

Unveiling of God no 73
God's Sovereignty and the human will
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Philippians 2:13. *"It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure"*

Who is This Melchisedec pp. 46 *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--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.*

This morning we will examine the subject of God's Sovereignty and the human will which has led to one of the greatest theological debates that ever took place in the study of Bible doctrine which concerns man as *"a free moral agent"* and the power of man's will.

Even hundreds of years after the great debates between Martin Luther and Erasmus who was Europe's leading philosopher at that time, and that debate concerned ***the power of man's will***. The issue being debated was actually man is sovereign in his choice, or not. But we still see today a great confusion concerning this so called ***"power of the human will"***.

Many erroneous views are held, even by people who call themselves believers today. The most popular error which prevails and is taught from most of the pulpits today, is that man has a ***"free will"***, and that salvation comes to the sinner through his own will cooperating with the Holy Spirit. Denominations like the Baptists place the ***"free will"*** of man over and against the free will of God. They may not say so outwardly but that is what their doctrine actually teaches.

Yet God's Word plainly teaches in **Romans 9:16** *"It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy"*.

Therefore, who are we to believe? God's Word or the preachers? Yet some will say, Did not Joshua say to Israel in **Joshua 24:15** ***"Choose you this day whom ye will serve"***?

Well, as a matter of fact he did; but what else did he say in the same sentence? He added, *"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"*

So then why do men attempt to pit scripture against scripture? The Word of God never contradicts itself, and the Word expressly declares in **Romans 3:11** ***"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."***

Jesus said to the men of his day in **John 5:40** "*Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life*"? Yes, but some did come to him, some did receive him. So who was he talking to? He wasn't talking to all.

Now in **John 1:12-13** we read, "*But as many as received him, to them*(those that received Him, *to them*) *gave he power*(*to them gave He exousia, the ability to make a right decision*) *to become the sons of God, to them*(who?) *that believe on his name:* (and who are these that believe?) *which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*"!

So it is only those who have been born of God that he gave this ability to make a right decision to be what God ordained them to be, sons of God. Yet some will argue, "*But does not Scripture say, Whosoever will let him come*"? And we should say, yes It does, precisely. But this does not signify that *everybody has the will to come*? Or He would **not** have said, "*whosoever wills*" because by saying, "*whosoever wills*" it shows not everyone has the will to come. It should read "*whosoever has the will to come let him come.*" So how is it that some have the will to come while others do not have the will to come?

What of those who will not come? The words "*Whosoever will may come*" no more implies that fallen man has the power in himself to come, than when Jesus said "*Stretch forth thine hand*" implied that the man with the withered arm had ability in himself to comply.

Let's just look at other scripture concerning having the will to come or not to come.

We read in **John 3:20** *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed and reprov'd. 21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought* (have their source) *in God.*

In and of himself the carnal man, the unregenerate man, has power to reject Christ; but in and of himself he has not the power to receive Christ. And why is that? **Because** as we read 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 it be.*" And if it cannot be, then it was not made to be subject to the will of God.

In reality men of the world, unregenerate men hate God as we see in **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.*

Therefore, men choose that which is according to their own nature, and therefore before men 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.

For we are told in **Proverbs 14:12 ¶** *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

And also in **Proverbs 16:9** we are told ¶ *A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.*

But you might ask, doesn't the Holy Spirit overcome a man's enmity and hatred when God 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? And the answer is no.

If a man can really "**overcome**", his own enmity against God and His Word, then he would readily turn to Christ; but the fact that he does not come to Jesus Christ as His Saviour demonstrates that his enmity has not been overcome just as many who through the preaching of the Word, are actually convicted by the Holy Spirit yet nevertheless die in their unbelief, cannot be overlooked. Yet, the real fact which must not be lost sight of is that the Holy Spirit does more in God's elect than he does in non-elect: Because in the elect we are told in **Philippians 2:13** "*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of God's good pleasure*". But this is not spoken of in the non elect.

