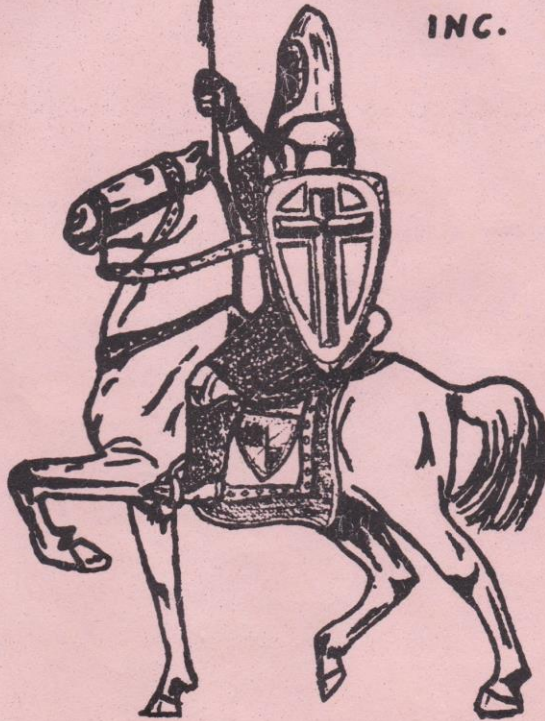


BOOK SIX

"KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD"
By Dr. Albert Grimes

Christian Training Center
INC.



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SPECIALIZED TRAINING IN GIFTS AND MINISTRIES

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Book 6: Knowing the Will of God
Lesson 1: Terms Relating to the Will of God
Acts 2:23
By Dr. Albert Grimes

Before we go into the study of God's will, there are certain terms that we should understand, which will help our study.

These terms are: "Determinate Counsel", "Foreordain", "Predestinate", "Foreknowledge".

DETERMINE COUNSEL OF GOD

The Determine Counsel of God is a term relating to a determined course of action that the persons of the Godhead, after deliberation, brought forth.

In this determined course of actions, certain things or events were decreed to take place, as is stated by the scripture, Genesis 1:26, "...Let us make man..."

EVENTS RELATING TO ISRAEL

These events were determined upon Israel, and nothing could put to one side the determined will of God as in Daniel 9:24-27, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy..."

This determined period of time started after the seventy years of captivity, and is still in progress, and will end at the 1000 years' reign of Christ when Israel as a nation will be fully accepted by God.

Then events relating to the death of Jesus were also determined in the same sense. Luke 22:22, "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!"

Then the act of determination is spoken of in Acts 2:23, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Same event in Acts 4:28, "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

Relating to the nations of earth, Acts 17:26, "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

So determination relates to the act of the Godhead selecting one of the Godhead to be slain in order to bring about redemption's plan. Acts 2:23, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

It also relates to those whom He hath chosen, Ephesians 1:4, "...before the foundation of the world..." And in Romans 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate..."

Then of Israel in Romans 11:2, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew..." This relates to the nation, Acts 17:26.

FOREORDINATION

Out of the Pre-determination came foreordination. John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

Acts 13:48, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

1 Corinthians 2:7, "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."

Ephesians 2:10, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Those who are foreordained have now special limitations put upon them provided for in the plan of salvation, which they are to receive. These special limitations relate to predestination.

PREDESTINATION

Predestination is the effective carrying out of God’s will in the case of those who are foreordained to salvation.

Romans 8:29-30, “For whom he did foreknow (foreordain, after the determinate counsel), he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover (working out of what we are predestined to) whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

Ephesians 1:5,11, “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will... 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”

Predestination is the carrying out of what God has ordained. So we are predestined to certain things which God in his Sovereignty will bring to pass.

These are, being conformed to the image of Christ, the completing of the plan of God in regards to our salvation, Calling, Justification, Glorification, Adoption, Inheritance. All these are not the believer’s.

But the will of God in relationship to my life here on earth is a different area of the will of God. The actual working out of God’s will in my life, may relate to what He has determined, ordained, predestined, but it also relates to another area, and that is me as a believer.

This part of the will of God depends upon my dedication, separation, willingness to serve, and a whole area of things, circumstances, and conditions.

Then there is the fact of the believer’s own will. It is true that we are bought and purchased and we are not our own, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, and we cannot by an act of will change our destiny in regards to what God has determined, ordained, and predestined.

But, we as believers have enough free will to decide and let self rule in our lives, and put to one side what God has ordained for us to do, John 15:16, Ephesians 2:10, and live a life outside of God’s ordained will. This is what is known as the permissive will of God. It relates to something that is not in the Will of God for us. But, it is an experience which God allows, but does not desire for us. It is not, His will, but our own.

The believer is obligated to know the Will of God. This is pointed out in scripture where it teaches that believers are commanded to conduct themselves carefully as those who have the facts concerning the Will of God. Ephesians 5:15-17, “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”

We as believers are to collect all the information available regarding the will of God, put it together, and come to a sound conclusion as to what His Will is for our lives.

KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD
Book 6
QUESTIONS ON LESSON 1

1. If a person creates something out of nothing, does he have the right to do with it and plan it the way he wants it? Explain.
2. What does “the determinate counsel of God” mean?
3. What did the Godhead determine regarding one of them, to bring about Redemption?
4. Explain what “foreordination” is.
5. What is “predestination”?
6. What does the working out of God’s will in my life depend on, in regards to me?
7. How much free will do I NOT have?
8. How much free will do we have?
9. Are we obliged as believers to know God’s Will? Why?

Book 6: Knowing the Will of God
Lesson 2: God's Will in Relationship to Redemption
Romans 12:1-2
By Dr. Albert Grimes

Some believers are always concerned with knowing the will of God for their every day life, and they expect to come up with conclusions, but day after day they become more disappointed in their search and never find the answers.

We must understand that finding the will of God for my life is connected with so many other areas, relating to the will of God. And in order to understand God's will for my every day life, I must understand all the other realms relating to the will of God.

It is first necessary for me to have an understanding in regards to God's will in redemption.

GOD'S WILL IN RELATIONSHIP TO REDEMPTION

When I accepted Christ, did I fully understand what had taken place in my life? This has a lot of bearing on knowing God's will for my life.

In relationship to my condition before redemption, according to Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." In other words, we were absolute slaves of Satan.

The redemption by the sovereign act of God, came into our lives, as stated in John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Then again in John 6:65, "And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." In redemption, we were actually bought by God, by the blood of Christ.

We are bought by the blood of Christ as stated in 1 Peter 1:18-19, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

Having been bought, we are not our own. This is one of the most potent factors in knowing the will of God, "I am not my own", as stated in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

We are then the purchased possession of God, sealed to be His, until the redemption day, as in Ephesians 1:13-14, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Now let us face the facts. I was a slave of Satan, not my own. Now I am bought by Christ, redeemed, and I now belong to God, Body, Soul, and Spirit.

