

God's Will Confirmed by Jesus / James Montgomery Boice

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- (John 6:37–40 ESV) **37** All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. **38** For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. **39** And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. **40** For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

A Sure Salvation

In this section of John, three areas of God's will concerning us are mentioned. **First**, verse 37 tells us that the will of God is seen in our election. "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away." **Quite clearly, the plain sense of this passage is that God has chosen a great company of persons, all of whom he has given to Christ and all of whom will come to him.**

I do not understand why this doctrine is so vigorously resisted by so many, unless it is due to the fact that this is simply unlike man's normal way of thinking and runs against his desires. People have imagined that the responsibility of human beings for their sin is lessened if one speaks of election. But this is not true. It is true that some have preached election in a way that implies that people are not responsible, but this comes from following the dictates of reason rather than the plain teaching of the Word of God. God elects, but we are also responsible. Thus, I can stand in the pulpit and preach anything that an Arminian can preach about man's sin and the necessity for him to surrender his will to the Lord Jesus Christ. If you have

not believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, your failure to do so is your own responsibility; you are already, therefore, justly under condemnation. If you would be saved, you must come to Christ. You must do it. You must yield yourself to him. At that same time, I can come to a text like this and declare with equal force that if you do come it is because God chose you in Christ before the foundation of the world and quickened you irresistibly by grace so that your eyes were opened to see who Christ is and your will was moved to embrace him.

Someone has illustrated this by describing the door of salvation as containing two signs. On the outside—"Whosoever will may come." On the inside—"Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." **You say, "But am I among the elect?" I do not know. Believe in Christ; I will tell you the answer after you either receive or reject him. If you do believe, it is because the will of God the Father was confirmed by the will of God the Son in your election.**

Second, verse 39 tells us that the will of the Father is confirmed by the will of the Son in the matter of our preservation. "And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day." **This verse tells us that God's will is that no one who believes in Jesus Christ should ever be lost.** It tells us that Jesus confirmed this will of his Father by promising to raise up all who do believe at the last day.

Finally, the will of God is confirmed by Jesus in the matter of our entering into a new quality of life now. Verses 39–40 say, "And this is the will of him who sent me, that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." **Eternal life is a present possession. Hence, this verse adds to the**

preceding thought of the keeping power of God the equally important thought that God is determined to accomplish his will in us now. We must not think that God begins a work in us at the moment of our initial faith in Christ, completes it at the moment of our death, but is completely indifferent to what happens to us in the meantime. That is absurd and unbiblical. On the contrary, the fact that God has placed his own, eternal and everlasting life within us is evidence that his will extends to the way we live, think, act, and grow now.

God is Determined

Other verses also teach this. Philippians 1:6 is one: "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." This verse states that God is determined to carry out his plan in a Christian through this life until the moment in which the Christian dies or Jesus returns to take him home.

This is a remarkable statement if we really understand it. To put the matter bluntly, it means that God's great purpose (of which our election, calling, and preservation are only a part) is to make each person who believes in Jesus Christ like Jesus. It means that God is so delighted with his Son that he has created and called millions of sinful men to himself in order that he might reproduce Jesus Christ in them and so populate the universe with millions of Christs where there was only one before. This does not mean that we will become divine. God is still God. We are his children, parts of his creation. But it does mean that we will be like him, like Jesus. This is the point in the whole matter of our present transformation.

"I DELIGHT TO DO YOUR WILL,
O MY GOD?"

"TEACH ME TO DO YOUR WILL,
FOR YOU ARE MY GOD?"

*Do we pray like that? Do we long for
the delight of doing God's will?
If not, then why not?*

- (Psalm 40:8 ESV) I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.
- (Psalm 143:10 ESV) Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground!
- (Mark 3:35 ESV) For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.
- (Colossians 4:12 ESV) Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.
- (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 ESV) Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
- (1 Peter 2:15 ESV) For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.