Now the Armenian doctrine believes the Spirit's work of conviction is the same in both the converted and the unconverted. And they believe the real distinction between the believer from the non believer is that the believer is yielded to the Holy Spirit whereas the non believer resists Him.

But if this were the case, then the Christian would make himself to "**differ**", whereas the Scripture attributes the "**differing**" to God's discriminating grace as we see in **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?*

Again; if such were the case, then the Christian would have ground for boasting and self-glorying over his cooperation with the Spirit; but this would flatly contradict **Ephesians 2:8** which says, "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*". And if Faith is a revelation, then it is something that has been revealed. And if revealed then it is not an inward work in you but something that has been given to you. So what if nothing has been revealed to you? Then without that revelation, you can never be saved. Therefore by reason that it is revealed this shows it is a work of God, not of your own self.

The real born again Christian will acknowledge that we came to Christ because the Holy Spirit brought us from unwillingness to willingness? And is it not also true that the Holy Spirit has not done that in others we know? But what he has done in you! Granting that others have also heard the Gospel Message, been shown their need of Christ, yet, they are still unwilling to come to him. Thus the real question is, why has He wrought more in you than in them. Now you may think "*I remember well the time when my conscience just willed myself to act upon my will and therefore I just yielded to the claims of Christ upon me*". Well that may be true. But before you "**yielded**", the Holy Spirit overcame the carnal enmity of your mind against God, and the real facts are that this "**enmity**" God does not overcome in everyone.

Never forget "***It is God that is working in you both to will and to do His Good pleasure.***" But this is not said about everyone.

Could it be said, That others do not come because of their unwillingness for their enmity to be overcome. In other words, could it be said that they have the power whether to come or not and they have chosen not to come?

Look, there are no one that wills to come of their own nature, not until God begins to work in you to will and then to do. That is the power of His grace working in your heart.

That is why we are told that before we can come, God must make us willing to come by giving us a new heart and then a new spirit which we see in ***Ezekiel 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.***

Now, concerning this new heart and new spirit Brother Branham said in the message ***Impersonation of Christianity 57-0120M So God had to give you a new heart, not a patched up one, a new heart. That's your intellects that you think with, a new way of thinking. 043 Then He said after that, "Then I'll give you a new spirit." What's that? A new desire, "I want to do right." And then God said, "I will give you My Spirit". First God gives you a new understanding, Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father which is in Heaven. God gives you that new understanding. Then that new understanding brings forth a new desire in your heart, and finally God gives you of His Own Spirit and places it within you. Christ in the you, the Hope of Glory.***

Notice he said it is ***Christ in you***, which is ***the anointing of God in you, the Hope of Doxa***, the Hope of having the very mind that was in Christ. Look, how else could you ***understand the things of God except the spirit of God be in you*** which Paul said in ***1 Corinthians 2***.

So then what has the human will to do with it? And so then, what is the human will? Is it a self-determining agent, or is it, in turn, ***determined by something else? Is the human will sovereign? or just a servant?*** Is the will superior to every other faculty of our being so that it subdues them? or is it overcome by their 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 simply render obedience to something outside of itself? "Does the will stand apart from the other great faculties or powers of the soul, a man within a man, who can reverse the man and fly against the man and split him into segments, as glass breaks into pieces? Or, ***is the will connected with the other faculties***, as the tail of the dog is with his body, and that again with his head, so that where the head goes, the whole creature goes, and ***"as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he?"***

Notice it must begin with the thought, therefore it is First a thought, then the heart (the desire or the aversion), and then once it controls the heart the action comes as a result. Is it this way, does the dog wag the tail? Or, is it the will, (the tail), that wags the dog (the wishes)? Is the will the first and chief thing in the man? Or is it the last thing to be kept subordinate?

In **Genesis 3:6?** we read "*And when the woman saw that the tree that it was good for food'* (notice her sense of perception, and her use of intelligence, her head), "*and a tree to be desired*"(notice desire speaks of her affections, her heart), "*she took and ate thereof*"(and thus we see her will bringing about her action). But what controlled that will? The decision came through her mind.