I have no rights of my own. I should have no plans, no ambitions of my own, only what God, through His plans and purposes has determined for me.

Finding myself in this position, and accepting it as the Will of God, I am now at the threshold of being led into first proving what is good and acceptable and the perfect Will of God.

In other words, my Christianity will begin to work. The proving of the good and acceptable and perfect Will of God will come after two principle things are now performed in my life.

These things can only be fully entered into after I realize my position in relationship to redemption, "I am not my own". These two things are "Dedication" and "Separation".

DEDICATION AND SEPARATION

Coming to this place of dedication and separation will be the first active step into knowing God's Will for my life. This is spoken of in Romans 12:1-2, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service..."

This is dedication. It's giving of one's self to God, without reservations. It is a complete giving of one's self to God.

Some have in all honesty presented their bodies a living sacrifice, yet there has been no proving of God's good and acceptable and perfect will.

The problem in most cases is that what they have presented was not holy. Therefore it was not acceptable to God.

There were areas where the works of the flesh controlled, and perhaps areas where Satanic forces controlled, and the offering was not acceptable to God. And because of these things the dedication is not complete. I must come before God, and allow the Holy Spirit to show me the areas in which I need deliverance, after which my dedication will become more acceptable to God.

Romans 12:2, "And be not conformed to this world..." Conformed means, stop assuming an outward expression which is patterned after this world, an expression which does not come from, nor is it representative of what you are in your inner being as a regenerated child of God. It could be further translated, stop masquerading in the fashions of this world, its mannerisms, speech, expressions, styles or habits.

The word "world" means all the floating mass of thought, opinions, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations at any time current in the world.

Too many believers in our day are seeking the approval of the world. No child of God has to look like the world, and act like the world in order to help it.

It is the preaching of the cross that is the power of God unto salvation, not styles and habits.

As children of God, in order to have God's approval, we have to touch not the unclean thing, as state in 2 Corinthians 6:17-18, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

If we are conformed to this world we will become more and more like the world, and more, will come under its domination. Because of this, we will never be transformed when our life is taken up with the world and all it offers. Our minds are captivated and consequently no spiritual growth will take place.

It is only when we are entirely separated from these things can any transformation take place, and God's good and acceptable and perfect will be proved in our lives.

We can become spiritually minded, or have a renewed mind as the result of the Spirit's control. In this condition it enables the saint to put his life to the test, for the purpose of approving it. The test being that it conforms to the Word of God.

Thus the saint will experience what obedience to the Word is. He will also find out what it feels like to have the Word of God saturate and control our lives.

When this takes place in the life of the saint, he will prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect Will of God, or he will put his approval upon it. He will know it to be of God. He will know it is the Will of God.

Our Lord was speaking of the same thing in John 7:17, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

When we as children of God come and dedicate, separate, and become spiritually minded we shall know of the good and acceptable and perfect Will of God.

In other words, when we have fulfilled our part, then the good and perfect Will of God will be revealed, not until.

God does not reveal His Will to His children who do not obey Him. Obeying God is the Will of God. For all of us not in relationship to what we have been studying, Dedication, Separation, not be conformed, but being Transformed, this opens the way into God's Will for my life.

KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD
Book 6
QUESTIONS ON LESSON 2

1. When I accepted Christ, did I fully understand what had taken place in my life? Why?
2. What was my condition before Redemption?
3. How did we happen to come to God?
4. How were we bought? Explain.
5. What is a most important factor in knowing the will of God?
6. How were we sealed?
7. Within what limits should our plans, etc., be made?
8. What is the first active step I make towards God's Will?
9. What is dedication?
10. What are some things that hinder dedication?
11. What does "be not conformed to this world" mean?
12. What does "the world" mean?
13. How do we get God's approval?
14. What happens when we conform to the world?
15. What is the test or standard we put our life to?
16. Is obedience necessary in knowing the will of God? Why?

Book 6: Knowing the Will of God
Lesson 3: God's Will for Me in Relationship to His Plans and Purposes
Ephesians 1:11
By Dr. Albert Grimes

Having submitted ourselves to the fact of redemption, that we are bought by God, and that we are not our own, and according to that understanding we have dedicated and separated ourselves to God, and we are no longer being conformed to this world, and we are being renewed in the spirit of our minds, and we are no beginning to prove the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, in other words, our Christianity is beginning to work, we are not proving it to be real.

Then we must understand that God has an eternal plan for this universe, and that you and I are part of it, as pointed out in Ephesians 3:11, "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Everything in this universe works according to that planned purpose. What a difference it makes to a child of God to know that there is a real purpose in this universe, a planned purpose, and that everything is working out an eternal end.

How different to the evolutionist who leaves everything to chance. Throughout all the changes of evolution, there is no real purpose, no real end, no goal. But the child of God can know that he is part of a universal program which is eternal.

GOD WORKS ALL THINGS ACCORDING TO THAT PURPOSE

Ephesians 1:11, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

So whatever is going on in this world, or in the universe itself, it is all working out the purposes of God.

We as God's children have an inheritance, or we have a part in God's program, because he hath predetermined us to His purpose, and He will work out everything according as He has planned.

WE ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO THAT PURPOSE

This calling has an eternal aspect to it as is stated in Ephesians 1:4-5, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." This is further revealed in 2 Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Then in 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."

**THIS PURPOSE IS A COMPLETE FINISHED PROGRAM
IN THE MIND OF GOD**

We are now living out, as we walk in the Will of God, the finished work as pointed out in Romans 8:29-30, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

WHAT WE ARE PREDESTINATED TO

First, we are predestinated according to God's own purpose as in Ephesians 1:11, "...predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

Then we are predestinated unto adoption through Christ as in Ephesians 1:5, “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ...”

We are now predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son as in Romans 8:29, “...he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

ALL THINGS ARE WORKING TOWARDS THIS PLANNED PURPOSE OF GOD

Romans 8:28-30, “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. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” The fact that this is God’s program for us must be taken into account. His is an eternal plan. This is what I am predestinated to.

What are we to understand by the “predestinated”? It means to “determine before hand”. In other words, God has predetermined for all of His, all things as scripture reveals.

Just like the Son of a King, we are destined to sit upon a throne, even before we were born, as well as being predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ which is a future eternal part of God’s plan and purpose.

So in the same sense, I am also ordained to a special place in the Body of Christ. This ordination into a ministry in the Body of Christ is also predestinated of God.

We have to understand these things. I am not my own. I am a predestinated person. I belong to God, and I also should understand that all the necessary power through the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit is at my disposal to enable me to be conformed to the preordained plan of God.

I can submit myself to this plan or I can turn aside and miss it, and live in God’s permissive will, but the permissive will of God is not a safe place for any child of God.

The predestinated plan of God for my eternal welfare cannot be changed, but His intended will for me on earth can be missed, refused, and lost, and I can live a life outside of God’s intended will, and still I will be saved. But I will have no position or place in the program of God in eternity.

