

**TRUTH B-P CHURCH**  
**Adult Sunday School**

**THE SEVENFOLD WILL OF GOD**

**LESSON ONE: INTRODUCTION**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

“What is God's will for me?” is probably one of the most asked questions among Christians. Young believers ask it when choosing a career or a partner in marriage. Christian parents ask it when raising children. Aging believers ask it when it is the right time to retire from work. Every Christian, regardless of age or spiritual maturity, desires to know the will of God.

And God delights in revealing His will to His children. Throughout the Bible, He repeatedly calls His people to know, understand, love, and obey His will. Psalm 143:10 “Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God.” Ephesians 5:17, “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”

**II. KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD**

Knowing God's will affects every area of our life. It shapes our worship, decisions, relationships, ministry, careers, suffering, witness and eternal perspective. Without understanding God's will, we end up becoming anxious, fearful, indecisive, spiritually immature, and vulnerable to false teaching and superstitious beliefs. Knowing God's will enables us to walk confidently according to His power.

In Colossians 1:9-10, Apostle Paul prayed that the Christians in Colossae would “...be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing ...” The knowledge of God’s will leads to worthy living before God. Sound doctrine always produces faithful practice.

What does “will” mean? The biblical word "will" refers to God’s purpose, desire, determination, intention, or decree. God's will is not merely what He wishes. It is His perfect purpose accomplished according to His wisdom. “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure” (Isaiah 46:10).

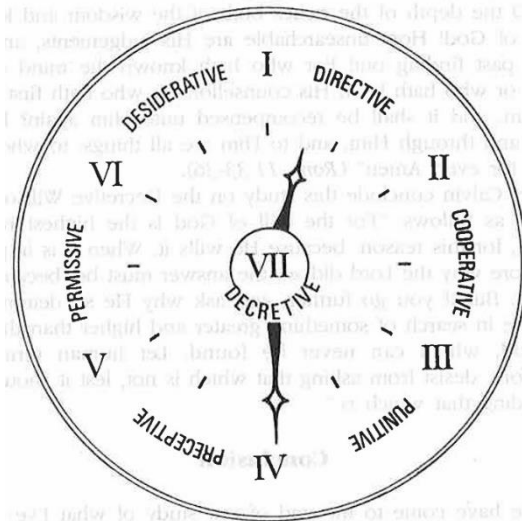
God's will is never frustrated. Unlike man’s plans, God's purposes never fail. Man often says, “I plan to ...” but oftentimes circumstances prevent them. God never says, “I intended but failed in the end.” It will never happen. Whatever God purposes will surely come to pass.

**III. CALVIN’S CLOCK OF THE SEVENFOLD WILL OF GOD**

What is the time of your clock of life now? This is not asking what time it is now. This is asking whether we are living according to the will of God. In order for us to know the “time,” we need to learn Calvin’s clock of the sevenfold will of God.

**A. Four Headings**

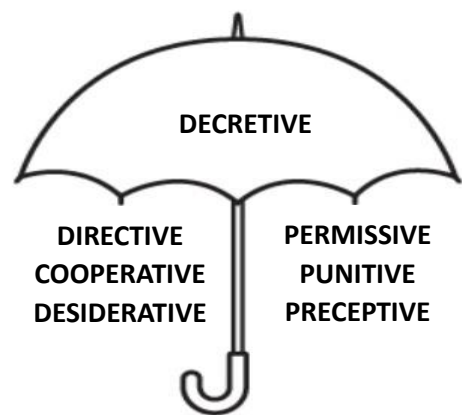
From Calvin’s teaching, the complex will of God can be classified under four headings: General, Specific, Extraordinary, and the Predetermined. The General: (1) Preceptive, (2) Desiderative. The Specific: (3) Directive, (4) Cooperative, (5) Punitive or “Chastitive.” The Extraordinary: (6) Permissive. The Predetermined: (7) Decretive.



**CALVIN'S CLOCK OF THE SEVENFOLD WILL OF GOD**

## **B. Two Perspectives**

This writer has derived from Calvin's clock of the sevenfold will of God by looking from the larger perspective to the smaller perspective. The larger perspective is the decretive will of God. And all other six aspects of God's will are grouped under smaller perspective. Smaller does not mean less or not important. All are equally important. It is where they are found and relate to each other. The umbrella picture describes this larger and smaller perspective very well.



## **IV. GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY**

The Bible teaches two truths simultaneously. First, God is absolutely sovereign. Second, man is genuinely responsible. These truths are never presented as contradictions. For example, Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery. Their actions were sinful. Yet Joseph later declared: "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (Genesis 50:20). Their evil choices were real. God's sovereign purpose was also real. Both truths stand together. Similarly, those who crucified Christ committed a terrible sin. Yet Acts 2:23 says Jesus was delivered "... by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God."

Man's responsibility never cancels God's sovereignty. God's sovereignty never removes human accountability. These parallel doctrines of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility are essential throughout the study of God's will.

## **V. SUMMARY**

The sevenfold will of God provides a comprehensive biblical framework for understanding how God works in history, salvation, the church, and lives of individual believers. Understanding these seven aspects prevents confusion and gives us confidence, wisdom, peace, and assurance to live for God's eternal glory. God desires His children to know His will. He did not hide His will from them. He delights to lead all those who seek Him sincerely. May God bless our study that we will not only learn to know God's will but also to do His will faithfully until we meet our Saviour face to face. Amen.