

Lesson 65

10.17. God's Will in the Area of the Word

- We study God's will for the Church and can summarize it as what Jesus said before ascending to heaven after his resurrection: *'You will be my witnesses.'* This is God's basic will for the Church age. However, God reveals his will in each age through three areas: Word, Worship, and Government.
- Let us specify how each individual in the Church carries out the Word of God. Jesus left this imperative for the Church: *'Go and preach the gospel.'*

⇒ **Mark 16:15;** *'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.'*

- There are two types of messages that the Church of Jesus Christ conveys. When we say *'Church,'* think of yourself individually because the Church is you. It is important to distinguish between the two types of messages we convey to others because this will help us avoid many problems:
 1. The message for those who do not know Jesus.
 2. The message for those who have already accepted Jesus as the Lord and Savior of their lives.

⇒ **1 Corinthians 15:1~4**

⇒ **Romans 10:9~10**

- The message for those who do not know Jesus is simple: *'You are a sinner, but Jesus suffered on the cross and paid the penalty for your sins. He died, was buried, and rose again. If you accept this into your life and confess that Jesus is Lord and Savior, you will be saved.'*
- An unbeliever who does not yet have Jesus in his life will only understand the literal meaning of this part of the Bible. Therefore, don't argue with him about the flood, Cain's wife, the Ten Commandments, or the Sermon on the Mount. Only those who have Jesus can believe in these things. The Holy Spirit makes us believe and shows us the true Word. We will only have the Holy Spirit in us after we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. How can you expect an unbeliever, who does not have the Holy Spirit, to understand that the flood was universal or that Satan was a cherub who fell, separated himself from God, and became His enemy? He will look at you and laugh.

⇒ **John 14:15~17**

⇒ **John 14:26**

⇒ **John 16:13**

- If we tell someone who hasn't been born again that the Church will be raptured in the blink of an eye – meaning you're on earth one moment and in the air with Jesus the next – it sounds crazy to that person. Of course, we are not going to tell that person that they will go to hell if they do not accept Jesus. We must have God's wisdom to guide them to accept Jesus into their lives.

⇒ **Acts 8:26~40;** *'And beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him..'*

- The Ethiopian was reading a passage from the Bible when the Holy Spirit sent Philip to evangelize him. Based on what the Ethiopian was reading, Philip *'took the cue, reached his target, and proclaimed Jesus to him'*. Suppose you are evangelizing someone when they suddenly say, *'But what about the flood?'* You could reply, *'We'll talk about that later. Now, let's continue where we were.'* Then, continue with the evangelism. Don't fall for it. Take advantage of the person's interest without getting into an argument. Announce Jesus to him from that subject. The Holy Spirit will enable you to do this. Believe it and start practicing.
- Jesus preached based on people's interests; he took advantage of the circumstances of the moment. This is how we should do it. This is the message for those who do not know Jesus.

⇒ **John 4:7~15**

- Now, for those who are saved, the message is much greater. Once an unbeliever accepts Jesus and is born again, it is your responsibility to disciple them or refer them to someone who can, such as a group or Church. Unless it is an evangelistic service, an unbeliever will not understand anything at a Church service. Evangelism does not take place in the Church. Hence the imperative, *'Go into all the world,'* because it is outside that you will preach the gospel. The local Church is where you gather children into a family and disciple new converts.

⇒ **Ephesians 4:11~16;** *'Jesus gave the Church the gift of teaching so that discipleship could flourish.'*

⇒ **Romans 12:6~8;** *The gift of teaching, to teach.'*

⇒ **2 Peter 3:17~18;** *'But grow in the grace and knowledge.'*

⇒ **2 Timothy 3:14~17;** *We must be prepared for every good work.'*

⇒ **2 Timothy 2:14~15;** *Instead of quarreling with people, 'we should handle the Word of Truth well.'*

- However, the Bible warns us to test whether everything we are taught comes from God. It states that there will be false teachers and pastors. This should alert God's people because there are false teachers and pastors who use the Word of God but distort it.