Now, these questions are of practical importance for us to consider. Our answer to these questions shows whether we have a fundamental understanding of doctrine, and whether that understanding is Biblically sound.

Therefore, let's examine the **Nature Of The Human Will**. In other words, **what is the Will?**

The will is the faculty of choice, and the immediate cause for all of our actions.

But choice necessarily implies the refusal of one thing and the acceptance of another, and the positive and the negative must then both be present to the mind before there can be any choice rendered.

Therefore, in every act of the will there is a preference that is made, which is the desiring of one thing rather than another. Like John 3:19 tells us they chose darkness rather than light. So why did they choose darkness rather than light. You see, where there is no preference, but complete indifference, there is no choice. That's your lukewarm Laodicean spirit. And as James said a mind that vacillates will never receive anything.

But the **will** shows that a choice that has been made. 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 some thing**.

The **will cannot be both sovereign and yet a servant**. It cannot be both cause and effect. Therefore the **will is not causative**, because, as we have said, **something causes it to choose**, therefore **that something must be the causative agent**. And **choice itself is affected by certain considerations**, and is **determined by various influences** brought to bear upon the individual himself, hence, **choice is the effect of these considerations and influences**, and **if 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 predicate absolute "freedom" of it.

Acts of the will cannot come to pass of themselves, and to say they can is to postulate an uncaused effect. In other words, **nothing cannot produce something**.

However in all ages, there have been men who have contended that the will of man is an absolute freedom and is sovereign act within man himself. **Men will even argue that the will possesses a self-determining power**. They say, for example, I can turn my eyes up or down. In this case they suppose that Man is choosing one thing in preference to another, while he is in a state of complete indifference. But the moment indifference vanishes, choice is made, and the fact that indifference gave place to preference, overthrows the

argument that the will is capable of choosing between two equal things. As we have said, **choice implies the acceptance of one alternative and the rejection of others.**

That which influences **the will is that which causes it to choose.** And if the **will is influenced,** then there must be an **influencer.** What is it that influences the will? We reply, The strongest motivating power which is brought to bear upon it. And what is this motivating power? It varies in different cases. With one it may be the logic of reason, with another conscience, with another the impulse of the emotions, with another the whisper of the tempter, with another the power of the Holy Spirit; **whichever of these** presents the strongest motivating power and exerts the greatest influence upon the individual himself, **is that which impels the will to act.**

In other words, the action of the will is influenced 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 excite.

If the will is controlled, it is neither sovereign nor free, but is the servant of the mind.

Therefore, it is only natural to see that outside considerations must be concerned if we are to make any decisions concerning our will. In other words what motivates the will to do and to act? If there are any considerations that are external to our own will then those become forceful factors when making our decision to act. And if the will can be controlled by an outside forceful factor, then the will is subservient to outside factors. and if subservient then it is not sovereign.

Because in the strictest sense of the word, to be sovereign means you answer to no one, and are completely independent from all. Therefore to be sovereign in your will, you must be not only omniscient but omnipotent. For if you are omniscient you know all things and there is nothing that you do not know. Now, we know that knowledge is power. If you know even one thing more than the other guy you can use that one thing as a leverage over that person. And Omnipotent means all powerful, which means you are able to enforce whatever your desires are. Therefore man's will is not sovereign. Only God is sovereign.

Human philosophers insists that it is the will which governs the man, but the Word of God teaches us that it is the heart which is the dominating center of our being.

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

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*".

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 latter refer to God's will!

When we see that it is the heart and not the will which motivates the man, we are not merely striving about words, but insisting on a distinction that is of vital importance. Here is an individual before whom two alternatives are placed; which will he choose? We answer, the one which is most agreeable to himself, i.e., his "**heart**" which is the innermost core of his being.

In the path of the sinner is set either a life of virtue and piety, or a life of sinful indulgence; so which will he follow? The sinner always chooses the latter. Why? Because this is his choice. "There is a way that seemeth right unto man but the end thereof is the way of death". But does that prove the will is sovereign? Not at all.

