



The Will of Satan

By Steve Gallagher

Way back in eternity—before there was time, earth or man—there was a tremendous Kingdom with a marvelous King. It seems that millions of angelic beings inhabited this domain. Since there was only one will in the entire Realm, there was a complete lack of conflict. Every angel was content and lived in unbroken fellowship with God.

At some point, an archangel named Lucifer became fixated on himself, rather than the Lord. He swelled with pride and decided—the first decision ever made outside of the will of God—that he would overthrow the Lord and take His place as absolute ruler. “I will ascend to heaven;” he announced. “I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.” (Isaiah 14:13-14) These five “I will’s” reveal the introduction of a new will into the Kingdom of God.

Some time later, God created a planet which would be inhabited by man. Everything began well enough, as man—just like the angels of heaven—enjoyed perfect fellowship with his Creator. But lurking in the shadows was the malevolent presence of that fallen angel, Lucifer. One day, he approached Eve and impugned God’s merciful intentions with the concept that the Lord was holding out on her. Faced with the decision to obey God or not, Eve chose Satan’s will over God’s. In one grievous instant, her soul was polluted, her mind darkened and she came under the dominion of sin and death.

Today, several millennia removed from the Fall, the question still faces us: what is Satan’s will and what is God’s will? Jesus once said, “The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.” (John 10:10) The latter phrase perfectly describes the heart of God. His will is founded upon His good and merciful character. Every decision He makes, every word He speaks, and every action He takes is an expression of His lovely, benevolent will. Since love is the substance of His character, it is impossible for Him to act outside of that love. Even in wrath, God is displaying His love by purifying the world of ungodliness for the sake of those who respond to this great love. (Satan, through lies and deception, has successfully supplanted God’s perfect will on earth with his own. Thus Jesus, on another occasion, prayed, “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,” counteracting Satan’s devious plan.)

The first phrase of John 10:10 expresses the devil’s mission statement: “The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy.” Jesus’ words here perfectly describe Satan’s evil will. He is absolutely determined to annihilate every person he possibly can. One way he accomplishes this is by holding out the promise of the extreme pleasure of sexual sin, luring people into rebellion against the will of God. He is constantly whispering, “Hath

God *really* said, ‘you shall not...’” Men who have given themselves over to immorality have consistently listened to his lies. They listen and act because, at the moment of the temptation, what he is offering seems much more valuable than the fruit of obedience.

This is a very important subject to me because a number of years ago, the Lord gave me the following passage of Scripture as a theme for the work being done at Pure Life Ministries:

“And the Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.” (II Timothy 2:24-26)

The first half of this lengthy statement describes the spirit that the minister should be in who works with these individuals. However, for the sake of our subject here, we will briefly focus on what is expressed about men in sin. There are six things said about them: three that describe their condition and three that show the answer to their problem.

- They are ensnared by the devil.
- They have “been held captive by him to do his will.”
- They are “in opposition.” (What are they opposing, if not God’s will?)
- They must “come to their senses.”
- The solution to their dilemma is repentance.
- Repentance will lead them into “the knowledge of the truth.”

Clearly, then, the key to freedom from the bondage of Satan’s will is found through repentance. We see this same formula worked out in the life of the Prodigal Son, who, after doing the expressed will of the devil, “came to his senses” while in the pigpen, repented of his sin, and returned to his Father.

Yes, Satan has his own will: to “steal, kill and destroy.” However, believers who are caught in his trap can find freedom through repentance. As they repent, they too will come into “the knowledge of the truth.” And, as Jesus rightly said, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32)

Steve Gallagher is the founder and president of Pure Life Ministries. He has dedicated his life to helping men find freedom from sexual sin and the abundant life in God that comes through deep repentance.

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