

The Will: The Governing Power

Ezek. 36:25-27 “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.”

Php 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

2 Cor. 2:14 “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ....” (KJV)

1 1. What is Christian perfection?

2 “Christian perfection **consists in the complete harmony of our**
3 **will with the will of our Creator.** The inhabitants of Heaven find,
4 in obeying the will of God, their joy and blessedness.” {ST May
5 25, 1882 Par. 8}

6 **What does the Lord require of his blood-bought heritage?—The**
7 **sanctification of the whole being,—purity like the purity of**
8 **Christ, perfect conformity to the will of God.** {RH November 24,
9 1904 Par. 3}

10

11 2. What is the will? Under whose control is the will?

12 “Pure religion has to do with the will. **The will is the governing**
13 **power in the nature of man. If the will is set right, all the rest of**
14 **the man will come under its sway.** The will is **not the taste or the**
15 **inclination, but it is the choice, the deciding power; the kingly**
16 **power which works in the children of men unto obedience to**
17 **God or to disobedience.”** {Lt49-1887.12}

18 “**What is the new heart? It is the new mind. What is the mind?**
19 **It is the will. Where is your will? It is either on Satan’s side or**
20 **Christ’s side.** Now it is up to you. Will you put your will today on
21 Christ’s side of the question? **That is the new heart. It is the new**
22 **will, a new mind. “A new heart will I give thee.” Then let us**
23 **begin right here.”** {1SAT 210.1}

24

25 3. What happened to the will at the time of the fall of man? What
26 do we need to do to overcome the effects of the fall?

27 **“This will of man that is of so great consequence was at the fall**
28 **given into the control of Satan, and he has been working in man**
29 **to will and to do of his own good pleasure, but to the utter ruin**
30 **and misery of man.** Now God made an infinite sacrifice in giving
31 Jesus, His beloved Son, to become a sacrifice for sin, that **God may**
32 **now say, without violating one principle of His government,**
33 **“Yield yourself up to Me, give Me that will, take it from the**
34 **control of Satan, and I will take possession of it, I will work in**
35 **you to will and to do My good pleasure.”** Then He gives you the
36 **mind of Christ, the will becomes transformed and the character**
37 **formed after Christ’s character.”** {Lt49-1887}

38 **“Through yielding to sin, man placed his will under the control**
39 **of Satan. He became a helpless captive in the tempter’s power.**
40 **God sent His Son into our world to break the power of Satan,**
41 **and to emancipate the will of man.** He sent Him to proclaim
42 liberty to the captives, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the
43 oppressed go free. **By pouring the whole treasury of heaven into**
44 **this world, by giving us in Christ all heaven, God has**
45 **purchased the will, the affections, the mind, the soul, of every**
46 **human being. When man places himself under the control of**
47 **God, the will becomes firm and strong to do right, the heart is**
48 **cleansed from selfishness, and filled with Christlike love.** The
49 mind yields to the authority of the law of love, and **every thought**
50 **is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”** {OHC
51 104.3}

52 **“The living agent, by an act of faith of his own, places himself in**
53 **the hands of the Lord for Him to work in him His good**
54 **pleasure in His time.** ... This is a training process, a constant
55 discipline of the mind and heart, that Christ shall work His great
56 work in human hearts. Self, the old natural self, dies, and Christ’s
57 will is our will, His way is our way, and the human agent becomes,
58 with heart, mind, and intellect, an instrument in the hands of God to
59 work no more wickedness, but the righteousness of Christ.” {1888
60 666.2}

61 **“Christ remembered our nature in the requirements he made. He**
62 **took our nature upon himself, and brought to man moral power**
63 **to combine with human effort.** He would conform us to his
64 authority, that we may know his will. **He can and will, if we**
65 **submit to him, fill the chambers of the mind and the recesses of**
66 **the soul with his Spirit.** Then our will is in perfect harmony
67 **with the divine will. Our spirit may be so identified with his**

68 **Spirit that in thought and aim we shall be one with him. Then**
69 **Satan will no longer control us. Christ is our Leader, and his**
70 **true followers like to keep in step with him. He speaks, and they**
71 **obey his voice.** His people are made willing in the day of his
72 power.” {YI August 17, 1899 Par. 3}

73

74 4. What happens when the will is not submitted to Christ?

