

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adult Sunday School

THE SEVENFOLD WILL OF GOD

LESSON TWO: THE DECRETIVE WILL

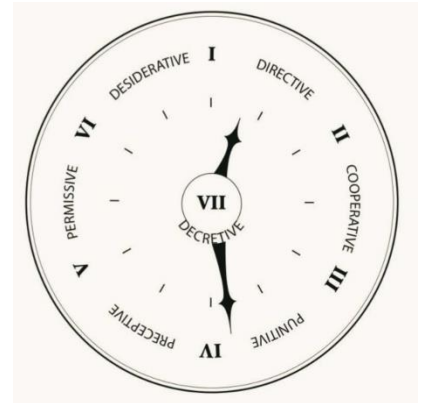
I. INTRODUCTION

The sevenfold will of God stems from this big question “What is God’s will for my life?” But, can a mere man know the mysteries of God’s decrees? The answer is both yes and no. Yes, it is as far as God is pleased to reveal His will to us. No, it is because we are unable to comprehend fully and completely like God does.

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

In a simpler classification, God’s sevenfold will can be understood as two main parts: The larger perspective and the smaller perspectives. The larger perspective is the decretive will of God. All other aspects of God’s will are the smaller perspectives. Smaller does not mean less or not important. All are equally important.

Rev Timothy Tow presented God’s will graphically on the “Calvin’s Clock of the Sevenfold Will of God.” A clock tells time by its three hands, the hour hand, the minute hand and the second hand. But these are the out-workings of the mechanism beneath the face of the clock. The moving hands are simple to read, but we cannot see the inner workings of the clock.



II. THE MECHANISM OF THE CLOCK

The decretive will is the deepest, like the mechanism of the clock. God’s decree is understood by His sovereign election and predestination. According to Ecclesiastes 3, our birth, death, marriage, and all aspects of our life are predestinated of God. That includes our salvation. If God did not elect us to be saved before the foundation of the world, we would never be saved. It was entirely “according to the good pleasure of His own will” (Ephesians 1:5, 2:8-9; see also Romans 9:1-13).

Rev Timothy Tow loved using the banana skin story to illustrate God’s decree. He says, “Suppose I invite you to my birthday party. On your way to my party, you step on a banana skin and break your kneecap. Am I answerable at law for your injury? The verdict is ‘No.’ The Law judges on the immediate cause, not the remote cause. So does divine justice.”

John Calvin on the decretive will of God says, “For the will of God is the highest rule of justice, for this reason, because He wills it. When it is inquired, therefore why the Lord did so, the answer must be, because He would. But if you go further, and ask why He so determined, you are in search of something greater and higher than the will of God, which can never be found. Let human temerity, therefore, desist from asking that which is not, lest it should fail of finding that which is.”

God’s decretive will is beyond man. Therefore, whatever is revealed to us by God is good enough for us. We must humble ourselves and not get upset for not knowing everything which God knows. We must always seek God’s will, but we must also do so in the spirit of humility and thanksgiving.

III. ISAIAH 55:10-11

Decretive will means God's decree and everything is under His sovereign control. Past, present and future are all in His hands. Nothing by chance. Nothing by accident. All is known and under the power and control of God. There are a number of passages in the Bible to teach us concerning God's decretive will. One of them is Isaiah 55:10,11.

Isaiah 55:10-11, “¹⁰ For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: ¹¹ So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

God's decretive will is seen in five aspects:

- A. **Origin.** God's will is like the rain and the snow in its origin. The snow and the rain come down from above, where they originate. So too does God's will from above. From His will, He spoke through His Word. God's Word is from God, inspired by His Spirit, protected and preserved perfectly. It is God's truth. Like the rain and snow, God's Word comes down out of heaven from the mouth of God. It is not the words of Isaiah, Paul or Peter, or any man's word but God's Word.
- B. **Work.** God's will is like the rain and the snow in its work. The rain and snow do not bounce back up to heaven like a ball, they have a work to do. They water the earth. The will of God also has a work to perform. God is pleased to touch the hearts of men and women and children with His will through His Word (see Romans 10:14-17). God's will shall be done!
- C. **Result.** God's will is like the rain and the snow in its result. The rain and snow have result to show. When the earth is watered, there awaits the result. The result is the earth will bring forth vegetation that buds. Likewise, the will of God has result to show. A Chinese man gave a gift Bible to a missionary with the explanation, “Every time I read it, it kicks me.”
- D. **Vision.** God's will is like the rain and the snow in its vision. The rain and snow, having fallen and caused the vegetation to grow and bud, causes it to produce seed so that more vegetation might grow. The will of God through His Word also produces seeds. These are the seeds of truth that pass on from generation to generation.
- E. **Provision.** God's will is like the rain and the snow in its provision. The rain and snow provide food and sustenance for the consumers. Likewise, God's will through His Word is spiritual food for God's people. Food for the mature, and food for the babe in Christ (Hebrews 5:12-14). Apostle Peter calls the Word pure spiritual milk (1 Peter 2:2).

IV. SUMMARY

Nothing can change God's decree. God knows best and His will is the best for His people. Parallel to Isaiah 55:10-11 is Romans 8:28. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” While that which is bad could be the consequences a believer suffered because of his sin or for the sake of building his faith. We know God's will is always good for us. This great truth of comfort tells us that God takes all of life and turns it into a that which works for our spiritual good and for His eternal glory.

Let us be assured that God can take our life, with all of its ups and downs, blend it with His amazing grace, add a portion of His everlasting love and transform it into great blessing. God's decretive will is the larger perspective which helps us to know that whatever happen and will happen, they are already determined by God. Absolutely nothing happens outside of His will. May God help us. Amen.