his own weight (of sin) drags him down. Do you understand?

God does not push him down, any more than I pushed the book down. Let all of God's restraint be removed, and every man is capable of becoming, and would become, a Cain, a Pharaoh, and a Judas.

How then can the sinner become heavenward? By an act of his own will? Not so. "*Not by power nor by might, but by my Spirit said the Lord.*" A power outside of himself must grasp hold of him and lift him every inch of the way. The sinner is free, but in one direction only -

He is free to fall, free to sin. As the Word expresses it: **Romans 6:20**. *For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.* You are free from Right-wiseness.

The sinner is free to do as he pleases, always as he pleases (except as he is restrained by God), but his pleasure is always to sin. Because sin is unbelief, and he is not capable of believing unless God makes him thus.

The freedom or bondage of the will was the dividing line between Calvinism and Arminianism. Reduced to simple terms, this means that the difference involved was the affirmation or denial of the total depravity of man. Let's consider the following:

So then, let's consider the **Impotency of the Human Will.**

Does it lie within man's will to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior? Granted that the Gospel is preached to the sinner, but the Holy Spirit must convict him of his lost condition.

Was Pharaoh free to choose to go the way that Moses had said? No. Was Esau free to become a Jacob? No, he had to go his way. God hated Esau.

In the final analysis, it does not lie within the power of his own will to resist or to yield himself up to God. This answers the question of righteousness and unrighteousness.

Man is incapable of right-wise-ness unless God gives him the ability to understand the things of God. *"There is none that is righteous, no, not one."* But **John 1:12** tells us that God gives us the ability to make the right decision and become what we were ordained to become.

Because you are sons, God has given you the spirit of adoption. *"**Because you are sons**".* *"**To them that received Him**".* *"To them that were of a nature as to receive Him, God gave them the ability to make a right decision to become sons of God."*

And **Acts 13** tells us *that as many as were ordained to eternal life will, (did one thing they) believe."*

When we say that man is totally depraved, we mean that *"he is born in sin and comes forth to the world speaking lies"*.

That is why **Ephesians 2:2** tells us, *"according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience"*.

So what spirits will work in them? Satan. What's working in us? *God is working in us to will and to do His good pleasure.*

There is a moral inability that paralyzes man. This is proof positive that he is not a free man, but instead, the slave of sin and Satan. In **John 8:44**, we read, "*Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts (desires) of your father ye will do*". They can't get away from that.

Sin is more than an act or series of actions; It is unbelief, "*They sinned because they believed not.*" It is a state or a condition: it is that which produces the acts. And it penetrates and permeates the whole of man's makeup.

It blinds the understanding, corrupts the heart, and alienates the mind from God. And the will has not escaped. The will is under the dominion of sin and Satan. Therefore, the will is not free.

Remember the "*the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.*"

And Brother Branham said, "**People are going to do what they are going to do.**" Why? Because they are motivated by what is within them.

That's why Brother Branham didn't get upset if somebody just didn't do the right thing. Because he knew they were not going to do the right thing. All right. People are going to do what they're going to do.

Don't try to correct everybody. You should be more like a Christian. You should be more of this, and you should be more of that. People are going to do what they're going to do.

"There is none that seeketh after God, no, not one" **Romans 3:11.**

So let's repeat our question: Does it lie within the power of a sinner's will to yield himself up to God? Can water by itself rise above its own level? Can it? No. Can a clean thing come out of an unclean? No. Can a bad tree produce good fruit? No. Can the will reverse the whole tendency and strain of its human nature? No. Can that which is under the dominion of sin originate that which is pure and holy? No.

The answer to all of these questions is simply No. If ever the will of a fallen creature becomes God-wards, it is only because Divine power, Divine intervention is brought to bear upon it, which overcomes the influences of sin that pull it in a counter direction.

In other words, God lifting up a man will fall, but the Lord will rise him up. Doesn't say the man rises himself up. You know, the athletes say, well, if you fall, just get up. And you know what? I'm sorry, it doesn't work that way. God has to raise you up.

In **John 6:44**, we find another way of saying it, "*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him*". No man. In other words, God's people must be **made willing** in the day of his power. **Psalms 110:3**.

And the only way is for "*God to work in us both to will and do His good pleasure*." You can't do it yourself. If Christ came to save that which is lost, you can't save yourself. Therefore, free will has no place at all.

Not that God prevents men from receiving Christ - far from it, but there are those who have no capacity to repent. Even when God uses all possible inducements, like he did with Pharaoh and Esau.

They didn't have it in themselves to repent. After all the influence God used upon them, they still could not repent.

So corrupt was their heart and so decided was their will not to submit to God, that nothing could induce them to receive the Lord and to give up sin.