⇒ **1 John 4:1;** *'Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God.'*

⇒ **1 Peter 5:2~3;** *The standard for pastors.'*

⇒ **2 Peter 2:1~2;** *'But there were also false prophets among the people.'*

⇒ **Jude 4;** *'For certain men have crept in unnoticed.'*

- Then, suddenly, a false prophet appears, and the people follow him. They say, *'I don't believe in the Bible anymore.'* However, the Bible warns us that this will happen. We have a choice: we can leave, flee, let it go, or go to the false prophet and tell him the truth. How do you recognize a false prophet? How do you recognize a false teacher?

⇒ **Acts 17:10~11**

It was Paul who spoke here. In God's eyes, nobility is not determined by titles like count or baron. Rather, the true nobles are those who eagerly receive the Word of God. When they hear it, they say, '*Ah! He is speaking. I will check. I will examine the Scriptures to see if these things are so.*' This is how we detect false teachers, false apostles, prophets, and pastors. Have you heard a prophet outside the Bible? '*Rubbish,*' don't listen to them.

- However, if you don't know the Bible, how will you know? Do you understand that if we don't know the Word of God, we have no way of knowing what is false? For example, consider counterfeit money in England. Bank tellers are familiar with real bills, so when they receive counterfeit bills, they immediately recognize them. They can tell just by touch whether a bill is real or fake because they know what a real bill feels like. You are listening to a study, and suddenly, a false note sounds out of tune. Sometimes it's just one thing, and sometimes it's the whole orchestra. What should you do? Run away and leave it behind. If we know the real thing, we will not be deceived; otherwise, we will be '*taken in.*'
- All of this falls under the category of the Word. What have we learned? We have learned to deliver two different messages: one for unbelievers and one for the saved. A Church that only evangelizes does not allow its members to grow spiritually, so the saved must be disciplined in all of God's Word. Conversely, if you preach doctrine to an unbeliever, they won't understand and will never be saved. We cannot confuse these two messages because they are specific to each situation.
- The main message we need to understand is that a vibrant life with Jesus, full of victories, is only possible if we love the Word of God and are willing to spend hours with Him. We must discipline ourselves and ask the Lord for grace before the Father. With this message in our hearts, we must walk forward with Jesus.

10.18. We need to be empowered by God

- Today, we are studying God's will for us within the Church. If we read the Bible from Romans to Jude, we will see God's will for us as individuals and as an organization. However, we will soon notice that (*and we need to be aware of that*) there is nothing within us that enables us to carry out God's will as it is revealed there. We need God's grace in our lives to fulfill His will. Under no circumstances can we lose sight of this.
- Now, we need to be careful because Jesus told his disciples:
 ⇒ **John 6:60~67**

'Do you also want to leave?' When they saw this, many of his disciples abandoned him and no longer walked with him. They gave up walking with Jesus, not because they wanted to sin again, but because they turned back. We run the same danger; giving up walking with Jesus means turning back.

- We are walking with Jesus, and if we give up on that, we will only walk backwards. Many today spend time doing the work of Jesus Christ, yet they are not walking with Jesus. God's only constant requirement is that we be one with Jesus. This was Jesus' own prayer for the apostles, disciples, and for us.

⇒ **John 17:9~26**

- If God has given you a clear and specific vision for your life, don't try to achieve it through human methods. Instead, live a simple life of absolute dependence on God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Never try to live life with God in any way other than God's way. Living God's will is devotion to Him. He says, *'You don't have the ability to do what I want. Depending on me.'* We simply have to tell God, *'I don't know how you're going to do this in my life, but I'm ready. Fill me with your grace.'*
- Being sure of this dependence is the key to walking with Jesus. We must decide not to turn back. Why were we born again? God created man, but man sinned and lost the image of God. When you are saved through Jesus Christ, you are not simply saved from hell or saved to go to heaven. You are saved to receive back what Adam lost: the image of God.
- This lost image of God first returns to our spirit instantly. (*This is how Adam lost it: he lost his life in the spirit instantly after sinning.*) Then, your soul is saved and sanctified, but it is a process. Salvation of our soul is not instantaneous; it is a transformation. (*It is also a reverse process to which man is subjected, moving further and further away from God's standards*). Finally, the transformation of our bodies will occur in the 'blink of an eye'. At the rapture, we will receive a glorified body. *'Physical death entered the human race instantly after sin ⇒ Genesis 2:17: 'but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die'.* First, you die spiritually; then, you die physically. These are the same steps in reverse. Adam took steps forward beyond what he should have, and now we take steps backward to receive the image of God lost in the beginning.
- The great struggle in all this is the sanctification of our souls, which is a difficult process. (*The salvation of our spirits and bodies is instantaneous through God's mercy*). We do not want to 'give up' our lives: our religious lives, social lives, economic lives, and so on. We tell Jesus: *'Lord, I accept you as my Savior. That's fine, but I'll continue to take care of my own life.'* This is the big problem and risk we run: giving up walking with Jesus and turning back. We need Jesus not only as our Savior, but also as the absolute Lord of our lives. To achieve this, we must renounce our ego and the will of our soul and replace them with the will of God.

