

One of the most frequently asked questions that I answer has to do with “the will of God” for believers. Almost every one agrees, the Lord has a specific will for our life. Also, it is often easy to see what the Lord’s will is for others. We can watch their life and see the very hand of God at work in them. The problem comes with us! We sometimes are driven to wonder about what the will of God is. Where do we fit in the plan? If the Lord has called me to do a certain task, then why am I facing all these problems and obstacles? I realize there are thousands of books on the subject. Sermons are available in plentiful supply about this teaching. So as inadequate as I feel, it is my desire to maybe help some struggling saint with the issues they are battling concerning the will of God for them.

You will discover in your Bible study that often times a New Testament book will have an Old Testament counterpart. The reason is simple. The Old Testament was a type or shadow of things to come. What was concealed in the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament. The patriarchs followed God’s direct spoken word by faith. The purpose is then displayed for us today because we see the intention of God in the New Testament and we have the entire Word of God. With this in mind, I would say that the book of Joshua seems to be a pattern for the book of Ephesians. Both books deal with the children of God coming out of the wilderness to a place of possessing the precious promises He gives to them. When we are saved, we leave wilderness walking and must claim the land rights God has given to us too. He will always do what He says!

The book of Ephesians is broken down into six chapters. Each division is really a study within itself. I have marked each chapter in my Bible study as follows: Chapter One (**The Wealth of the Christian**) Chapter Two (**The Walk of the Christian**) Chapter Three (**The Witness of the Christian**) Chapter Four (**The Work of the Christian**) Chapter Five (**The Wedding of the Christian**) and Chapter Six (**The Warfare of the Christian**). Time and space will only allow me to share a few excerpts from my studies dealing with the first chapter.

The Apostle Paul had spent three years warning the early church of Ephesus about the things of God. There finally came a day when the Lord released Paul from the burden of the church to which he is writing about in our text. Before leaving the Ephesians, he told them to beware of heresy because there would be those who would come into their gathering like grievous wolves. Even greater, was the caution they would need to take among themselves lest, one of them would rise up and pervert the Gospel. With these words of warning, Paul commends them to God and the word of His grace, which was able to build them up (Acts 20:32). What a lesson to us! ***We can only do so much for people. We must teach them and turn them over to God.*** If you have wayward children, turn them over to God. If you battle with those inside your church, turn them over to God. If we have taught them right, then God will take care of the rest.

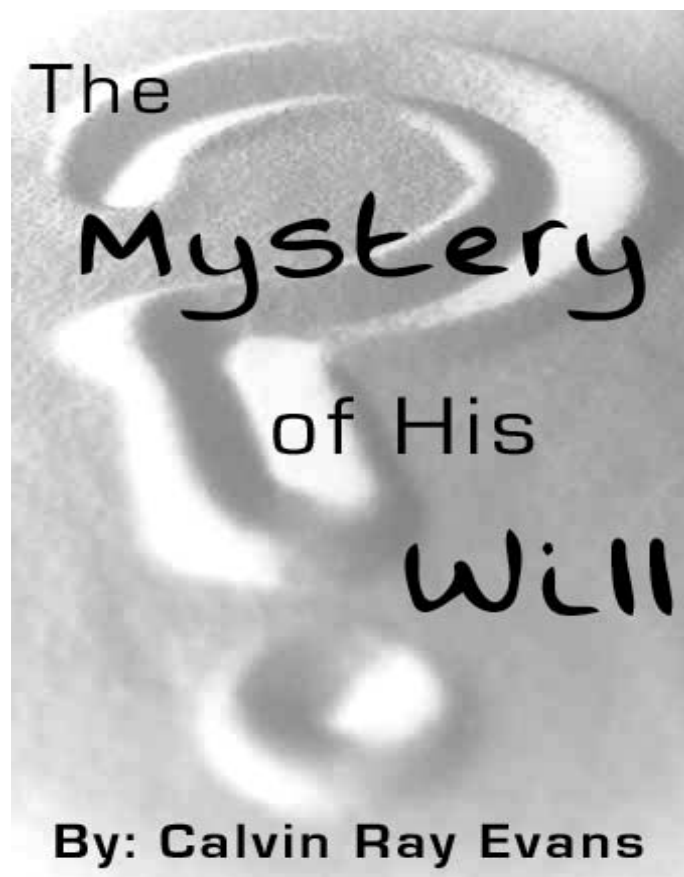
Now, we come to the focal point of the first chapter to the church at Ephesus. What an uplifting book for both the new convert and the seasoned Christian alike. It reminds us of the One we serve and the benefits we have in Him.