So it is necessary for us to pay special attention to God’s plan and purpose for us in this life.

KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD
Book 6
QUESTIONS ON LESSON 3

1. Explain: Is there really a planned purpose in the universe?
2. Are we a part of that plan? Why?
3. How does God look upon this purpose?
4. What three things are we predestinated to?
5. Does God really have a special ministry and place for me in the body? Can you give a scripture?
6. Where will the power to fulfill the ministry come from?
7. How do we get into only His “permissive” will?
8. Can the plan of God for my eternal welfare be changed? Why?
9. What will the result be in eternity if I live only in His “permissive” will here?
10. Why do we need to pay attention to God’s plan and purpose for our lives?

Book 6: Knowing the Will of God
Lesson 4: God's Will for Me in Relationship to My Ordained
Place in the Body of Christ
1 Corinthians 12:18
By Dr. Albert Grimes

The previous studies which deal with redemption and God's predestinated plan brings the believer into an understanding of the fact he is not his own, and that a predestinated plan of God has already been laid out for his eternal existence.

Now we come to another principle in relationship to the Will of God, and it relates to this life now, as you and I live upon this earth.

This program for a human life upon this earth changes in relation to the dispensation in which we live. We find ourselves living in the Dispensation of Grace, and in this part of God's program, the church of Christ is the main, principle thing.

So God, without consulting me in any sense, has ordained me into a ministry into this church, which is the main purpose in this dispensation. Now this placing me into the body of Christ is a predestinated event as is pointed out in Jeremiah 1:5, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." This is an Old Testament event, but in the same sense it is New Testament, as is pointed out in Paul's experience in Acts 22:14, "And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth."

So we must understand God's purpose in this age of grace as is stated in Acts 15:14, "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name." And God's program will never change, nor will he deal in any other way until this part of His plan is completed, as stated in Romans 11:25, "...that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." In other words, "until the church is complete".

So the completion of the church is God's program for this dispensation, and we must also conform to this and find our place in God's program.

WE ARE ADDED TO THE CHURCH

As soon as we are saved we are added, or placed, additionally into the Church as stated in Acts 2:47, "...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." I must adjust my life and take my place in the Church as God has ordained me. Ephesians 4:8, "...and gave gifts unto men," or, "he gave men as gifts". Those gifted men are placed in a special place as stated in Ephesians 4:11, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." Then again in Romans 12:7-8, "Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness."

Gifted by the Lord in regards to our ministry, and by the Holy Spirit in regards to our spiritual gifts, as in 1 Corinthians 12:7, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." 1 Corinthians 12:11, "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

The fact of knowing our ministry and spiritual manifestations has first priority in my life. I must first pattern my whole way of living according to the position God has given me in the Body, the Church. What I am in the Body of Christ is what I am in my daily living, and my whole life must conform to it.

My spiritual vocation must have first priority in my life, as in scripture it is pointed out, Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The Word of God reveals this fact, but at the same time it tells us that we have a responsibility to our wives and children. We have to provide in these areas. It is necessary to have a home. These are the added things.

But most of us have to admit that in most cases this daily business of living has taken up most of our time, and God's ordained program has taken second place in our lives. And it's the most important, because it deals with the eternal aspects, while all we gather round us in this life will be left behind.

What am I to do in these areas? The trouble is that we have separated our Christianity from our daily living. It's something we put on after work. But, we must understand that what we are in the Body of Christ is what we are in daily life, and all our connections, and those whom we contact will in some degree come under that ministration.

I am not one thing at work, and another thing at Church. I am only one thing. Wherever I find myself, I am a teacher, and every opportunity that God puts before me, I teach in all the aspects of the teaching ministry. And every God ordained contact that I make in daily living and in church will come under the teaching ministration.

Men and women cannot separate what they are in the Body of Christ from their daily living, or their occupation in this world. What I am in God's plan works in all areas of my life.

THE REVELATION OF THIS MINISTRY

I remember after I was saved receiving from the Lord the scripture of Jeremiah 1:5-10. Every child of God, called of God, has had this experience. They may not have understood, because of the lack of teaching, but most of us can recall perhaps this personal call of God.

THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF OTHERS THERE MAY COME A CONFIRMATION OF OUR CALL

Now we should understand what we mean by confirmation. This is only a confirmation of the personal call of God relating to our place in the Body of Christ.

Someone witnessing to what we know is the call of God as in the case of Saul. Ananias confirmed to him his call of God, but let us understand just what type of man this Ananias was. Acts 22:12, "And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there."

Paul had prayed for an understanding of the Will of God for his life in Acts 9:6, "And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?..." God's answer is given, Acts 9:6, "...And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." After which, Ananias came and ministered unto him, Acts 22:13-15, "Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. 14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. 15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and hears." Confirming of His apostolic ministry.

This kind of confirmation was done outside of the local church, and was directly under the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

THIS PERSONAL CALL CAN BE CONFIRMED BY THE CHURCH THROUGH ELDERS

We must understand that when this was performed in the early church, there was no such thing in existence as denominations. The church was a world wide church, existing as one. Local churches existed because of the locality only. And this confirmation was to the personal call that God had given the believer. And wherever and whenever believers gather together, they form the church regardless of what humanistic organizations they belong to, and elders of such gatherings can, and are able to confirm a man's personal call from God as pointed out in 1 Timothy 4:14, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

Let us understand that this ordinance refers to confirming a ministry and is not personal prophecy. Personal prophecy is to be found in 1 Corinthians 14:24,25, where the secrets of the heart are made manifest.

OUR PERSONAL CALL IS THE FIRST REVELATION OF GOD'S WILL FOR OUR LIVES

We have learned about God's will for our lives in the future in His eternal purpose, and His ownership of us in this life. Now we are brought face to face with His personal call for our lives.

This personal call has two elements in regards to its fulfillment. First, we have a personal responsibility to the church into which we are placed by God, as pointed out in 1 Peter 4:10, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." Then in 1 Corinthians 14:12, "Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." Second, we have a personal responsibility to the world. We are to witness. We must witness in the areas in which we live but we do so according to our ministry.

Having now understood the call of God in relationship to my ministry, I am now to learn as much as possible, the ministry and its operation, as is pointed out in God's Word, in 1 Timothy 4:14-15, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all."

The word "meditate" means to "care for", "to attend to carefully", "practice". The words, "give thyself wholly to them" mean "to be constantly in there", "to throw one's self wholly into his ministry", or "up to our ears in work", or "sticking to the task". The word "profiting" means "to cut forward", "to blaze the way", or "make a pioneer advance".

Then again in 1 Timothy 1:18, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare."

The whole procedure concerning God's Will for my life here on earth then, center around the fact of my knowing my place in the Body of Christ. This is a first principle.

Some move out into a God-ordained call, but because of the lack of teaching upon the subject of ministries, are never able to enter into a full ministry. Others know nothing of a God-ordained call, and they spend their whole lifetime working in some man-promoted program that in no way conforms to the call that God has given them.