In order to understand this we must go back from effect to cause. Why does the sinner choose a life of sinful indulgence? Because he prefers it, all arguments to the contrary notwithstanding, though of course he doesn't necessarily enjoy the effects of his choices. And why does he prefer it? 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 new nature*. Hence we say **it is not the will** which makes the sinner impervious to appeals to him to "**forsake his way**", but 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:

Jeremiah 17:9 tells us *The heart is deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

In defining the will we have said above, that "**the will is the faculty of choice, the immediate cause of all action.**" We say the immediate cause, for **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.

Does Scripture make its appeal to man's will? Isn't it written in **Revelations 22:17**, "*And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*"?

And did not our Lord say in **John 5:40**, "*ye will not come to me that ye might have life*"?

But the Scripture is not only made concerning man's "will"; other faculties are also addressed. For example: "*He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*" "*Hear and your soul shall live*", "*faith cometh by hearing*", "*Look unto me and be ye saved.*" "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved.*" "*Come now and let us reason together*", "*with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*", etc., etc.

Next I would like to examine **The Bondage of the Human Will.**

As we examine the human will, its nature and functions, we must look at the will of man as it is seen in three classes of believer namely, Adam before his fall, then the sinner, and finally the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the un-fallen Adam his will was free, free in both directions, free toward good and free toward evil. Adam was created in a state of innocence, but not in a state of holiness, as is so often assumed and asserted. In Adam there was no constraining bias in him toward either good or evil, and as such, Adam differed radically from all his descendants, as well as from "*the Man Christ Jesus*." But with the sinner it is far otherwise. The sinner is born with a will that is not in a condition of innocence, because in him there is a heart that is "*deceitful above all things and desperately wicked*", and this gives him a bias toward evil.

So, too, with the Lord Jesus it was just the opposite. He also differed radically from un-fallen Adam. The Lord Jesus Christ could not sin because he was "the Holy One of God." Before he was born into this world it was said to Mary, **Luke 1:35** "*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*".

Speaking reverently then, 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 toward that which is good because, side by side with his sinless, holy, perfect humanity, was his eternal Deity. Or as brother Branham said, "*he did not bypass his theophany, therefore he knew who he was and he knew the will of God and as Jesus said, his entire purpose in life was to do the will of the Father.*"

Now in contradistinction from the will of the Lord Jesus which was biased toward good, 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 his depraved heart.

So where does the sinner's freedom consist? This question is naturally suggested by what we have just said above. The sinner is "*free*" in the sense of being unforced from without. God never forces the sinner to sin. Remember we read in **Psalm 1:6** "*God watches over the way of the righteous but the way of the sinner is left to himself.*" So God just does not get involved in the life of the sinner. he is left to himself.

But that does not mean the sinner is "*free*" to do either good or evil, because an evil heart within him already inclines him toward unbelief. And that is what the Scripture teaches.

John 3:18 *He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, (notice he comes to the world already condemned.) because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (God leaves him to himself and does not place within him the ability to make a right decision.)* **19** *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* **20** *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.* **21** *But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*

Let me illustrate what I have in mind. I am holding a book in my hand. If I release it; what will happen? It will fall, right? Ok, so it will fall which mean that there is buy one direction it will fall. Right? That is Downwards; always downwards. So Why is that? Because, the law of gravity takes over, and its own weight sinks it.

Now, God has another law that is call the law of life, which in **Genesis 1:11** says, "*every seed will bring forth after its kind.*"

Suppose I desire this book to occupy a position three feet higher; than it is right now? Then what? I must lift it up; therefore a power outside of this book must raise it up. That is the relationship which fallen man has with God. While His divine power upholds him fallen man, he is preserved from plunging still deeper into sin; but let that power be withdrawn completely, and he falls by his own weight of sin and it drags him down. God does not push him down, any more than I pushed the book down. Therefore let all divine restraint be removed, and every man is capable of becoming, a Cain, a Pharaoh, a Judas.