75 “Satan will always rule the will that is not under the control of the
76 Spirit of God.” {ST December 20, 1899 Par. 2}

77 “As in the days of Christ, **the enemy of God works constantly to**
78 **lead men to place the will in his control, that God may be**
79 **forgotten.** He knows that if this is done, he can control the whole
80 man. He tempts men in many ways to forget their Creator. To some
81 he offers tobacco and alcoholic drinks. Others he tempts by
82 pointing them to their own degradation and helplessness. **Those**
83 **who yield to his temptations can have no conception of the love**
84 **of God. The will becomes enslaved, bound to pursue a course**
85 **which the word of God does not justify.”** {ST November 19,
86 1896 Par. 7}

87 “**The will of every human being should be under the discipline**
88 **and control of God; for, uncontrolled, it is a dangerous element.**
89 **Untold harm may be done if the enemy is allowed to take**
90 **control of the human will.”** {PUR February 16, 1905 Par. 1}

91

92 5. What happens when the will is surrendered to Christ?

93 “When we place our will in unison with the will of God, the
94 obedience that was exemplified in the life of Christ will be seen in
95 our lives.” {ST December 20, 1899 Par.2}

96 “**If the human agent consents, God can and will so identify His**
97 **will with all our thoughts and aims, so blend our hearts and**
98 **minds into conformity to His Word, that when obeying His will,**
99 **we are only carrying out the impulses of our minds.”** {OFC
100 268.5}

101 “**As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes**
102 **omnipotent.** Whatever is to be done at His command, may be
103 accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.”
104 {COL 333.1}

105 “**Under the supervision of divine power, the will is to become**
106 **strong, prompt, and firm.”** {PUR February 16, 1905 Par. 3}

107 “**Self-control is a power that all may possess. It is gained by**
108 **placing the will wholly on the side of God, taking the will of**
109 **God for your will.”** {OHC 219.3}

110 **“Man is safe only when he places himself under the control of**
111 **God. When this is done, the will becomes firm and strong to do**
112 **right; the heart is cleansed from all selfishness, and filled with a**
113 **Christlike love and tenderness.** The mind yields to the authority
114 of the law of love, and “every thought is brought into captivity to
115 the obedience of Christ.” The powers, hitherto “members of
116 unrighteousness,” and “servants of sin,” are consecrated to the
117 service of a God of love.” {ST November 19, 1896 Par. 9}

118 “The way has been made clear for all those who choose to hear,
119 repent, and believe. **All heaven is waiting the sinner’s co-**
120 **operation, and the only barrier that stands in his way is one**
121 **which he alone can remove,—his own will. He must submit to**
122 **the will of God,** and through repentance and faith, come unto God
123 for salvation.” {RH March 24, 1896 Par. 10}

124 “I saw that the **angels of God are not to force or bend the will of**
125 **the individual they watch over. They are to gently chide, warn**
126 **and guard. Satan can never force back these holy angels from**
127 **their charge.** None can do this but the individuals that they are
128 watching over. If these individuals continue to grieve these tender,
129 holy angels; if they go astray from their counsel and warnings, and
130 choose an independent course of their own, they will drive these
131 angels from them. **If the will is submitted to them, they will bend**
132 **it in the heavenly channel, and they will ever be on the watch**
133 **for their interests, leading them from a thousand dangers,**
134 **preventing their lives being taken by Satan,** and, if they are
135 inclined to go a wrong course, stand in the path before them to
136 prevent their ruin.” {2SG 277.3}

137 **“But if individuals continue to retain their own will, choose**
138 **their own course, and have their own way, the angels leave**
139 **them in sadness. Then Satan comes in to control the will, and**
140 **bend the mind, and smiles in hellish triumph at his success.”**
141 {2SG 278.1}

142

143 6. What does it mean to exercise the will?

144 **“The first step in the path of obedience is to surrender the will**
145 **to God.** This may seem a difficult thing to do; for Satan will
146 present every possible objection, and will manufacture difficulties,
147 and magnify perplexities before the mind; **but take the first step,**
148 **and the next step on the ladder of progress will be easier.”** {RH
149 October 9, 1894 Par. 6}

150 **“In order for us to reach this high ideal, that which causes the**
151 **soul to stumble must be sacrificed. It is through the will that sin**
152 **retains its hold upon us. The surrender of the will is**

153 **represented as plucking out the eye or cutting off the hand.**
154 **Often it seems to us that to surrender the will to God is to**
155 **consent to go through life maimed or crippled. But it is better,**
156 **says Christ, for self to be maimed, wounded, crippled, if thus**
157 **you may enter into life. That which you look upon as disaster is**
158 **the door to highest benefit.” {MB 61.1}**

