



Control # 5

Hello everyone. Welcome to “Notes from the Presence.” In today’s article, we are going to turn our attention another aspect of control - many of us believe that God created us so He could, in turn, control us.

I would venture to say that most Christians and virtually all non-Christians (at least those that believe there is a god of some kind), see God as a divine being that wants full control over them. After all, if God didn't have control in mind, why did He make us in the first place? It is difficult to conceive of a God who would create a race of beings in order to set them free rather than dominate them from first cry to last breath.

There is one major issue that shapes this way of thinking and it is found in the concept of "God's will." Because our Heavenly Father has a will, He has been relegated in our minds to being a "control freak." Think of it for a moment; we are told numerous places in the bible to "find" and "do" God's will. Failure in this respect has some serious negative consequences. For this reason we go about life fearing this "will" and trying desperately to find it. We are under the impression that His will is contrary to ours, and that if we do what we desire, we will be going in a direction away from His desire. I have watched countless young adults try to navigate the uncertain waters of life's vocation. They inevitably end up frustrated, begging for God to reveal His "will" to them.

There are a couple of things I have learned about the will of God. First, the will of God is the most natural fit for our lives. God does not find pleasure in forcing people to do things they do not want to do. Instead, He has created each one of us with natural abilities, anointings, dispositions, and interests. His will is to release us into a place in life where these qualities can find their most natural expression. There is one other aspect of God that constantly amazes me. No sooner do we pray a prayer of submission, laying our will on the altar of worship, than He turns around and says to us: "now what

do you desire?" This aspect of God is one of His most faithful attributes - the fact that when we offer something to Him, He always gives it back to us with increase. This is especially true when talking about worship. When it comes to laying down my will before my God, I always do it in the context of worship. Worship is an exercise in trust. It requires us to believe that what we offer is not lost, but found again "in Him." Here is an interesting portion of scripture in this regard.

Revelation 4:9-11 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."

In this passage we find a picture of heavenly worship. We are then introduced to a group of elders in paradise that have crowns. These crowns represent their reward. Everything they did on earth that was good and everlasting was rendered down and moulded into golden crowns that they wear on their heads. Then, we get a birds-eye view of a heavenly invocation in which the elders cast their crowns before the throne as an act of worship. However, they now have a major dilemma on their hands. Evidently this heavenly worship happens throughout eternity in perpetual cycle after cycle of glory. We can assume this fact because of the use of the word "whenever" at the beginning of the first verse. Their conundrum is this: the next time the heavenly worship cycle starts again, they will have no crowns to cast because they have already given them to God. It is impossible to come before God empty-handed in worship and I remind you, once a sacrifice is given, it is quite irretrievable. We are not told how they get their crowns back, only that each time they worship, they have crowns to cast. I speculate that every time they throw their crowns before the throne, God receives them as an act of worship, and then gives them brand new and improved crowns to cast all over again. I can only imagine what these crowns will look like after an eternity of worship!

When it comes to laying down our will before God as an act of worship, a similar thing happens. The process is described quite clearly in Romans chapter 12:

Romans 12:1-2 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

The will of God for our lives is found not in striving, but in surrender and in worship. As we turn our attention towards God, offering ourselves to Him in worship, our minds are transformed and we prove all over again what His will is for us. Notice the description of His will - it is good, it is acceptable, and it is the perfect fit for us. Does God want us fully surrendered to Him in worship? Yes! Does He want to control us? Absolutely not! That which we surrender, is returned to us with a greater understanding through a transformed mind and multiplied to us - even better, more acceptable, and absolutely perfect. Now that, my friends, makes the will of God exciting!!

Our next article will close out this subject as we continue to talk about the notion that God wants to control us. We are going to discuss His "will" in the context of "wills and inheritances" among other things.

Thanks for reading. Jesus is real and He has a perfect plan for your life.