

God's will my dwelling place By Andrew Murray

Chapter 12 KNOWING GOD'S WILL

Acts 22: 14, 15 **Ananias said, The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear the voice of His mouth; for you will be His witness to everyone, of what you have seen and heard,**

When Saul said, Lord! What will You have me to do? He was referring to personal and immediate duty. When Ananias, after three days, spoke of his call from God "to know His will," the thought was a much larger one. Saul had been prepared by God as His chosen vessel, to whom he could entrust "the mystery of His will," "the mystery of Christ," "which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God," "that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus, through the Gospel" (Eph. 1: 3, 9-10, 3: 3-4, 6, 9).

Eph 1:3 **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heaven, in Christ,** (Rom 8:1 ...Those who are in Christ, who live according to the Spirit and not the flesh).

9 **Having made known to us the mystery (not knowable naturally) of His will...**

10 **That in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ...**

Eph 3:3 How that by revelation He made known to me the mystery...

4 **By which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ** (not knowable by human intelligence only by revelation),

6 **That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel** (by God's living word - Christ),

9 **And to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things** (by His word, Jesus Christ, that is. by the breath of His mouth, Psa 33:6, John 1:1)

[Col 1:26-28 **The mystery which...now has been revealed to His saints...To them God willed to make known...this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you** (His living word and Spirit in your heart) **the hope of eternal glory.**

28 **Him (God's living word) we preach, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ Jesus.]**

I have previously spoken of the need of not confining our knowledge of God's will to the commands and promises which only refer to us personally. All God's children are called to enlarge their hearts, to take a personal interest in the great work God seeks to carry out in the world, and so to be ready to take their part in the fulfillment of His purpose -- the winning back of the world to Him, to be the kingdom of His Son.

In studying Paul's surrender to Christ's will in conversion, we saw how closely that was linked to his vision of the Lord in heaven. Here we find the same connection:

"Appointed to know His will, and to see the Righteous One." The mystery of God's will is the mystery of Christ: to know the will is inseparable from knowing the Righteous One, who put away sin, and is to rule in righteousness on the earth. In the life and writings of Paul we see how firmly he holds the two truths together. It is ever: **Jesus Christ our Lord, through Him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith** - Rom 1:5 NIV.

As one who had seen and heard Him, Paul's Gospel was ever a personal witness. He never preached the will of God as a doctrine, or a decree, or even as a revelation, apart from the living person of that Lord Jesus. In whom that will had revealed all its riches and blessings, and in personal contact with whom alone its salvation could be realized. To know the will, and to see the Righteous One, let these ever be inseparable. The living Christ Himself can alone fit us to know and do the will of God. To know the will and not see the Righteous One would make it a new law of Moses, a burden heavy to be borne. To see Him is to know the will in the light of God's love, to know it in its Divine beauty and perfection, and to receive the power to do it.

All that God did in Paul was "**for an example unto them who would hereafter believe...**" - 1 Tim 1:16. Like him, and through him, each of us is called, in our measure to know this larger will of God, His purpose for all is that the Gospel should be preached to every person. There is no sadder proof of how little it is understood or preached than the lack, in the great majority of Christians, of anything like enthusiastic devotion to the cause of Missions. Just as Christ, so His Church, is only in the world to carry out this Father's Divine will,

Even among those who do give missions a measure of support, there is so little awareness of the overwhelming prominence which ought to be given to this will of God. It is not one command among others. It is the one thing in which the will of the Father includes everything: that all people should know and honor Christ. It is the one thing for which Christ died and lives. It is the one thing for which the Church exists, to be a light to them that are in darkness. It is the one thing by which a child of God can prove that they live not unto themselves but unto Him that died for him and rose again. It is the one truth that above all else needs to be restored to its place and which assuredly will bring the revival of every other truth of the spiritual life. This is in very deed the very will of God, that the Church as the body of Christ, and every believer as its member, is to

seek first, absolutely first, the kingdom of God. All are to labor that His will be done throughout the earth, as in heaven.

And what can be the explanation, if this is the will of God, that the Church has so little apprehended or fulfilled it? If Paul was divinely illuminated to know that will, and to make it known to the Church, why has it so little possessed the Church of Christ? The answer is not far to seek. Just as in Paul this will of God needed a very special spiritual revelation, it is so still. It is easy, when once a truth has been seen and pointed out by spiritual people, for other Christians to see and accept it too. And yet it may be an article of mental belief, that does not really, through living faith, master and possess the heart.

The will of God is a living spiritual energy; we do not know that will truly until it has entered and filled our will. As love alone can meet love, and heart alone touch heart, so will alone can apprehend will. Anything less is but a mental image, a conception of the truth, not the thing itself in its reality and power. And so a great deal of the missionary interest of our day proves, by the feeble hold it has, and the little sacrifice there is made for it, and the continual bickering over petty details, that the knowledge of this mystery of God's will is not held in the power of the Spirit.

Paul speaks of "**the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**" It is only as the mystery of Christ in us, the experience of an indwelling Christ is truly known, that the glory of the mystery will be seen to be this, that it is the will of God for all the Gentiles. The more truly I know by the Spirit what it is to have Christ living in me (and for me, my will, to be living in Him), the more I shall long and labor that it may be Christ living in all.

"God has appointed you to know His will, and to see the Righteous One, and to hear the voice of His mouth, and to be His witness of what you have seen and heard." God gave Paul as an example; in your measure this word is for you also, my reader. Do believe that in this mystery of God's will for the Gentiles the glory of God, of Christ, of the Church, of every believer is centered. All God's wisdom and power, His holiness and love and faithfulness meet in it. And you are appointed -- what a privilege -- to know His will, and have it possess you, and use you as its instrument and messenger and witness.

Do not fear to yield yourself utterly to it, a living sacrifice. **"Appointed to know His will, and"** (here is your strength) **"to see the Righteous One"**. He Himself brought that will and now works mightily in all who see Him, and receive Him as their Lord who lives in them. Oh! cast yourself into this mighty stream of Divine love -- the will of God for the salvation of the ends of the earth. Look up and see and worship the Righteous One, the Lord our Righteousness, the King of Righteousness, whose rule is to bring peace and blessing to the world. As you do, then to seek to do all God's will for the establishment of His kingdom, will become your one ambition.