HOW TO ENTER INTO MY MINISTRY AND THE OPERATIONS OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Now we must be carefully instructed in relationship to our ministry and gifts, and as we have studied, we are to attend very carefully to our ministry. We are to practice it.

We are to throw ourselves wholly into our ministry. We are to make advances into our ministry, and God will bring about the opportunities. Then we are to warfare according to the prophecies, 1 Timothy 1:18. The warfare is in relationship to the prophecies of 1 Timothy 4:14. Our ministry is to be worked out in accordance to the prophecies.

Thus the Spirit-filled believer has a definite order of operation which is related to his call from God.

PREPARATION FOR MINISTERING IN OUR MINISTRY AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Having now found my place in God's eternal program, and having now found my place in the Body of Christ, I am now in a position to fulfill God's will for my life.

In order to move into my ministry, there are definite things I have to understand. I must understand that my ministry is not to be performed by any human talents that I possess, or any ability that I have. I minister according to a God-given ability as pointed out in 1 Peter 4:11, "...if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth..." The word "ability" means "forcefulness", "power", "strength".

So, my ministry is not brought forth in the power of natural ability, or education. With the ministry is given a God-given ability to perform. I must learn to wait on my ministry as stated in Romans 12:7, "Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering..."

The word “ministry” relates to the sphere in which I work and each sphere of operation is different and must be performed in a different way as suggested in Romans 12:7-8, “Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”

All these words, teaching, exhortation, giving, shewing mercy, relate to the sphere of operation, the idea being that the one who is given a teaching gift should remain within the exercise, or sphere of that ministry. It’s a wise man who stays within the sphere of service for which God has fitted him, and does not invade some other field of service for which he is not fitted.

The faith which is measured to us qualified us in these different areas of ministry, as stated in Romans 12:3, “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

This faith does four things for us:

1. It conditions the powers and the office of believers.
2. It also gives the believer spiritual insight which, according to its degree, qualified a man to be a prophet, a teacher, or so on.
3. This same faith enables the believer to receive powers of discernment as to actual limitations to and of his ministry.
4. It also introduces him to new standards of measurement according to which he accurately determines the maturity and extent of his powers, and so does not think of himself more highly than he ought to think. He thinks soberly according to the extent and powers of his ministry.

THE BELIEVER MUST WAIT ON HIS MINISTRY

Romans 12:7, ““Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering...” The word “wait”, does not relate to the word as we understand it. But it means “to expect fully”, “to look for”, “awareness of”.

We are to expect the ministry to come forth, and we are to take hold of every opportunity that God gives us to bring forth that ministry.

THE BELIEVER MUST ALSO STIR UP THE GIFT THAT IS IN HIM

2 Timothy 1:6-7, “Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. 7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

The word “stir” means “to awake fully”. That is, “to arouse”, speaking of an act, “to put one’s self in the way of manifestation”, “exercise what one has been taught in relationship to the gift”.

THE BELIEVER MUST NOT NEGLECT THE GIFT

1 Timothy 4:14, “Neglect not the gift that is in thee...” The word “neglect” means to be “careless of”, “be negligent”, “to not regard”, “to be of no interest”.

We are duty bound to minister, or give what we have to one another, as is it stated in 1 Peter 4:10, “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

The word “stewards” speaks of the responsibility of the proper use and disposition of something entrusted to one’s care. We have to discharge the special duties to which God has called us.

These things are the first priority in knowing the Will of God. If this working, active part of God’s Will is not understood, the whole sphere of Christian experience is of no avail.

I must know who I am, and what I am, and how I am to do it. Then, and then only, will my life as a child

of God have any direction.

So, in the early stages of my Christian experience, I am what the scripture calls a disciple, which means, a learner, a pupil, enrolled as a scholar, as in Acts 9:10, "...certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias..." It is the Will of God that I first become a disciple, and learn to minister the things of God.

Then later in the Will of God my ministry and Spiritual Gifts can be confirmed to me. Then I will be able to enter into my God-ordained place in the Body of Christ, and fulfill God's intended will for my life.

KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD
Book 6
QUESTIONS ON LESSON 4

1. In what dispensation do we live?
2. What is the main principle thing in it and what part do I have in it?
3. What does God want to complete in this dispensation?
4. When are we added to the church?
5. What did God give to the church?
6. Who gave us our ministry and who our gifts?
7. What must come forth in our life?
8. Do we shirk our family responsibilities in order to fulfill it?
9. What am I to do in regards to making a living and my ministry?
10. What do we mean by “confirmation”?
11. What was the first prayer Paul prayed?
12. What is the difference of confirming a ministry and personal prophecy?
13. To fulfill our personal call, what two personal responsibilities do I have?
14. What do I need to learn now?
15. What is the will of God in regards to these things?
16. What does “meditate” and “profiting” mean?
17. What does the knowing of God’s will for my life center around?
18. How do I get opportunities to minister?
19. What must we understand regarding the “ability” to minister?
20. To what does the word “ministry” relate?
21. What must we learn in regards to outreach of “ministry”?
22. How do we get faith to minister?
23. What four things does this faith do for us?

24. What does it mean to “wait” on our ministry?
25. How do we “stir up” the gift?
26. What does “neglect” mean?
27. What does “stewards” mean?
28. What three things do I need to know to have direction in my life?
29. In the early stages what am I?

Book 6: Knowing the Will of God
Lesson 5: God's Will in Relationship to His Word
2 Timothy 3:16
By Dr. Albert Grimes

After finding my place, first in God's eternal plan, and purpose in relationship to glorification, then secondly, in relationship to my place in the Body of Christ, I must become a student of God's Word, for in the Word of God I will find all of the instruction I will need for every phase of my Christian experience. This is pointed out in the Word. 1 Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

There will be no growth without the Word rightly divided, as stated in 2 Timothy 2:15, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The word "study" suggests to us that we are to make haste and exert ourselves, give diligence.

The term "rightly dividing" means "to cut straight". It relates to the stone mason's art of cutting stones fair and straight to fit into their places in a building.

What method of Bible study would be most beneficial to a beginner? First, the broad outline and divisions of God's Word must be understood. This can only be obtained through a study of Dispensational Truth.

We must understand that the Bible is divided into Ages and Dispensations. These we must understand, and this kind of study will keep us from error. After we have an understanding of Dispensational Truth, we can then go further into the study of thematic subjects, the study of Themes.

This kind of study will put meat upon the bones of Dispensational Truth. There are hundreds of themes one can study throughout the Bible. After one has mastered the themes of the Bible, then he will, because of his doctrinal knowledge, be able then to study the Books of the Bible one by one.

With this method of Bible study, one can become as stated, "approved of God". A workman approved is a workman who has been put to the test, and meeting the specifications, has won the approval of the one who has subjected him to the test.