How then can a sinner become heaven bound? By an act of his own will? It's not possible. A power outside of himself must take a hold of him and lift him every inch of the way. The sinner is free, but free in only one direction, he is free to fall, he is free to sin.

As the Word expresses this in **Romans 6:20** "*For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness*". The sinner is free to do as he pleases, always as he pleases (except as he is restrained by God), but never forget his pleasure is to sin.

But as brother Branham said, when you are filled with the very Life of God you are also free to do as you wish, but all you wish is to do the will of God. "*For it is God who is working in you both to will and to do.*"

In our opening statements in this sermon I mentioned that a proper conception of the nature and function of the will is of a practical importance to us, that it constitutes a fundamental test of theological right-wise-ness, or doctrinal soundness based on Biblical truth.

I would like to amplify this statement and attempt to demonstrate its accuracy. 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. In taking the affirmative we shall now consider, **The Impotency Of The Human Will**. Does it lie within man's will to accept or reject the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour? Think about that, because that is the great debate.

Granted that the Gospel is preached to the sinner, that the Holy Spirit convicts him of his lost condition, does it, in the final analysis, lie within the power of his own will to resist or to yield himself up to God?

When we say that man is totally depraved, we mean that the entrance of sin into the human constitution has affected every part and faculty of man's being. Total depravity means that man is, in spirit and soul and body, the slave of sin and the captive of the Devil which according to **Ephesians 2:2** "*walking according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*".

So I want you to notice the difference between God's elect and non elect. The non elect we are told has *the spirit of the Devil working in them* while the elect have "*God working in them both to will and to do.*"

This statement is not to be argued over. For it is a common fact of human experience. Man is unable to realize his own aspirations and materialize his own ideals. He cannot do the things that he would. There is a moral inability which paralyzes him.

This is proof positive that he is not a free man, but instead, he is the slave of sin and Satan.

John 8:44 *"Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts (desires) of your father ye will do"*. Therefore sin is more than just an act or a series of acts; it is actually a state of condition: It is that which lies behind and produces the acts. For sin is simply unbelief. And it penetrates and permeates the whole of man's make up.

Sin, or unbelief blinds the understanding, corrupts the heart, and alienates the mind from God as we see in **Ephesians 4:17**. *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18. Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19. Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20. But ye have not so learned Christ;*

The will is under the dominion of sin and Satan. and therefore, the will is not free. In short, the "*affections*" love as they do, and the "*will*" chooses as it does because of the state of the heart, and because as we read in **Romans 3:11** "*the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked*" and "*There is none that seeketh after God*"

So again I'll repeat the question; Does it lie within the power of the sinner's will to yield himself up to God?

To answer that let me ask that same question in a different way. Can water (of itself) rise above its own level? Can a clean thing come out of an unclean? Can the will reverse the whole tendency and strain of its law of life? Can that which is under the dominion of sin produce that which is pure and holy?

Of course the answer to all of these is no. If ever the will of a fallen and depraved creature is God-wards, a Divine power must be brought to bear upon it which will overcome the influences of sin that pull it in a counter direction. This is just another way of saying what Jesus said in "**John 6:44**. "*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him*"

In other words, as we read in **Psalm. 110:3** "*God's people must be made willing in the day of His power*".

"If Christ came to save that which is lost", then free will has no place. Not that God prevents men from receiving Christ, far from it. But even when God uses all possible inducements, such as "*giving gifts unto all men, the rebellious also*", or in "*sending His rain*" which is his doctrine "*o the just and the unjust*".

We see that even when God uses all His power to bless, yet the non elect cannot change their nature for "*they were afore of old ordained to this condemnation*". And no matter how much God induces him to call out to Him, yet he is incapable of surrendering his will to the will of the Father because he cannot go beyond the law of life.

