

VINEYARD HARVEST

H O U S E C H U R C H

The Sword of the Spirit



The Word of God



“We are allowed to do all things [†All things are lawful/permissible],” but not all things are good for us to do [profitable; beneficial]. “We are allowed to do all things [†All things are lawful/permissible],” but not all things help others grow stronger 1 Cor 10.23

Harness your will

Apostle Paul is alluding (referring) to food in this passage in 1 Corinthians Chapter 10 but is using it to expound a spiritual theme pertaining to Christian conduct that should be practised in every walk of **Christian life**. The ever expanding word of God is able to accommodate our behaviour in a way (grace) that will make us realise that whilst we have freedom it is more profitable for us to behave in a manner that thinks about others more than of ourselves. In another passage in the Bible, Apostle Paul refers to his right to have a wife just like Peter and others but does not take one for the sake of the Gospel. He makes a point to emphasise the power of harnessing our will even though he does not expect that all will follow his example. ***Our will governs what we will do.***

Since God has given us a free will and we have submitted that will to God as Lord and Saviour, we must also submit to His will over ours. God does not override our will in most cases but expects that we will make a choice based on His commandments and wisdom. Not everything in Christianity is made righteous out of obeying a commandment; meaning to say, displaying wisdom or the lack of it plays a big part in how and what we decide. Since God has a permissive will many people exist in that vein of thinking believing that it is His perfect will **not realising** that it is separate to His perfect will. Even so, God allows us the freedom to choose till He gently begins to tug on us or till our circumstances in life do not quite work out. This causes us to question where we might be going wrong. When we stop to ponder on this, we might find that our actions and thoughts under His permissive will is no longer acceptable with Him for us to grow. ***It is then that we have to make a decision to change and subject ourselves to His perfect will.*** I remember a man who had seven children and wanted to provide for them. When I met him, he did not seem settled and travelled with his whole family from country to country in search of his destiny in life. Though he loved the Lord and often even heard God, yet in this area of his life he had no fulfilment. Finally, he ended up doing a well paid job working long and unusual hours. He had come to the conclusion that God had given him this job to provide for the future of his family. I had often ministered to him and his family previously but on this occasion when he told me that he was working in this manner, I asked him if he was going to church. He said ‘no’. He said he was too busy for church and besides he felt this was in God’s will for his life. Just then, I heard the Holy Spirit say to me to tell him that he was operating in God’s permissive will (grace) but not in God’s perfect will. When I told him that, it shook his very being. He then told his wife what I had said to him and admitted to the fact they he was now convicted about his error. What was his mistake? His mistake was to think that God had somehow given him permission to neglect his spiritual life for the benefit of a natural life. This is so common in the Christian world today that it is next to impossible to counsel most Christians about this area of their lack and difficulty in life because they are blinded by their own spirituality and will.

This can be a tricky area of spiritual growth for those who do not understand God. So many end up fighting Him on something they want to do but He says ‘no’. A classic case in point would be about who you should marry.

God may intervene when you decide to marry someone and say 'no'. You may not like that and go ahead and marry anyway. Then things do not work out and you realise you have made a big mistake. That mistake will not only be expensive and traumatic for you but to all who love you. Furthermore, it may deceive others to think it is okay to do what you did because they see you happy for sometime.

The Jews came out of Egypt with blessings but what started out in them as a blessing from God soon overtook them to become sin. They had given themselves a license to do what they wanted according to their will and understanding of God's word. They mistook the blessings of God in the wilderness for the approval of God and began to challenge Moses and commit all manner of sin and even made false gods.

The blessings of God are not always the approval of God

There are many Christian denominations in the world today who have ended up doing the same thing today. They start out well but end up bad. They have the form of Godliness but they deny the power. Today, many have approved, homosexuality, fornication, divorce, drinking, materialism and many other things that they just do not care what you do anymore as long as you attend church and pay your tithes. Added to this, they promote all manners of manifestations as being from God. They misuse the gifts and blessings to manipulate what they want according to their own will. They do not see how it is harming other Christians who are being taken away in this flood and at the same time causing unbelievers to stay away from coming to Church.

Dear friends, not everything is profitable or edifying to others or yourself. Being a Christian today in a dark and evil generation requires even greater care than ever before because we can easily compromise even to the point where we allow rather than correct. Many have joined in with the crowd in order to accommodate the crowds only to find themselves in sin and unable to extricate themselves from it. **What is it that makes you stand out?** Well, Daniel & Co decided not to partake of the King's delights because they felt that they would be compromising themselves before God. God honoured their decision. That decision to refrain caused them to be promoted to great men. I am sure that we can learn a lesson from this to apply in today's environment. When God was getting ready to bring Israel into the Promised Land, He said to them; 'you choose'. The choice was between blessing and cursing. Many have chosen wrongly in the past and paid a heavy price for it. When I chose to be angry with my mother for many years, I chose to be cursed not blessed. It took me a long time to work out that this was why I was not being blessed. Yet, God allowed me to continue in His permissive will for many years before I came to the conviction of my sin. This is God's grace but let us beware lest we lose out all together or many years of our lives in our disobedience and stubbornness and at the same time affect others by it. Secondly, let us not provoke God's grace. *Heb 12:15 Looking diligently lest any **man fail of the grace of God**; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

Apostle Paul was Saul in his pre-born again life. He was a learned man and a zealot. Though he loved God, he did not have the knowledge of God like he should have had. When his will was to destroy the Church, God knocked him off his donkey without asking him if that was okay or not. In other words, God intervened in Saul's will and changed him. It was then that Paul became who he was meant to be. Many of us need to understand God's will for our lives and come to the place where we begin to realise that maybe our ways and will are not cutting it for us in this life. We may need to take a step back and yield to God's perfect will and see if somehow we missed the mark. If others are being affected by our **unrighteous acts** we will know by that we are not in God's will. If others are being affected by our **righteous acts** for better or for worse then we will know we are in His will. Both Jesus and Paul affected many Jews and offended them by their words of truth and righteous behaviour. God still used them because they were in His perfect will.

Let us also abandon our ways and thoughts and come to Jesus the perfect example of one who did all things well in the sight of God. Man still does not accept Him and is often offended by Him but since you have chosen to walk with Him, learn also to do what His word says and you will be blessed as you come into His perfect will for your life.

Spiritual maturing is about harnessing your will unto perfection.

Lots of love

Pastor Noble

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