There is no sense in my seeking God's Will for my life until I apply myself to the study of God's Word. There is no suggestion here that it is necessary to know the entire Bible before I can begin to work for the Lord. I can learn to minister, manifest, teach, preach, witness, while I learn, always being careful to do all these things within the range of my understanding of God's Word. Never get out of your depth.

So, we should understand that only after diligent study of God's Word are we approved of God. God can only use those who are learning to know His Word. The whole exercise of my ministry depends upon my knowledge of God's Word as is stated in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Each separate passage, and the scriptures as a whole are inspired of God, or "God breathed", and as the inspired Word of God it is profitable for "doctrine", teaching material. All doctrine must be formulated from the Word of God. It must be built from the material of the Word, scripture upon scripture, every scripture adding more light and understanding of the doctrine taught.

The whole area of our Christian experience has its foundation in sound doctrine. Never be carried away with movements who claim we can fellowship around Christ, alone, apart from doctrine. These are man-made aspirations that only lead to confusion.

"Reproof" relates to "conviction" of sin or wrongdoing, "correction", restoration to an upright, or right state, correction or improvement, relating to character, "instruction in righteousness", whatever in adults cultivates the soul, especially by correcting mistakes and curbing passions, hence instruction, which aims at the increase of virtue, "perfect", completely fitted, "thoroughly furnished", to complete, finish, or "fitted out".

There is one principle we all should understand, that the knowledge of sound doctrine will help to save us, and them that are taught by us, as in 1 Timothy 4:16, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

There is good doctrine, 1 Timothy 4:6, “If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”

There is sound doctrine, 2 Timothy 4:3, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.”

There are doctrines of men, Colossians 2:22, “Which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men?”

There are strange doctrines, Hebrews 13:9, “Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines...” All doctrine that differs from the Gospel in regards to its truth is strange doctrine.

There are doctrines of devils, 1 Timothy 4:1, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”

We are exhorted to teach sound doctrine, Titus 2:1, “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.”

Sound doctrine is the only kind of doctrine that will convince of truth, as stated in Titus 1:9, “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”

Sound doctrine can only be taught as we submit ourselves to the scriptural standard laid down for us in Titus 2:7, “In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.”

It is the children who are carried about by every wind of doctrine as stated in Ephesians 4:14, “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine....” It is understandable then that a sound principle of studying the Bible must be maintained. This we will do in our next lesson.

KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD
Book 6
QUESTIONS ON LESSON 5

1. Where can I find all the instruction I need?
2. What does “study” mean?
3. What do we mean by “rightly dividing”?
4. What method of Bible Study should be most beneficial to a beginner?
5. What will be the results?
6. Do I need to know the entire Bible before I can minister? Explain.
7. Within what range must I keep?
8. Where and how do we get doctrine?
9. What does “reproof” relate to?
10. Name the different kinds of doctrine.
11. Which kind will convince of the truth?
12. To what must we submit?

Book 6: Knowing the Will of God
Lesson 6: God's Will in Regards to the Interpretation of His Word
By Dr. Albert Grimes

The principle of proper interpretation of God's Word must be understood by the student of God's Word, for upon this depends our whole ministry. And one thing we must understand then, is that the literal method is the only correct method of interpretation. For God's Word is written in our language, and it therefore should be interpreted as our language is, and when the literal sense of scripture makes sense, seek no other sense.

Now, apart from the main principle literal method of interpretation of scripture, there are other methods, by which the scripture may be interpreted. But, let us understand that all doctrine may be established by the literal method, and all the other methods of interpretations must be tested by the literal methods.

THE METHOD OF TEACHING FROM TYPES

A type may be a thing, an event, or a person, which prefigures some truth connected with the Bible.

In the teaching of these types, one should always explain that these things only typify certain truths in order that the person being taught will not hold them on the same level as literal teaching, or use them to try and establish doctrine.

Some use the Tabernacle of Exodus 19:1 through Exodus 40:38, which in literal interpretation relates to Israel and their approach to God through offerings and the High Priest. They use it in relationship to the believer and his approach into the presence of God, or to the sinner and his coming to God. They build up an interpretation which may be built upon New Testament truths, and apply it in the sense spoken of.

In some groups this type of teaching is classified as spiritual, and an elaborate system of doctrine is set down through this method. We should understand that as long as our types relate to literal truths they may be considered safe.

We know of some teachers who have gone beyond the body of revealed truths, and they divide the churches into three groups according to this same tabernacle. The outer court group, the holy place group, and the holy of holies group. Naturally, the Holy of Holies group are the overcomers, the real spiritual ones.

Then there are Prophetic types, and Enoch is made to be a type of the raptured church caught out before the tribulation which is represented by the flood. Noah and his family are a type of Israel being protected from the dragon during the tribulation period. The scriptures used are Genesis 5:24, Genesis 7:7, Genesis 8:18, along with Revelation 12:14.

Then there are person types which people use, both in the Old Testament and New Testament to portray Christ, believers, the experience of believers, and so forth. The whole life of Abram can be made to portray the life of believers in regards to their call into God's work, and other experiences. Jacob, and Moses, could be used in a similar sense. Also Saul and David.

The teaching in regards to Symbols must be understood. There seem to be six kinds of symbols in the Bible, and all are prophetic in character, or relating to events predicted to:

1. Persons
2. Institutions
3. Offices
4. Events
5. Actions
6. Things

THERE ARE THREE PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

1. The names are to be understood literally.
2. The symbol relates to something different from themselves.
3. Some resemblance is traceable between the symbol and the thing symbolized.

The great question with the interpretation of symbols should therefore be, what are the probable points of resemblance between this sign, and the thing which it is intended to represent.

Some of these symbols and their interpretation of symbols should therefore be, what are the probable points of resemblance between this sign, and the thing which it is intended to represent.

Some of these symbols and their interpretations can be brought forth at this time. Revelation 12:1-6, the woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, upon her head a crown of twelve stars, then a great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns. The interpretation of the dragon symbol is given in Revelation 12:9, "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan..."

How are we to interpret the meaning of the woman? This woman cannot be the church, for positionally in the Book of Revelation the Church is represented by the twenty-four elders, and is raptured in heaven in chapters 4,5.

Then this woman is with child, ready to be delivered. This is not the church's conditions for the church is represented as a virgin in 2 Corinthians 11:23, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

Now in Genesis 37:9, speaking of Joseph and his dream, "And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me." Now the interpretation of this dream was fully understood by them as in Genesis 37:10, "And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"

The same symbols are used in regards to the woman of Revelation 12:1, who represents Israel. The manchild is doubtless Christ who came from Israel, as in Romans 9:4-5, "...and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came..."

The event about the dragon trying to devour the child as soon as it was born relates to Matthew 2:16, when Herod slew the children, seeking to destroy Christ. Then the child was caught up to his throne, and was to rule with a rod of iron, Revelation 12:5. This is stated of Christ in Psalm 2:9, and Revelation 2:27. Thus the woman is proven to be Israel, who will be protected from the Antichrist during the tribulation period in Revelation 12:6.