Therefore, so corrupt is his heart, and so decided his will not to submit to God (however much it may be the devil who encourages him to sin) that nothing can induce him to receive the Lord, and to give up sin. If by the words, '*freedom of man*', they mean that no one forces him to reject the Lord, this liberty fully exists. But if it is said that, on account of the dominion of sin, of which he is the slave, and that voluntarily, he cannot escape from his condition, and make choice of the good even while acknowledging it to be good, and approving of it, then he has no liberty whatsoever. "*He is not subject to the law, neither indeed can be*" the Bible says, and hence, "*they that are into self cannot please God.*"

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

Man is a rational being and as such he is responsible and accountable to God, but to affirm that he is a free moral agent is to deny that he is totally depraved. Depraved in his will as in everything else. Because man's will is governed by his mind and heart, and because these have been corrupted by sin, then it follows that if ever man is to turn in a God-ward direction, "*God himself must work in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure*" **Philippians 2:13**.

Man freedom is reality is the "*bondage of corruption*"; and in his sin he "*serves divers lusts and pleasures*." Man is impotent as to his will. He has no will of his own that is favorable to God.

We believe in free will; but then it is a will only free to act according to its nature. A dove has no will to eat carrion; a raven has no will to eat the clean food of the dove. But as Brother Branham would say, "*if you could put the nature of the dove into the raven then the raven will eat the food of the dove*".

Satan has no will for holiness. and thusly, God could have no will for evil. That is just the law of life. The sinner in his sinful nature could never have a will according to God. For this he must first be born again". For the will must act according to the law of life within him.

The superficial work of many of the professional evangelists of the last fifty years is largely responsible for the erroneous views now current upon the bondage of the natural man, encouraged by the laziness of those in the pew in their failure to "*prove all things*" according to **1 Thessalonians 5:21**.

The average Christian today conveys the impression that it lies wholly in the power of the sinner whether or not he shall be saved. It is said that "*God has done his part, now man must do his.*" Well, to answer that all we have to do is ask the question, "*what can a lifeless man do*", and since man by nature is "*dead in trespasses and sins*" **Ephesians 2:1**, then If this were really believed, there would be more dependence upon the Holy Spirit to come in with his miracle working power, and less confidence in our own attempts to "*win men for 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 order for this illustration to be in any wise true to the picture which Scripture gives us of the fallen and depraved sinner, the sick man in bed must be described as one who is blind **Ephesians 4:18** so that *he cannot see the medicine*, his hand paralyzed **Romans 5:6** so that he is *unable to reach forth for it*, and his heart not only devoid of all confidence in the medicine but filled with hatred against the physician himself **John 15:18**. O what superficial views of man's desperate plight are now being set forth! **Christ came here not to help those who were willing to help themselves, but to do for his people what they were incapable of doing for themselves: "To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house"** **Isaiah 42:7**.

Why preach the Gospel if man is powerless to respond? Why bid the sinner come to Christ if sin has so enslaved him that he has no power in himself to come? the reply is, we do not preach the Gospel because we believe that men are free moral agents, and therefore capable of receiving Christ, but we preach it because we are commanded to do so **Mark 16:15**; and according to **1 Corinthians 1:18** "*though to them that perish it is foolishness*, yet, "*unto us which are saved it is the power of God*".

We also read in "**1 Corinthians 1:25** "*The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men*".

And again in **Ephesians 2:1** *The sinner is dead in trespasses and sins*, and a dead man is utterly incapable of willing anything, hence according to **Romans 8:8** "*they that are in into self* (the unregenerate) *cannot please God*".

To the unregenerate wisdom, it appears the height of folly to preach the Gospel to those that are dead, and therefore beyond the reach of doing anything themselves. Yes, but God's ways are different from ours. It pleases God "*by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*" **1 Corinthians 1:21**.

Man may deem it folly to prophesy to "*dead bones*" and to say unto them, "*O, ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord*" **Ezekiel 37:4**. Yes, but then it is the word of the Lord, and the words he speaks according to Jesus in **John 6:63** "*My words are spirit, and they are life*".

Wise men standing by the grave of Lazarus might pronounce it an evidence of insanity when the Lord addressed a dead man with the words, "**Lazarus, Come forth.**" But he who thus spake was and himself the Resurrection and the Life, and at his word even the dead live!

