

Is It Well With Thee?

Bringing our Brokenness and our Bad Habits to Christ

IS IT WELL WITH YOUR SOUL? (THE WILL - PART 2)

This is part 43 of the Is It Well With Thee Sermon Series

SUMMARY

We live in a world of facades, false fronts, and covered realities. We want to be happy all the time and we want others to think that we are, but underneath the harsh reality is that the bad days, the difficult things, and the high level of stress are all weighing us down. Oftentimes, they leave us feeling discouraged, depressed, and like there is simply no hope, but **THAT ISN'T TRUE AT ALL**. While our enemy wants to use the realities of life against us, God wants us to bring our brokenness and our bad habits to Him so that in the midst of life's very real struggles we can still answer, "It is well."

REVIEW

Last week, we began to consider the third element of our soul – the will.

1) The **DESIGNING** of the will

God created us with the ability to **THINK**, to **FEEL**, and to **CHOOSE**. Thinking has to do with our mind, feeling has to do with our heart, and choosing has to do with our will.

Because we were created in the image of God, we are not **COMPELLED** to please and praise God; we are to personally and willingly make the **CHOICE** to please and praise God. The former says I **MUST** please and praise God (there is no other option or choice) while the latter says I **WANT** to please and praise God with God my life.

God gave us *freewill* which means that we have been given the ability and the opportunity to make our own decisions, but we are also responsible for our own actions. We have the freedom to do whatever we want, but we are responsible for, and we will be held accountable for whatever we choose.

Our *will* is where our **DESIRES** and **DETERMINATION** reside. It's where our **WANTS** shout from and it's where our **WILLINGNESS** (or what we consent to do) shows up. It is where our **PERSONALITY** is formed, where our **PASSIONS** reside, and where our **PURSUIITS** are chosen.

We found that our *will* is **STUBBORN**. We also found that our stubborn will is a good thing when our wants and our willingness is directed by truth, but that's a bad thing when our wants and our willingness is dictated by anything other than truth.

And that's really where we pick back up.

MESSAGE

1 Thessalonians 5:14-24 says, *"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."*

If you're in the habit of marking things in the word of God, I want to draw your attention back to verse 23 where the Bible says, *"And the very God of peace sanctify...your whole spirit..."*

For a few moments, I'd like to begin to consider this thought: **IS IT WELL WITH YOUR SOUL? (THE WILL – PART 2)**

Disclaimer - I am not a doctor, and I am not approaching these topics from the standpoint of one. I am simply attempting to help us gain an understanding of what the Bible has to say about our mental, emotional, and physical health.

1) The **DESIGNING** of the will

Now that we have established the fact that our **DESIRES** and **DETERMINATION** reside within our will, we need to build on that and explore what those two things want – **DELIGHT**. That's kind of where we ended last week when we found that delight isn't just an **EMOTION**; delight is an **ACTION**. It isn't just something that we feel; it's a choice that we make. To put it as simply as possible: our will is our chooser.

In the book of Job, which is considered to be the oldest written book of the Bible, we find a lot of things said about the soul, but there are two statements that Job makes that I want to draw our attention to:

In Job 7:15, Job says, “...that my soul **chooseth**...”

In Job 6:7, Job says, “...that my soul **refused**...”

Our *will* chooses what it perceives will lead to delight and refuses what it perceives will not lead to delight. Delight is the soul’s **OBJECTIVE** and choosing and refusing is the soul’s **OPERATION**. Our soul says “yes” to what it perceives will lead to delight and our soul says “no” to what it believes will prevent delight from becoming or remaining a reality. Please don’t miss this formula: **DESIRE** produces a **DETERMINATION** which will take us in the **DIRECTION** of what we are **DELIGHTING** in.

We were created to delight in the **LORD**, and we were created to delight in the **LAW** of the Lord. When we do, we experience **WONDERFUL PROVISIONS, TREMENDOUS STRENGTH, AWESOME FRUIT, GREAT POTENTIAL** and **LONGEVITY**.