⇒ **Mark 8:34~38;**

'For whoever desires to save his life (Psyche) will lose it, but whoever loses his life (Psyche) for My sake and the gospel's will save it.'

⇒ **Romans 12:2;**

'And do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (renewal of your soul), that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.'

- Our big problem today is the transformation of our souls. We must change our old patterns of life to align with God's Word. It's not just about stopping adultery, stealing, and other obvious sins. The great sin that keeps us separated from God and far from the image of God within us, even though we are saved, is our unwillingness to walk with Jesus. We say, *'I don't want to walk in the yoke of Christ. It's too different from my way of life.'*
- This pride within us must fall in the name of Jesus. Pride prevents God from acting in our lives and using us as channels of blessings. When this pride falls, God is set free and we become malleable in His hands.
It's not enough to learn everything in the Bible or to know all of God's plans. More than that, you have to become aware of the Spirit of God and surrender yourself. Throw yourself into God's hands without fear and say, 'Father, take away everything in me that does not please you. Take away everything that prevents you from acting freely in my life.'
- The moment you say that a '*cleansing*' truly begins, and it's no joke. We are like the '*desert acacia*' that was transformed into boards for the tabernacle and covered with gold. This is the work the Lord is doing in each of us. For this, we are saved: to be restored to the image of God as when man was created. When you cut down a desert acacia tree, you first have to chop away the bark, which hurts. Then, we go over it with coarse sandpaper and then fine sandpaper. All this work is '*painful*' because we must renounce the will of our '*soul*,' but it is glorious. The crooked, hard acacia tree in the desert is transformed into a straight, orderly board. Finally, it is covered with gold. This is what God is doing in us.
- Do you know why it hurts? It hurts because we like to be like desert acacias. It hurts because our old nature, our flesh, likes sin. Remember, our flesh is not saved, so it must be subjugated by the Spirit. Our flesh will not be transformed, but our souls must be transformed and sanctified through the Word of God. Therefore, it is useless to discover God's will for you or for the Church today if you don't have the power to carry it out. It is difficult; it is a battle within us. But this is the only way to become what God wants us to be.

⇒ **Galatians 5:16~26;**

The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit.

⇒ **1 John 2:15~17;**

But whoever does the will of God lives forever.

- Recognizing our own weakness and allowing God to empower us is the only way to be victorious. We must walk in this world as Jesus did, overcoming the world, sin, the flesh, and the devil. Wherever Jesus went, he undid the devil's work. The Church must walk in this manner as well. Wherever we go, we must undo the works of the devil and resist every appeal of the flesh. This will only happen if we allow the Holy Spirit to empower us.

- God gave the planet Earth to man, and He manifests Himself here only through man. God blesses the planet only through the Church. Today, it is through the Church that God acts on Earth. We must stop saying, 'How terrible the world is.' The world is indeed terrible, but we are God's channels for changing our environment, our home, and our workplace. The world will not change, but many will be saved if the Church works with the Holy Spirit.

⇒ **Revelation 22:17;** *'And the Spirit and the bride (the Church) say, Come!'*

- Remember what we studied? The Spirit plants one seed and the Church plants another. Look at the privilege of the Church! We must stop complaining about '*how difficult things are*' and act in accordance with the Holy Spirit of God. We can't hide the sun with a sieve, but we can change our attitude. Instead of complaining, the Church should kneel and pray to the Father: '*Bless and change the things around us. Change the things in our homes, in our workplaces, and in our country. Give us peace.*' We must begin releasing words of blessing instead of murmuring and complaining.