There is one observation which seems to have been overlooked by many students of the interpretation of prophecy, and that is the fact that scripture interprets its own symbols.

So we must understand then, that some prophecy is conveyed to us by means of symbols, and symbolic language. But, whenever such is the case, the symbols are explained in the immediate context in the book in which they occur, or elsewhere in the Word. No room is left to the imagination of the interpreter.

THE METHOD OF PARABLES

There is another method used in the scriptures, in most cases to reveal future events, and that is the method of using parables.

A parable is a story in which people, things, and happenings have another meaning. The Lord made frequent use of this method as a means of revealing prophetic revelations. An understanding of the right method of interpretation is very important.

Someone has given us seven rules to guide us in their interpretation:

1. Determine the exact nature and details of the customs, practices, and elements that form the material or natural part of the parable.
2. Determine the one central truth the parable is attempting to teach.
3. Determine how much of the parable is interpreted by the Lord Himself.
4. Determine if there are any clues in the context as to the parable's meaning.
5. Do not make a parable walk on all fours.
6. Be careful of the doctrinal use of parables.

7. A clear understanding of the time period that many of the parables are intended for is necessary for their full interpretation.

It is important that parables should not be made the first, or sole source of scripture doctrine. Doctrine otherwise already set forth through the literal method may be further illustrated by them, but we are not to gather doctrine exclusively from them.

Now, in the interpretation of scripture there are two possible dangers we want to deal with:

- that of teaching the Bible with no principle thought of the Dispensational setting of the scriptures we are dealing with.
- then the dangerous habit of the spiritualization of scripture.

THE METHOD OF TEACHIING ACCORDING TO THE DISPENSATIONAL SETTING OF THE SCRIPTURE

Now there are definite periods of time related to in the Word of God. The Bible speaks of Ages, Times, and Seasons, Last Days, Times of the Gentiles, and Fullness of the Gentiles, and it is quite evident as we study these periods of time that in some periods certain truths were revealed, which were not revealed in other periods.

As we study the Bible, we notice that we have progressive revelations of truth being revealed, a gradual unfolding of the truth. It's like the growing of the fruit tree. There are roots in the ground, a trunk, and branches from the trunk, then leaves from the branches, then fruit. We should never look among the roots, or the trunk for the fruit. We look for it among the branches and the leaves.

There is truth in God's Word which is only revealed in certain parts of the Bible, and when we have an understanding of what that truth is then we can find out in what period of the Bible it was revealed. Then we can find it in its right place, rightly explained.

If we go to the other parts of the scriptures to find that truth, it will not be there. Then we will have to use other scriptures not related to the truth we are seeking and misapply or misinterpret them, and make them teach what we want them to teach. This is how error comes forth.

Examples of what we mean can relate to the Church. All through the entire Old Testament the Church is not mentioned, and also in the Gospels, it is only predicted, as in Matthew 21:18. The only place in the scriptures where we have the Church revealed and described is in the period from the Book of Acts through to Revelation.

This fact is explained in Ephesians 3:5-6, "Which in other ages (Old Testament) was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." Then again in Colossians 1:26, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints."

If the revelation concerning the Church was only revealed to the apostles and prophets of the New Testament Church, we are to look for the whole truth concerning the Church from their writings, and nowhere else can it be found. But some persistently apply scriptures from all over the Bible to the Church, and all kinds of erroneous teachings come forth that harass the Body of Christ.

One of the most misapplied scriptures in regards to what we are discussing is, the Parable of the Virgins, in Matthew 25:1-13, which is made to teach that the foolish virgins which did not have the Baptism of the Holy Spirit will be left to go through the tribulation. Now, if Church truth was only revealed, as stated in Ephesians 3:5-6 and Colossians 1:26 to the apostles and prophets, which was after this period in Matthew 25:1-13, what are we to understand in regards to this parable?

The parable relates, as it states, to the Kingdom of heaven, which is a different program from the Church. A careful study of Matthew 25:1-13 will prove this point. In Matthew 24:21-22, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." It's the tribulation that takes place after the Rapture that is mentioned here.

Then also in Matthew 24:29-30, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: **30** And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

This event relates to Christ’s coming to the earth, the Revelation, and it’s after the tribulations, when Christ comes to set up His kingdom. Matthew 25:1-13 falls after these events, and relates to the Kingdom period, and the parable of the virgins relates to those who are called in relationship to the Kingdom, and in no way does it speak of the church.

THE METHOD OF TEACHING THAT COMES FROM SPIRITUALIZATION OF SCRIPTURE

Teachers who use this method of interpretation of scripture try to tell us that underneath the surface of the literal translation of the scripture is a hidden spiritual meaning that must be sought for in the teaching of the Word of God.

But the danger relating to this kind of teaching is that those hidden meanings of scripture come altogether out of the minds and imaginations of the teacher.

Thus, the great danger in this system is that it takes away the authority of scripture, and leaves us without any basis on which interpretations may be tested, and reduces scripture to what seems reasonable to the interpreter, and as a result makes true interpretation impossible.

Instances of this kind of teaching can be given in this sense. The whole book of Exodus was used as a basis for what was termed “Present Day Truth”, and was made to conform to a pattern of interpretation relating to the Church and a special group called the Moses group. They were raised up and protected just as Moses was, then brought forth as the deliverance of the Church.

The whole book was interpreted in this sense, all relating itself to this fantastic revelation. For over one whole year this kind of teaching was taught to hundreds of believers, and accepted as sound doctrine.

There was an actual voice that produced all these fantastic mystic interpretations. This deeper hidden sense of scripture was none other than the spirit of error, 1 John 4:6.

Every Bible student should then understand, when the literal sense makes sense, seek no other sense.

Finally, we as students of the Bible should seek to get below the surface of the English Bible and learn to dig in the areas of the Greek and Hebrew. Now, we do not have to take language courses. There are wonderful helps for Bible students which can be used with much benefit, such as “Word Studies in the Greek New Testament” by Kenneth S. Wuest, four volumes, and M.R. Vincent.

Understanding in these areas can sometimes clear up for us misinterpreted scriptures, and give clearer views in regards to the truth.

One of the greatest examples of this can be seen in the misinterpreted sections of scripture in 1 Timothy 2:11-15. This has been used by English readers of the Bible to keep the woman from having any kind of teaching ministry. But an understanding of the Greek words relating to “teacher”, and “teaching” produce an altogether different view.

Paul is saying, “I do not permit a woman to be a teacher”, in the sense described in Ephesians 4:11, Pastor Teacher, or in 1 Corinthians 12:28, thirdly teachers, or those having authority in matters of doctrine and interpretation. She is not to usurp authority in the sphere of doctrinal disputes or questions of interpretation. Where authoritative pronouncements are to be made, the woman is to be silent. But, they can teach under the Elders, or doctrine of the church already formulated by teachers.