We go forth to preach the Gospel, then, not because we believe that sinners have within themselves the power to receive the Saviour it proclaims, but because "**the Gospel itself is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth**", and because we know "**that as many as were ordained to eternal life shall believe**" **Acts 13:48**

What we have set forth today is not a product of "our own thinking" but God' thoughts towards mans will. Christianity itself has departed so far from the teachings of the scriptures that we were told it will take the Spirit of Elijah to restore is back to the doctrine of the fathers.

Now, in closing I am going to give you just seven quotes from God's prophet that will sum up everything we have covered by Scriptures this morning.

1) From his sermon **QA Hebrews part 1 COD 57-0925 P:40** Brother Branham said, "*Now, look here. Scriptures no doubt tell us that **these are they who will not be saved. Therefore, if the atonement cover all of Adam's race, and some were lost because they did not avail themselves of the promise, or the provision, would not... must we... will he... be a mightier force than eternal plans and purposes of Almighty God? Would it be... (the person now on this second question, is asking) Would not man's free will be a mightier force than the eternal plans and purpose of an almighty God? **No,** my brother or sister, **certainly not.** There is nothing more powerful... Man's will could never compare with the eternal purpose of God's judgment. **It couldn't be.** See?***

God of this evil age 65-0801M P:29 *The outside man is a physical being which is controlled by six senses, or five senses, rather. The inside man is a spirit man which is controlled by five senses: Conscience, and love, and so forth. The outside man: see, taste, feel, smell, hear. But the inside of that spirit is a soul, and it's controlled by one thing: your free will. You can accept what the devil says or accept what God says. And **that'll determine what spirit's in there. If it's a spirit of God, it'll feed on the things of God, and it won't feed on anything of the world.** Jesus said, "**If you love the world or the things of the world, it's because the love of God's not even entered this inner part.**" Satan's deceived you. "**And man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**"*

Hear ye Him 58-0301E P:89 *Then the Word of God, which is infallible, proves that Jesus Christ didn't heal nobody until God showed Him a vision on what to do. **Find one place in the Bible where a prophet ever did anything without God showing him what to do. It's not man; it's God.** Even God didn't recognize the flesh of His own Son to give Him free will for whatever He did. **He did just as the Father told Him.***

Hebrews Chapter 6 57-0908E P:12 *God calls who He will. And it's all by election. We find out that it's not him that wants to be saved, **not him that willeth or him that runneth,***

*it's God that showeth mercy. And no man can come to Jesus except God draws him first. So what you got to do with it anyhow? You haven't got nothing to do with it. You're out of the picture altogether. We found out that **man never seeks after God**; it's God seeking after man.*

Great warrior David 55-0118 P:3 *Last night we were speaking on the same thing, that gifts and callings are without repentance. It's God's election and foreknowledge is what makes the thing so. If we have a desire, the Bible said, "It's not him that willeth, or him that runneth, but it's God that showeth mercy." See? It's not whether you will, or whether you want to, or where your desires is, it's whether it is God's will or not. Then we have to find out God's will, and if it's that perfect, we can just set our faith to that and say, "This is it." And we can run right on the way the will of God runs.*

QA on the seals 63-0324M P:55 *There's only one way you can be saved, and that is not him that willeth or him that runneth, it's God Who shows mercy. And God by His foreknowledge predestinated a Church to His glory, and that's the ones that's saved. That's right.*

Serpent's seed 58-0928E P:39 *No wonder Paul said in **Romans 8**, "Foolish man, who can tell the Potter what to do about it?" Who... When the clay raise up and says, "Why make you--me thus." Did not He raise Pharaoh up for the same purpose, that He might show His glory down in Egypt? He hardens who He will and justify who He will. It's not him that willeth, or him that runneth, but God that showeth mercy. So you have nothing to do with it. You haven't one thing to do. If it's grace, if it's a free gift, there's not a thing you can do about it. God has give it to you, and that's the will of God. That's the thing that God has predestinated to you.*

Let us pray...