Psalm 37:3-5 says to “Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.”

Psalm 1:1-3 says, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

Now, we find this to be true all the way back to the beginning. Adam and Eve were created in the image of God (we’ve established that already), but then they were placed in the Garden of Eden. It was a place where they could delight in the Lord and where they could delight in the law of the Lord. And they did, at least for a little while. When they made the choice to delight in the Lord and in the law of the Lord, they had the privilege to enjoy all that the Garden offered for as long as they continued to delight in the Lord and in the law of the Lord.

*Genesis 2:7-9 says, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow **every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food**; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.”*

Genesis 2:15-17 says, *“And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, **Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:** But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”*

Think about this: there was enough for Adam and Eve to enjoy for eternity in the Garden of Eden as long as they made the choice to delight in the Lord and in the law of the Lord. Now, what I want you to understand is that there is still enough for us to enjoy in the Lord for all of eternity, but we still have to make the choice to delight in the Lord and in the law of the Lord.

In Psalm 37:11, we find that there is abundant peace to be enjoyed.

In Psalm 94:19. We find that there are comforts for the soul to be enjoyed.

In Psalm 119:24, we find that there are counsellors for our questions.

In Psalm 119:77, we find that there are tender mercies to be received.

It's a wonderful thing to walk with the Lord, it's an exciting journey to walk with Jesus. It's a blessed life when we say “yes!” to the Lord. It's simply how we were designed to live.

2) The **DIVERSION** of the will

Throughout our study of the soul, we have been considering sins impact on our soul. When God created man, God said that it was good, but sin has had a drastic impact on every part of us. In relation to our soul, sin **DARKENED OUR MIND**, sin **DISTORTED OUR EMOTIONS**, and sin **DIVERTED OUR WILL**.

By definition, the word *diverted* means “to turned aside or to be drawn away from a particular course, or intended direction, to another course with the intent of being pleased, amused, or entertained.” In other words, I am drawn to something that I am convinced or I have been persuaded that I will find greater delight in.

I want us to take the time to see how that unfolded in Genesis chapter 3.

Genesis 3:1-6 says, *“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”*

Satan appealed to Eve's delight which she allowed to draw her away from the course that she was currently on. It's also interesting that Satan didn't approach Adam; Satan let Eve do that. Why? I'm convinced that it was more difficult for Adam to say "No" to Eve than it was for Adam to say "No" to Satan. Why? Because Adam had found delight in the woman. You see, our adversary uses our delight to draw us away from our design.

We make the choice as to whether we are going to be led by **TRUST** or by **LUST**. We either choose to trust God and His Word or we choose to trust ourselves – our thoughts, our feelings, our desires.

1 John 2:15-17 says, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."*

James 1:13-16 says, *"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren."*

Our enemy knows that if he can shift our **DELIGHT** then he can shift our **DIRECTION**.

Psalms 78:18 says, *"And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust."*

The idea here is that they wanted something different than what God had provided. Instead of choosing to please God, they want to satisfy their lust. They wanted their way, and they were determined to get it.

Because of sin, we are born with a selfish tendency. We live to please ourselves. We do what is right in our own eyes. There is a reason that Proverbs 14:12 and Proverbs 16:25 both tell us that *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."* Because our fallen tendency is to do what we want, what we like, and what we prefer.

Just because I like something doesn't make it right.

Just because I think something doesn't make it right, and

Just because something feels good doesn't mean that it's right.

For a child of God, we have a **DUTY** to live our life in a way that pleases God, but we still struggle with a **DESIRE** to do that which pleases me. The Apostle Paul describes this struggle in Romans chapter 7.

Romans 7:14-23 says, *"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."*

Here's the reality: our new man and our old man can't agree on anything, because they are heading in two different directions. The new man desires that which pleases God (holiness, truth, right), but the old man still desires that which is pleasant to the eyes, that which is pleasing to the flesh, that which promotes and preserves me.