159 **“The Spirit of God does not propose to do our part, either in the**
160 **willing or the doing. This is the work of the human agent in**
161 **cooperating with the divine agencies. As soon as we incline our**
162 **will to harmonize with God’s will, the grace of Christ stands to**
163 **cooperate with the human agent; but it will not be the**
164 **substitute to do our work independent of our resolving and**
165 **decidedly acting.” Lt 135, 1898**

166 **“You are often discouraged at finding yourself weak in moral**
167 **power, controlled by habits and customs of your old life in sin,**
168 **to find yourself in slavery to doubt, and inefficient. You find**
169 **your emotional nature untrue to your best resolutions, untrue to**
170 **your most solemn pledges. Nothing seems real. Your own**
171 **inefficiencies lead you to doubt the sincerity of those who would do**
172 **you good. The more you struggle in doubt, the more unreal**
173 **everything looks to you, until it seems that there is no solid ground**
174 **for you anywhere. **Your promises are nothing, they are like****
175 **ropes of sand,** and you regard the words and works of those whom
176 you should trust in the same unreal light. **You will be in constant**
177 **peril until you understand the true force of the will. You may**
178 **believe and promise all things, but I would not give a straw for**
179 **your promises or your faith until you put your will over on the**
180 **believing and doing side. If you will fight the fight of faith with**
181 **your will power, in the work, I have not the least doubt that you**
182 **will conquer. Your feelings, your impressions, your emotions**
183 **are not at all to be trusted, for they are not reliable, especially**
184 **with your perverted ideas and the knowledge of your broken**
185 **promises and forfeited pledges.” {Lt49-1887}**

186 **“But I tell you that you need not despair. You must choose to**
187 **believe, although nothing seems true and real to you. ... Your**
188 **part is to put your will over on the side of Christ in the matter**
189 **of faith. Just as you yield up your will to the will of Jesus**
190 **Christ, God immediately takes possession of that will, and**
191 **works in you to will and to do of His good pleasure; and all of**
192 **your nature is brought under the control of the spirit of Christ,**
193 **even your thoughts are subject to Him. You cannot control your**
194 **impulses, your emotions, as you may desire, but you can control**
195 **the will, and you can make an entire change in your life. Your**

196 **life, by yielding up your will to Christ**, is hid with Christ in God
197 and allied to the power which is above all principalities and
198 powers. **You have a strength from God that holds you fast to**
199 **His strength, and a new life, even the life of living faith, is**
200 **possible to you.** But your will must co-operate with God's will...."
201 {Lt49-1887}

202 "Will you say, **"I will give my will to Jesus, and I do it now"**?"
203 From that moment, be wholly on the Lord's side. **Disregard the**
204 **pitiful clamoring of appetite, of custom, of passion. Give Satan**
205 **no chance to say, You are a wretched hypocrite.** Close the door
206 so that Satan shall not thus accuse you and dishearten you. **Say, "I**
207 **will believe, I do believe that God is my helper," and you will**
208 **find that you will be triumphant in God. Every emotion will, by**
209 **steadfastly keeping the will on the Lord's side, be brought into**
210 **captivity to the will of Jesus...."**

211 **"Talk faith. "I will believe, I will believe that God can and will**
212 **give me, Henri Frey, the victory." Keep on God's side of the**
213 **line. Set not your foot once on the enemy's side, and the Lord**
214 **will be your helper, He will do for you that which it is not**
215 **possible for you to do for yourself." {Lt49-1887}**

216

217 7. What do we learn from Christ's example?

218 "Jesus Christ is our example in all things. He began life, passed
219 through its experiences, and **ended its record, with a sanctified**
220 **human will. He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet**
221 **because he kept his will surrendered and sanctified, he never**
222 **bent in the slightest degree toward the doing of evil, or toward**
223 **manifesting rebellion against God." {ST, October 29, 1894 par.**
224 **7}**

225

226 8. What does this mean in our lives?

227 **"Those who have a sanctified will, that is in unison with the will**
228 **of Christ, will day by day have their wills bound to the will of**
229 **Christ, which will act in blessing others,** and react upon
230 themselves with divine power." {ST, October 29, 1894 par. 7}

231 **"When the power of Satan over souls is broken, we see men**
232 **binding their will to the cross, and crucifying the flesh with the**
233 **affections and lusts. It is indeed a crucifixion of self; for the will is**
234 **surrendered to Christ. The will of man is none too strong when it**
235 **is sanctified and put on the side of Christ. The will is a power,**
236 **and as many triumphs are to be won in spiritual warfare, and**
237 **many points of progress to be made in the spiritual journey,**

238 **and many lessons to be learned from Christ, the great Teacher,**
239 **it is necessary that the will should be sanctified. In**
240 **surrendering the will, the root of the matter is reached. When**
241 **the will is surrendered, the streams that flow from the fountain**
242 **will not be bitter, but will be as pure as crystal. {ST, October**
243 **29, 1894 par. 6}**

244

245 9. The will must be given to be possessed by God every day.