## THE WEALTH

There are really two key phrases I call your attention to concerning our wealth as children of God. Both of these important terms are given to us in the third verse. First is the statement, ***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...”*** Have you ever stopped to think how blessed God is? You can never find another that is as blessed as our Lord.

When Moses was on his way to meet Pharaoh face to face, he felt inadequate. He knew the king of Egypt would want evidence of the authority of Moses. To prove his qualifications, Moses seems to ask God for a resume. *“Who shall I say sent me?”* That was a reasonable question to ask the Lord since he was carrying the message for Him to Pharaoh. The reply from the Lord to Moses is the shortest and most powerful résumé ever presented. The Lord told Moses to tell Pharaoh, *“...I am, that I am...”* has sent you. In other words, He is both the noun and the verb. He is both the past and the present. He is all in all and you need nobody else because no one else can compare to Him. He has never had a problem He could not solve. He has never heard a question He cannot answer. He has never made a promise He has not kept. He has never had to depend on anyone else. He is God and beside Him there is none other!

The writer of Hebrews gives us great insight about how blessed God is. He shares the account of the Lord dealing with Abraham. The Lord knew that the swearing of an oath brought consolation to men and also an end to strife. He wanted to comfort the soul of Abraham and looked for one greater than Himself to swear by. He looked in all directions and could find none more powerful or blessed to swear by. *“For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself”* (Hebrews 6:13).



*Scripture Text: Ephesians 1:3-9*

Look all you want, you will never find any other to compare to Him! He is blessed and He can never lie! If you look at a white wall and tell others it is red, then you have lied. However, if God looks at a white wall and says it is red, then immediately it is red. It is impossible for God to lie. What a strong consolation and comfort for us.

Now, that alone is something to stir us but watch what the second phrase says. The God that is blessed beyond all, "...*hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings...*" Hallelujah! He gives to us from all He has. Notice, it is spiritual blessings. When you teach or preach on wealth people usually think of one thing, money. The wealth He has given to us is spiritual! He just gives us money to prepare us to handle real wealth! Money prepares us for some real blessings. I stress this because it is never the amount of money you have, it is what you do with it that matters to God. Let me try to give explanation of this statement.

We live in a society that handles most financial transactions by check. Most of you probably have a checking account. We write a check to a person, sign it and in turn they take it to their bank to deposit or cash it. If they have no check in hand, they have no money in their account. However, a check is only good for the amount the person can cover in their account. When a really large amount of money changes hands it is usually not done by check. It is transferred from one account to another. If I have a large missionary gift to send overseas, I usually wire it from our account into an account of the missionary ministry instead of mailing a check. Why? I know that it arrives safely. I do not have to personally go there to be sure they get the funds they need for the missionary project. However, if they do not check their account, they could have money there for their needs and not know it.

I call your attention once again to the fact the blessings we get from God are spiritual. They come through His account, which is *a spiritual transaction*. Therefore, He transfers them by His Spirit into our spiritual account. When we were a sinner, the spiritual man or woman was dead. **When we got saved we opened up a spiritual account.** The spiritual man or woman comes alive! Now God doesn't have to come to where we are and give us a check. He simply transfers these blessings into our account. If you do not feel blessed, the problem may lie in the fact you have not checked your spiritual account lately. Since God is blessed, He has more than enough blessings to move into our spirit. Stop looking for a check to come. Look into the account. It may be there already and you just don't know it because you failed to see your statement.

## THE WILL

The next thing we see is *"the will"* in verses four and five. Once again, there are a couple of words used in this passage that gives us insight to understanding the will of God for our life. I think we often over analyze what God is saying and we sometimes need to pause and meditate on the words He has written to us.

The first word is *"predestinated."* At first glance, many may want to shy away from it. I am not a theologian or scholar but I do pray God uses my feeble attempt to help you understand what I perceive about this great Biblical word. Predestination is really broken down into two parts. "Pre" means before and "destination" has to do with ending. The passage is stating the Lord already has a plan for our ending before we ever begin. Now don't stop reading right here but go on with me. If we just used that word by itself then it would appear the Lord has already determined everything for us so there is no need to be saved. Some have even told me it is already determined who will go to Heaven or not so there is no need to preach to people or invite them to Christ. When asked, "Does God have a plan for everyone from the time we begin our journey of life?" The answer is emphatically, "YES!" His will is plain. His plan is pure. *"The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* (II Peter 3:9). That is His will!

