

GOD'S WILL

TEXT: I TIMOTHY 2:1-6

INTRODUCTION:

1. The will of God is one of the great themes of the Bible. First Timothy 2:4 says God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."
2. This does not mean all men will be saved, but that God desires all men to be saved.
3. However, many people are not willing to accept God's offer of salvation. The Holy Spirit convicts sinners but He does not force sinners. Stephen said to the Jewish religious leaders, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51).

I. GOD'S WILL REGARDING PRAYER (2:1-3).

1. Here we see Paul use the word "exhort" (2:1). The word means, "to beg, to entreat." The same word is often translated "beseech."
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" (Rom. 12:1).
3. This is not a commandment but an appeal to their conscience to do what "is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour" (2:3).
4. One cannot force a Christian to pray. Prayer results from an inner conviction. Prayer should be seen as a privilege, not just a duty.
5. These verses deal with public prayer.
 - Supplications -- requests or petitions
 - Intercessions -- suggests confidence in prayer
 - Giving of thanks -- praying with gratitude
6. Verse 2 says this praying results in Christians leading "a quiet (tranquil) and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."
7. John Phillips writes, "By the time Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, thousands of Christians had died horrible deaths under (Nero's) rule. Yet, Paul said in effect, 'Pray for him. He is the king'" (*Exploring the Pastoral Epistles*).

II. GOD'S WILL REGARDING SALVATION (2:3, 4)

1. It is not God's will for sinners to go to hell.
2. Second Peter 3:9 says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count

slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

3. John 3:17 says, "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."
4. Ezekiel 33:11 says, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"
5. Our Lord said in Matthew 23:37, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"
6. Sir Walter Scott was once speaking about the veil of the Temple being rent in twain from the top to the bottom, when a man at the back stood up and asked, "How big was that hole?" Scott answered him, "It was big enough to let any sinner pass through."
7. Verse 4 says God "will have all men to be saved," and verse 6 says Jesus "gave himself a ransom for all." The Bible teaches an unlimited atonement.
8. First John 2:2 says, "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world."
9. D. Edmond Hiebert said, "That some men are not saved is not due to any inefficacy or deliberate limitation in the divine will, but is due to man's rejection of God's appointed means of salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (*First Timothy*).

III. GOD'S WILL REGARDING ACCESS TO GOD (2:5)

1. A mediator is a reconciler. He stands between two parties that differ—that are separated—and the mediator seeks to effect a reconciliation between the two opposing parties.

2. In this case the two opposing parties are the holy Lord God, whose wrath is kindled against sin every day; and who will surely judge mankind according to His holiness and His righteousness; and on the other side is the sinful, and depraved, lost and dying sinner.
3. In the Old Testament we see pictures and types of our great mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ. Moses was a great mediator (cf. Exodus 32:9-14).
4. Aaron was also a great mediator (cf. Num. 16:43-50).
5. But the Lord Jesus Christ is our perfect mediator because He is both God and man, and is therefore the perfect mediator between God and man. No one else is qualified.
6. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).
7. He is our only Saviour (2:6) and our only mediator (2:5). The Roman Catholic Church has many mediators: Mary, the saints, their priests and popes, etc. But all of that is unscriptural.

CONCLUSION:

1. In Rome, in the courtyard of the one of the huge Roman Catholic basilicas, there is a huge crucifix with Mary hanging on one side of the cross, and Jesus is hanging on the other side. The RCC teaches that Mary is their co-redemptrix and their "mediatrix."
2. The RCC teaches that the obedience and sufferings of Mary were essential to secure the full redemption bought by Christ (cf. I Tim. 2:5, 6).
3. Colossians 1:18 says, "That in all things he might have the preeminence."