With all these areas considered, one should have no trouble interpreting the Word of God.

Then to conclude, it is the function of the Bible to interpret experience, rather than the function of experience to interpret the Bible. We must be very careful not to build doctrine upon human experience. I knew a man...

KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD
Book 6
QUESTIONS ON LESSON 6

1. What is the only correct interpretation method?
2. In teaching types what must we always explain?
3. Name six kinds of symbols in the Bible.
4. What are the three principles of interpretation?
5. In scripture, where are symbols interpreted?
6. What are the seven rules of interpreting parables?
7. Are we to gather doctrine exclusively from parables? Why?
8. Why do we need to know and understand dispensations or periods of time?
9. How does error come?
10. Where in the Bible do we find Church truth?
11. What is the correct interpretation of the Virgins?
12. What is the danger of spiritualizing scripture?
13. What can help us understand Scripture?
14. In what way can women teach? Explain.
15. Do we use experience to interpret the Bible? Why?

Book 6: Knowing the Will of God
Lesson 7: How Does God Make Known His Will?
Proverbs 3:5-6
By Dr. Albert Grimes

In this study we want to deal with the different ways in which God makes known His Will to us.

Now the scriptures are clear in regards to guidance, in relationship to His Will, Proverbs 16:9, "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps." Psalm 32:8, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Psalm 48:14, "For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death."

Now there are many ways in which God uses to guide us into His will. The first principal method is through His Word. The whole of Christian experience is revealed to us from the scriptures, and a lot of our problems regarding the Will of God would be solved if we understood the Word more.

We may, as Spirit-filled saints, have entered into the knowledge of our maturity and know how to bring forth manifestations. But there may be other areas of my Christian experience that I am having trouble in, just because I have not studied the Word of God.

For instance, I may have brought myself under occult power, because of fellowship in these areas, not knowing that God distinctly instructs His people to come out from that kind of relationship, as in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Not only would this relate to occult fellowship, but it would relate to marriage to unbelievers also. How many Spirit-filled believers have knowingly married unbelievers, and are after such a union, having marriage problems, which they expect God to solve.

We are not to be caught up into the area of sexual license that is being put forth in our day, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5. We are to understand how God deals with believer's sins, and sin, 1 John 1:7-9, 1 John 2:1, Romans 6:1-11, and 1 Peter 2:24.

We must understand how to conduct ourselves as believers, as wives, as husbands, as children, Ephesians 5:1-33, and 6:1-9.

These are areas relating to the Will of God that believers should understand. Not only must they study the Word themselves, but the Church to which they belong is obligated to God to teach them also.

Believers have more problems in the areas relating to God's Will, relating to the revealed Will of God from the scripture, than any other area. The ignorance of God's Word among believers is appalling.

**GUIDANCE THROUGH THE INFLUENCES
OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

This is the first principle of guidance. It is the stage of guidance that few believers attain to, because there are so many areas of the believer's experience that hinder this kind of operation.

In the first instance, we have to be free from any confusion in regards to God's Will for our lives in relationship to the body of Christ. We would have to be dedicated to this part of God's Will in order to have no mental conflicts regarding it. Our mind would then be at rest in that area.

Then there could not be any deep hidden complexes, controlling our minds, and actions. Our minds must be controlled in every area. 2 Timothy 1:7, a sound mind.

Now why must we be at rest in our mind? Why must there be no interference? Because the kind of guidance we are discussing comes in these areas, and is spoken of in Philippians 2:12-13, "...work out your

own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

The word “worketh”, in verse 13, means to energize, to work effectively. The words “to will” refer to a desire that comes from one’s emotions rather than one’s reason. It is this desire to do the good pleasure of God that is produced by divine energy in the heart of the saint, as he subjects himself to the work of the Holy Spirit.

It is God, the Holy Spirit, Who energizes the saint, making him not only willing, but actively desirous of doing God’s Will. He does not leave the saint with the desire to do His Will. He provides the necessary power to do it. This we have in the words, “to do”. The Greek construction implies habit, the habitual doing of God’s Will.

In verse 12, we have human responsibility of working out our salvation. The salvation spoken of here is sanctification, victory over sin, and the living of a life pleasing to the Lord.

In verse 13, divine enablement which must be kept if the Christian life is to be lived at its best, a life lived in, and controlled by the Holy Spirit. Thus can be fulfilled the scriptural statement in Romans 8:14, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Not special sons, but referring to the fact that this is God’s method of guidance into His Will.

GUIDANCE THROUGH REVELATION

In this area of guidance we have to be careful, for there are many saints of God who have a weakness in regards to this kind of guidance.

To have supernatural direction from God would be to have attained the highest type of spirituality, and so some constantly seek to attain this experience. This could be dangerous, and it opens the door for deceiving spirits to enter our lives.

We must understand that this form of guidance is part of some ministries, and grows as the ministry grows. In most cases it is a kind of guidance that relates to our ministering for the Lord as the scriptures point out to us in Acts 8:29, “Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.”

Then we have the trance experience of Peter in Acts 10:9-16, beasts, creeping things, and fowl. Then the instructions, “kill and eat”. God’s instructions to Peter regarding the Gentiles.

Then the Spirit instructs him in Acts 10:19-20, “While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. 20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.”

In the experience of Ananias in Acts 9:10-12, “And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.”

In Paul’s experience in Acts 16:6-10, “Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.”

Then in Galatians 2:2, “And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.”

There are some who seek this kind of guidance for the affairs of everyday life. This kind of revelation does not lend itself to those kinds of things, but it relates to our ministering the things of the Lord.

Now there are some in fundamentalist groups who try and teach us that this kind of guidance does not relate to our day, now that we have the completed Word of God.

Now, I ask you, where would Ananias, out of the scriptures, receive the kind of guidance he needed to find Saul? This kind of guidance only comes by the Spirit of God. It’s a revelation of the Word of Knowledge.

It is a guidance apart from the Word of God that men receive even today.

GUIDANCE THROUGH PROPHECY

Now what we want to deal with is another form of revelation, but it comes through human channels in inspired speaking, and it is relating guidance, or direction, to someone else.

First, we want to establish the fact that it is scriptural. This is pointed out in Acts 13:2-3, "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

Now it is quite possible that the instructions relating to Barnabas and Saul was prophesied, and that the utterance dealt with the future ministry of two people.

Now what is the procedure here? How are we to determine this to be of God? We are instructed in regards to what to do. Verse 3 of Acts 13, "And when they had fasted and prayed..." The utterance was confirmed to be of God, by fasting and prayer, then the witness of it being of God was received by all.

Now the same principle is again spoken of in Acts 20:22-24, "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. 24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

The same warnings come through a prophet in Acts 21:10-14, "And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. 11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. 12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. 14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."

It can be clearly understood in cases such as these, that the individual spoken to has to, for his own self, find and determine what is God's Will in the matter, and that he must not let others persuade him.