There are many who only teach the words they like. They just deal with predestination but overlook the other part of the equation. Predestination deals with His will. However, there is another word found twice in verses four and five. That word is *"according"* and is really a musical term. A chord is an arrangement of single notes placed together in harmony to produce beautiful tones of music. While God has a will, He also allows us to have our own will too. Our will must be in accord with His will if we are to be in harmony with God. That does not mean we must go along with His will. We have a choice and you must choose of your own "accord" to be in tune with Him. Never take predestination by itself. The counterpart is "according" to us. Yes, you have a will too.



We even have a legal document we call "a will." The power of the will is so great it allows you to still control everything even after you are dead. You can state by your will that a person still can't have your car, money, house or other possessions even when you are no longer alive.

Even if you are lost, you have a will. An unsaved person can receive a diagnosis they have cancer and only have days to live. However, months later they may still be alive. They had a will to live! I have seen people lose their will and it is horrible to watch them deteriorate. I am not saying that our will alone keeps us alive. God is in control of life but He still has given us a will.

We extend invitations in all of our services to people who are unsaved to accept Christ. The reason we do so is to allow people to get their will in accord with His will. The Lord wants you to go to Heaven. If you want to go, then you can! Jesus paid the price and now you must get in tune with Him.

# THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL

This is where this message begins to stir in the depths of my heart! When our will is in accord with the will of God, we suddenly begin to understand *“the mystery”* of how our life has taken certain twists and turns. There are some things God does for us that are too sweet and precious for us to have thought up on our own. When we see those mysteries revealed, then we know it is a blessing from submitting our will to His.

I have some dear friends who attend our church, Jim Payne and his family. They have a singing group and decided to put together a video from a song he had written about Heaven. He invited my wife and I, along with several other people, to be a part of this production. We were honored to join with so many friends at a gathering to somehow share the joy of what our eternal home will be like. As the day progressed, there was a scene that needed to be shot of people walking on golden streets. Jim scanned the crowd and finally chose a friend, Kim Tilley, to be in the procession walking on golden streets. The camera just captured the feet of the people as they walked on a displayed road of apparent gold. The video was completed and we were all blessed to be a part of it.

Now, comes the mystery of His will that I am still shouting His praises about. When Jim and his family put that video together they had no idea how God would use it. Less than six months from the time they shot that video, Kim was in an accident which resulted in the amputation of part of her leg. She was heartbroken. Then one day, while watching the video again, they realized it was her walking on streets of gold! Praise His name! There will come a day when it will not be a concept but it will be reality. She will have a new body and walk on real streets of gold. Only God, who knows and sees the future, could come up with a story so sweet. He makes the bitter things in life better by letting us know His will to take us to a place where no heartache or sorrow will ever come.

When I preached this sermon, a young couple was present in the service. They were not serving the Lord and after the service they spoke several times about some of the mysteries I spoke about during the message. I had given some accounts of people who experienced wonderful things from the Lord because they were in accord with His will. They were moved but refused to pray that night and ask the Lord into their heart and home. The next day, the young woman received a phone call. She works at a company with 1200 other employees and personally answers about 70 calls a day. Her phone rang and a lady, whom she had never met, had called to witness to her. The lady was calling from Florida and my friend was working in Kentucky. The woman shared with her the burden she had to speak with her about the Lord. For nearly 30 minutes the stranger shared her faith and told about her born again experience. The mystery woman told about being raised by her father, an Orthodox Jew, and her mother, a devout Buddhist. She went on to tell of the importance of serving the Lord. That is the “mystery of His will!” That was all it took and this young couple came to our church the very next weekend and professed their salvation! God used a woman in Florida to call a young girl in Kentucky to confirm a message they heard the night before! This is not chance. It is the mystery of His will! I hope your will is in accordance with His will. It is wonderful to be in tune with Heaven.

## HAPPENINGS IN HAITI

Dear Pastor Evans,

Greetings from the saints in Haiti. In our ministries we are praying God who protects us. I’m so grateful for the monthly support you sent that enable me to take care the work. I’m sending you some pictures.

Thank you very, very much. We pray for you that God give you more strength and meet the need of your work and your loving family. We send our love and appreciation for them. May God bless you today and all long of this year 2005, under His mercy.

**Jerome and family**

*Editor’s Note: Please overlook any poor grammar or spelling in the above letter. I wanted to share the note from this great pastor in his own words.*



*A child fed is a life saved!*



*Children are taught in the mornings.  
Adults learn to read and write  
in the afternoon!*



*“He that hath pity upon the poor  
lendeth unto the Lord;”  
Proverbs 19:17*