The Bible speaks of the sinner: "*He is not subject to the law, neither indeed can be*"; (Can he be?) In other words, you can't save. You can't save someone who's not meant to be saved.) *hence, they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*"

Therefore, the will is not sovereign; it is a servant, because it is influenced and controlled by the other faculties of man's being. The sinner is not a free agent because he is a slave of sin. This was clearly implied in our Lord's words, in **John 8:36**, "*If the Son shall therefore make you free, ye shall be free indeed*". So, you can't make yourself free.

"*God himself must work in him* (according to **Philippians 2:13** (tells us) "*both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" "*He who began the good work in you, shall perform it.*"

Man is impotent as to his own will. He has no will and favor towards God. But I do believe in free will; but then it is a will that is only free to act according to its nature.

A dove has no will to eat dead vulture meat; it would kill him. A vulture will not eat a dove's food.

Put the nature of the dove into the vulture, and it will eat the food of the dove. And Satan could never have a will for holiness. Just as God could have no will for evil.

The sinner in his sinful nature could never have a will according to God. To do this, he first must be born again. The will is regulated by his nature, and thus a servant of his nature.

The average pulpit conveys the impression that it lies wholly in the power of the sinner whether or not he shall be saved. Like I said, the Baptist said, well, the greatest thing I got is I can choose Jesus. Jesus said, "*You didn't choose me, but I have chosen you*".

It is said that "God has done his part, now man must do his." Benjamin Franklin once said, "*God helps those who help themselves*". But a vindicated prophet of God said, "*God helps those who cannot help themselves.*" But "*No man can understand the things of God unless He has the Spirit of God in him*". (1 Corinthians 2:11).

What can a lifeless man do by himself? Nothing. And yet Jesus said, Lazarus, come forth. Whose will was it? The dead man's? Was Lazarus following his own will or the will of Jesus?

And men by nature are "*dead in trespasses and sins*" **Ephesians 2:1!** *And what man by taking thought* (by willing himself), *can add one cubit to his stature.*"

If men really believed these scriptures, there would be more dependence upon the Holy Spirit to come in with his miracle-working power, and less confidence in our abilities and attempts to "*win men for Christ.*"

How many times have you heard the preacher? We're going to go out and win a thousand souls to Christ.

When addressing the unsaved, preachers often draw an analogy between God's sending of the Gospel to the sinner, and a sick man in bed, with some healing medicine on a table by his side:

All he needs to do is reach forth his hand and take it. But in Laodicea, men are "*blind, miserable, and naked and don't even know it*". How is a blind man going to be able to find his medication? Can't do it. So, if he is blind, how can he reach out and take his medicine? He can't do it.

And Laodicean men are blind because they willed themselves to be blind, because of their unregenerate nature. And they are content in their blindness.

It reminds me of a man who believed he was dead. And so, a man tried to use logic on him and said, do you believe a dead man can bleed? And the man that thought he was dead, He said no I don't believe dead men can bleed.

So, the man stuck him with a pin, and the man who thought he was dead began to bleed. When he saw he was bleeding, he cried out, "*dead men do bleed*". You see, you can't change what won't be changed.

Then why bid the sinner to come to Christ, if sin has crippled him that he has no power in himself to come? Our reply: We do not preach the Gospel because we believe that men are free moral agents, and therefore capable of receiving Christ.

We preach it because we are commanded to do so, **Mark 16:15**; although to them that perish it is foolishness, yet, **1 Corinthians 1:18** says, "*unto us which are saved it is the power of God*".

Let's bow our heads in prayer.

Father, we see throughout this entire message this morning that everything depends on Your will. Jesus said, I came to do the will of You, O God.

So Father, we know that he's our example, and we are to follow therein that we freely give up our own will. Like Jesus said, "*not my will, but Thine be done*." Because we know that Your will, Father, following Your will, all things will lead to the good of them that love You, and are the called according to Your purpose.

So, Father, we know that if we were not in You before the foundations of the world, we don't have Eternal Life. We can't receive it. It's impossible. But the very fact that we can receive Eternal Life is because we received it in Your mind before the foundations of the world. We were part of Your DNA. We were part of Your code, so to speak. And when You spoke, the fullness of Your word came forth.

The Light came forth when You said, "*Let there be light*." And that was the Son of God. And all things then were created by him, and for him and Father, when we came forth in this hour, and that Light struck the seed, it brought in us a hearing from our theophany.

And so, Lord, we know that there are bodies, celestial bodies, terrestrial. When we die in this flesh, we go to the bodies terrestrial. But Brother Branham said, We've heard from our theophany, when we're born again, in Jesus' Name we pray. Amen. Amen.