GUIDANCE THROUGH CIRCUMSTANCES

The greatest example of this type of guidance is related to us in the life of Joseph. In studying this we are made to understand that God has predicted to Abram that his seed would become a great nation, Genesis 12:1-3, and that they would be strangers in a land that was not theirs, as stated in Genesis 15:13, "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years."

Now the purpose of Israel going into Egypt was that while in Egypt, though only few in number, could grow into a great nation, after which God would deliver them.

Now, in order to get Jacob and his sons to go into Egypt God cause a famine to come upon the earth, but had provided corn in Egypt, Genesis 41:56-67. But, before all this took place, God began to prepare one person to go before Israel in order to preserve them. This person was Joseph.

While Joseph was very young, God gave him revelation of his exaltation in Genesis 37:5-11. These dreams related the fact that his own father and mother and brothers would some day bow down to him, and that he himself would be exalted to a high position.

Now how God works out the circumstances in order to get Joseph into Egypt is an amazing story.

God first uses the envy of his own brethren, as in Genesis 37:4, "And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him."

It was because of this hatred that they sold Joseph to the Midianites, as in Genesis 37:27-28, "Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. 28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph

out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.”

Now in the Will of God, Joseph was brought into Egypt, and was sold into a certain household, Genesis 39:1, “And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.”

Then Joseph was wrongly accused by the wife of Potiphar, and was thrown into prison, Genesis 39:20, “And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.”

Now in the intricate workings of the Will of God, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their Lord, and were placed in the same prison where Joseph was, Genesis 40:1-3, “And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt. 2 And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. 3 And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound.”

Now both the butler and the baker dreamed dreams, which Joseph was able to interpret as in Genesis 40:5-20, which came to pass.

Then two years after this event, the king of Egypt dreamed, as in Genesis 41:1, “And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.”

The king, after demanding an interpretation to his dream which related to the famine which was to come upon the earth, could find no one to interpret his dream. Then the butler who had been in prison with Joseph remembered him, and told the king concerning him, Genesis 41:12-13.

Then Joseph is called by Pharaoh and he interprets the dream, and is exalted in the land of Egypt, Genesis 41:16-45. Thus the children of Israel were preserved in Egypt.

It is to be noticed that Joseph accepted each circumstance as it came into his life, and God was able to bless him.

In this kind of sovereign direction, there is needed a submissiveness to each circumstance. There is a danger for saints who come under this kind of direction to try and get out of these circumstances in their own way, and in doing so miss entirely the purpose of God.

GUIDANCE THROUGH THE OPENING AND SHUTTING OF DOORS

This term is a scriptural term, and is found in 1 Corinthians 16:9, “For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.” 2 Corinthians 2:12, “Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord.” Colossians 4:3, “Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds.” Revelation 3:8, “I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it...”

What constitutes an open door? An open door is an opportunity, or a combination of circumstances favorable for the purpose of ministering in my ministry, and I will have a definite witness of the Spirit concerning the same. Then fruit will result from this open door.

Now sometimes, more than one door will appear to open, and sometimes this may be confusing, but after closely examining each so-called opening, in regards to my personal ministry, plus the definite witness of the Spirit, I will find the one door that God has purposely opened for me.

Then we must understand that the type of door God opens will always relate to the type of ministry I have from the Lord

Some believers have ministry that eventually will travel in the Body. Others have local ministries. Some believers are settled in certain occupations, and their ministry will relate in that same area.

Others may expect, after a period of training in their ministry to Pastor assemblies. Others will move out into a full-time ministry, travelling or even teaching in teaching centers.

God, in most cases, as one door closes, opens another, and we must always be very careful as we sense in our spirit that the door is closing in regards to our ministry in a certain place, not to move until we are certain that the door is finally closed.

Some have moved before the door was finally closed, and have had no other door open to them. God in some cases does not open another door until the one we are in, closes out to us.

Sometimes, other doors have opened before the one we are working in has closed, and we have moved before our work was completed. We must know when a door has closed, and when another door has opened to us.

GUIDANCE THROUGH OTHER BRETHREN

Sometimes God may bring us in contact with certain brethren who know of needs which relate to our ministry, and these needs will give us the open door we need.

A principle must be understood here. Sometimes we may not receive any other form of guidance we have spoken of, only that a need has presented itself, and that our ministry can supply that need.

For example, if there existed a group of people that needed to be taught the Word of God, and God through the contact with some person, has made known to me that need.

Now after fully investigating the people in question, and you find that they are in need and desiring to be taught, and you have the desire to teach, and want to teach, the need is open door enough.

It is not necessary to have some special revelation in regards to guidance relating to your teaching or ministering, if a need presents itself.

THE FLEECE METHOD OF GUIDANCE

There are some who in relationship to guidance often use what is known as putting out the fleece. This comes from the experience of Gideon in Judges 6:36-40.

Now, if we study this section of scripture, we will find that the fleece in question was something not relating to guidance in regards to what to do, but it was only assurance to bolster up Gideon's unbelief.

In Judges 6:7-10, God gives the assurance to Israel that He will give them the victory over the Midianites. Then in Judges 6:12-18, an angel of the Lord gives Gods message also to Gideon revealing to him that God had called him to perform this task. And it was because Gideon did not fully believe God that he put out the fleece.

If we have guidance from God to go, or do some task for the Lord, would it be necessary to put out a fleece? However, there are some who think this is an accepted from of seeking direction.

THEN THERE IS THE METHOD OF GOING OUT WITHOUT ANY GUIDANCE OR DIRECTION WHATSOEVER

Now we know that there are many who would reject this as being unreasonable. But if we were to find ourselves like those in the early church, as in Acts 8:4, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

Sometimes circumstances and conditions are such that we have to move, we have to go, and as we go, God begins to open doors and ways of ministry.

We must understand that the God Who is over all, has always a plan and purpose, and in all of these methods discussed, can lead and guide us into His divine Will for our lives.

KNOWING THE WILL OF GOD
Book 6
QUESTIONS ON LESSON 7

1. What is the first main way God guides us?
2. To have the Holy Spirit direct us, why must we be at rest in our minds?
3. Who gives us the desire to do God's will and the power to do it?
4. Explain what it means "to work out our own salvation".
5. To have supernatural direction from God is what?
6. Is this kind of revelation for everyday life or what?
7. What gift of the Spirit works in this area?
8. What is the Gift of Prophecy and how does it work?
9. When prophecy came to separate Barnabas and Saul for the ministry, what was the procedure and how did they determine the Will of God?
10. What must the individual decide for himself?
11. Why did God prepare Joseph and send him to Egypt?
12. What unusual things did God use to get Joseph to the throne?
13. How did Joseph accept each circumstance and how should we?
14. What do you do when more than one door opens?
15. To what must we be sensitive, in regards to doors opening and closing?
16. If a need presents itself, do you have to have a special revelation to fulfill it?
17. By putting out a fleece, what did it show?