



## 10. Not my will but Yours

### How can you be absolutely sure that Satan will not have his way in your life?

Our lives are set up in such a way that we need to make daily, even hourly decisions. Humans have a free will, they are not robots. This is what makes us capable of true love; our choice. The problem comes in when we feel that we should exercise our free will without God. We were never created to exercise our free will without God. We may and we can, but this leads to disaster, and eventually to our being under the control of Satan.

When Adam and Eve refused to consult the Tree of Life (the Word of God), and instead consulted the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (their own intellect), they turned their lives over to Satan.

**Oftentimes Christians, even well meaning Christians** can get into the trap of using their own will without God involved. “Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails” (Proverbs 19:21).

**The Bible story that best illustrates this is Abraham,** Ishmael and Isaac. God came to Abram in Genesis 12 to call him out from his own family, his business and financial security, his idols and his method of worship in order to create a family to be called the “family of God.” This would be the Israelites, the Jews, and would eventually become Christians, the Body of Christ, God’s spiritual family.

**In Genesis 15 God appeared to Abram again** and they discussed having a child. “But Abram said, ‘O Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?’ And Abram said, ‘You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.’ Then the word of the LORD came to him: ‘This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir.’ He took him outside and said, ‘Look up at the heavens and count the stars--if indeed you can count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be.’ Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:2-6).

**Abram could not figure out how God was going to give him a child** since he was so old and his wife Sarah was barren and could not have children. He knew God’s will, and he figured that it was time to just do it. So he made his own plans for having a child.

“Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; so she said to Abram, ‘The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her.’ Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress.” (Genesis 16:1-4). Actually this was not an immoral act in those days as far as they were concerned. It certainly was not the way God created things to work and it caused a lot of heartache. The world had become so sinful that this had become normal, and God had not yet dealt with Abram about the Law and these kinds of

things. So in Abram's eyes, he was doing an innocent thing to help God with His plans. The child was named Ishmael.

**God was not finished with Abram however.** God had other plans, His plans! He came again to Abram some years later and told him about His plans. (Genesis 17)

**“When Abram was ninety-nine years old,** the LORD appeared to him and said, ‘I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.’ Abram fell face down, and God said to him, ‘As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you’ (Genesis 17:1-7).

**“God also said to Abraham,** ‘As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.’ Abraham fell face down; he laughed and said to himself, ‘Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?’ And Abraham said to God, ‘If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!’ Then God said, ‘Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year.’ When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him” (Genesis 17:15-22).

**Later, the Angel of the Lord visited Abraham and Sarah.** “‘Where is your wife Sarah?’ they asked him. ‘There, in the tent,’ he said. Then the LORD said, ‘I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.’ Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. Abraham and Sarah were already old and well advanced in years, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, ‘After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?’ Then the LORD said to Abraham, ‘Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son.’ Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, ‘I did not laugh.’ But he said, ‘Yes, you did laugh.’” (Genesis 18:9-15).

**“Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah** as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised. Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him” (Genesis 21:1-3).

**As it turned out, all of the Arab nations** came from Ishmael, Abraham's plans. Israel, Jesus and Christianity came from the supernatural birth of Isaac, which was God's plan and His own doing. Ishmael had a curse on him. “He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility towards all his brothers” (Genesis 16:12).

This surely has proven to be true. Israel and all the Arab states have been in a state of war and hatred for a long time. It is current news today! There are many precious Arab brothers in the Lord, but in general, the Arab countries have been against God's purposes for Israel.

**The lesson we are to learn from this** is that we need to allow God to perform those things for us that He wants. Sure we are supposed to work, study and try hard, but so far as our will is concerned, we are to offer that up to Him. Abraham should have had this attitude. He should have said, "Oh God, I know your promise to me, I understand You want me to have a child, and I don't see how that can possibly happen. Perhaps I misunderstood you, perhaps You have something else for me. I lay this desire of mine, and promise from You on the altar, and ask You to perform it for me if you want this for my life. I dare not touch this to help You. If this is from You, then I will wait until you perform it." We need to refuse to manipulate people and circumstances to get our way. God never does that, and we should be **afraid** to do it. This will ensure that we do not create an "Ishmael" in our life that we will be sorry for, perhaps forever.

**Take a lesson from Jerimiah.** The Lord told him that Israel was going into captivity to Babylon, and that eventually they would come back to their land. He told Jerimiah to make a real estate investment in anticipation of this return. However Jerimiah did not just go out and buy it even though he felt he knew God's will for him. Instead he waited until circumstances lined up with God's promise. Then he knew it was the word of the Lord.

"And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came to me, saying, Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum your uncle shall come to you, saying, Buy for yourself my field in Anathoth; for the right to redeem it *is* yours, to buy *it*. So Hanameel my uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD and said to me, Please buy my field in Anathoth, which *is* in the land of Benjamin; for the right of inheritance *is* yours, and the right to redeem *is* yours. Buy *it* for yourself. Then I knew that this *was* the word of the LORD." (Jeremiah 32:6-8).

**So many times I have been disappointed** when something did not work out. But later I saw God's hand in it protecting me from disaster! I am so thankful that God closed so many doors in my life, and that I allowed Him the right to close them!

**Jesus told us** "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33). Seeking His Kingdom is seeking the Word, and walking in righteousness and holiness. If we do that, God will add all the things we truly desire down deep in our hearts. When He brings something into our lives, it is perfect, and it truly makes us happy forever. He gives good gifts without sorrow. Sorrow is always attached to the things we bring into our own lives.

**How do we live this out on a daily basis?** "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and **perfect will**" (Romans 12:1,2). Offering our bodies daily means, not only offering our hands, feet, eyes, ears and tongue to Jesus, but also our intellect, our thinking, our will and our emotions. We make sure that we do not put junk in, so that junk will not come out. We will never have God's perfect will without it.

**If Jesus would not act on His own, how much more fearful should we be of acting on our own?**

In Luke chapter 4, the Devil tempted Jesus with acting independently from His Father. Jesus would not give in. The bottom line of these temptations was that they would all have led to “worshipping the Devil.”

“Jesus gave them this answer: ‘I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does’” (John 5:19).

“By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me” (John 5:30).

Why was this Jesus’ attitude? He was giving us the pattern for life for one thing. Jesus was here to turn around Adam’s sin of disobedience by being totally obedient to His Father. This is what got you and I saved. This is what will save us from trouble, and from Satan’s plans.

Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemene about going to the Cross. “He went away a second time and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done’” (Matthew 26:42).

**God’s will is what defeated Satan at the Cross, and it will defeat Satan in your life.**

“No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Corinthians 2:7,8).

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