246 **“My will must be given to God every day. I must have a growing**
247 **faith. I find it a constant warfare to fight the good fight of faith.**
248 **Unseen foes are constantly on my track, to weaken and**
249 **discourage me. There must be a constant decision of my will to**
250 **believe that God means just what He says; and if I continue to**
251 **put my trust in Jesus, the source of all power, He has assured**
252 **me that He will keep that which I have committed to His trust,**
253 **against that day. I want to know that I am triumphant in God**
254 **every day, that every emotion, every thought, is brought into**
255 **captivity to the mind and will of God. I want the assurance that**
256 **He has taken possession of that will which I have placed in His**
257 **hands.” {Lt42-1890.4}**

258

259 10. What must we constantly surrender?

260 **“This is the secret of their power. Much prayer, and a**
261 **humbling of the heart, a constant surrender of the will to God,**
262 **will bring the help pledged to every worker by the Father, the**
263 **Son, and the Holy Spirit. Angels of God will work for those who**
264 **yield themselves to the leading of the Spirit.” {7MR 354.1}**

265 **“Through the right exercise of the will, an entire change may be**
266 **made in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, you ally**
267 **yourself with the power that is above all principalities and**
268 **powers. You will have strength from above to hold you**
269 **steadfast, and thus through constant surrender to God you will**
270 **be enabled to live the new life, even the life of faith.” {SC 48.1}**

271

272 11. Does this mean that we no longer have any will?

273 **“God does not design that our will should be destroyed, for it is**
274 **only through its exercise that we can accomplish what He**
275 **would have us do. Our will is to be yielded to Him, that we may**
276 **receive it again, purified and refined, and so linked in**
277 **sympathy with the Divine that He can pour through us the tides**
278 **of His love and power. However bitter and painful this surrender**
279 **may appear to the willful, wayward heart, yet “it is profitable for**

280 thee.” {MB 62.2}

281 “The effort to **“break the will” of a child is a terrible mistake.**
282 ... Those who weaken or destroy individuality assume a
283 responsibility that can result only in evil. **While under authority,**
284 **the children may appear like well-drilled soldiers; but when the**
285 **control ceases, the character will be found to lack strength and**
286 **steadfastness.** Having never learned to govern himself, the youth
287 recognizes no restraint except the requirement of parents or teacher.
288 This removed, he knows not how to use his liberty, and often gives
289 himself up to indulgence that proves his ruin. – {Ed 288.1}

290 **Since the surrender of the will is so much more difficult for**
291 **some pupils than for others, the teacher should make obedience**
292 **to his requirements as easy as possible.** The will should be
293 guided and molded, but not ignored or crushed. **Save the strength**
294 **of the will; in the battle of life it will be needed.”** {Ed 288.2}

295 **“Every child should understand the true force of the will. He**
296 **should be led to see how great is the responsibility involved in**
297 **this gift.** The will is the governing power in the nature of man, the
298 power of decision, or choice. Every human being possessed of
299 reason has power to choose the right. In every experience of life,
300 God’s word to us is, “Choose you this day whom ye will serve.”
301 Joshua 24:15. **Everyone may place his will on the side of the will**
302 **of God, may choose to obey Him, and by thus linking himself**
303 **with divine agencies, he may stand where nothing can force him**
304 **to do evil.** In every youth, every child, lies the power, by the help
305 of God, to form a character of integrity and to live a life of
306 usefulness.” {Ed 289.1}

307

308 12. How do we maintain and enjoy the victory?

309 **“Let us no longer gratify the enemy by complaining of the**
310 **strength of our evil will; for in so doing we are feeding and**
311 **encouraging our wills against God, and pleasing the evil one.”**
312 {ST October 29, 1894 Par. 8}

313 **“Train and educate the mind to think and to talk of Jesus, and**
314 **Satan will lose his power over you. He cannot long bear to be in**
315 **the company of those who meditate and converse upon the love**
316 **of God.** In this way the mind is strengthened.” {ST September 4,
317 1893 Par. 5}

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