

May 2017

Dear Brethren:

We offer and extend another warm greeting from Minnesota, the land of ten thousand lakes. We trust all continues well with you despite the many things we do not fully understand in this life. This will be a meat-in-due-season letter for Pentecost.

After baptism, we entered into a war of the will that has caused many of God's people a great deal of grief. Many of God's people have never come to understand that the human will cannot build godly character. Even Paul was shaken by this truth.

Because the carnal mind [including the carnality of our wills] is enmity [is hostile with hatred] against God: for it [the carnality of our minds and wills] is not subject [obedient] to the law of God, neither indeed can be [without God's Holy Spirit] (Romans 8:7).

The mind-set of our nature is death. The mind of the flesh is not in obedience to the Law of God. It wants to exercise its own will, not God's will. It wants to be its own master, not in obedience to God's Law. Not only is the desire to live by God's Law missing in the carnal mind, but the power to do so as well. The carnality of the human mind and will is dead toward God without His Holy Spirit. Enmity is hatred toward God. It is the opposite of *agape* love.

For I [Paul] know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good [obedience to God's Law] I find not (Romans 7:18).

Paul had human will to build godly character and to overcome what he was by nature. But even though his human will desired it, he could not do it.

For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin [the nature of my mind and will] that dwelleth in me. I find then a law [of two opposing wills at work in my life], that, when I would do good, evil [the carnality of my own mind and will] is present with me (vv. 19–21).

Paul was shaken by this dilemma—this inner conflict between two opposing wills.

For I delight in the law of God [the Ten Commandments] after the inward man: But I see another law in my members [the influence of the human will], warring against the law of my mind [God's will to fulfill His Law], and bringing me into captivity [or enslavement] to the law of sin [the fruits of failure] which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me [rescue me] from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind [of Christ] I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh [the weaknesses of the flesh] the law of sin [the fruits of failure] (vv. 22–25).

Paul really was experiencing a war between two opposing wills. Human will was present with Paul. He had the expressed desire of the human will to conform to an established moral standard—namely the Law of God. Paul's human will was in agreement with a required correct behavior, but how to perform that behavior was Paul's dilemma. Paul learned some time later that it was going to require a miracle. Paul was going to have to rely upon Christ coming into his flesh to fulfill the will of God. If Christ lives in us through the power of God's Holy Spirit, then truly "we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10).

The thing we need to remember is that human will is human, and it cannot create in anyone godly character. It is of man. Godly character is of God. Certainly, the human will plays a big role in the conversion process, but it cannot overcome evil as God tells us to. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). Notice that we must be led and empowered by the Spirit of God, and only through God's inspiration can the human will choose to follow that Holy Spirit. It is through the goodness of God (which is bound up in His own *agape* love) that leads one to and grants repentance. The human will plays a key role because it must choose to receive God's goodness and follow His Holy Spirit. The human will must choose to use the Holy Spirit of God to overcome what it is by nature.

Notice this powerful statement made by Paul some time after he wrote the epistle to the Romans: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). In Romans, Paul was describing his own human willpower, but it was not the willpower of God. That is why his efforts were getting him nowhere spiritually. The human will cannot overcome spiritually. Here in Philippians 2:13, Paul says God works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. And what is God's good pleasure? It is to overcome the fruits of failure! We must have both God's will and God's power working in us in order to overcome the fruits of failure and to produce real spiritual fruit for Him. It is God's will in us that makes it possible for us to DO—to fulfill His will, His purpose and His good pleasure. We cannot do that with the human will. Why? It is because the will is dead toward God without the influence of God's Holy Spirit. The human

will plays its key role when it gives our consent to God to create His divine character within us. God will not place His divine nature in us by fiat. Nor will He create us as spiritual robots. God says that both the willing and the doing are done by Him—but only with our consenting participation.

Mr. Herbert Armstrong understood this truth. We are a work of God's hands, and we have a great part in it. His spiritual creation is going on in us only as our human will agrees to use His Holy Spirit. The righteous character that is to come into us comes from God through Jesus Christ living His life over again in us by the power of God's Holy Spirit. Christ must come into our flesh. The character comes from God, not from any human will. God will not instill His divine character within us without our consent. We must set our wills to allow Him to perform that spiritual creation within us. We must set our wills to use God's Holy Spirit as it leads us. If we fail to do that, it will become dormant in us, as it did in David when he got caught up in the sin of continued neglect in not responding to God's Holy Spirit. He had no thought of God when he willed not to respond to His Holy Spirit.

The human will has to take and use the Spirit of God. It has to be willing to submit to God's Spirit. Then, it is the use of that Spirit that causes us to grow to spiritual adulthood. The Holy Spirit will not work within us automatically. A human being must ask God to inspire the human will to use that Holy Spirit, or lose it. The acceptable use of the Holy Spirit is proven by personal overcoming and the manifestation of the fruits of that Spirit. Anything else denies Christ. In order to progress to spiritual adulthood, we must be led by the Holy Spirit of power, and really use that Spirit as it influences our thinking. The Holy Spirit does not take over automatically in our conversion process after baptism. We must stir up the Holy Spirit daily through the use of God's spiritual tools—the big four (prayer, study, fasting, and meditation)! "The inward man is renewed day by day [through the use of His spiritual tools]" (2 Corinthians 4:16). If you are caught up in the activities of daily living to the point where you neglect to stir up God's Holy Spirit, the inward man will deteriorate day by day, and the Holy Spirit will become dormant within you. God will not then be working in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Zechariah 4:6 is a scripture Mr. Armstrong quoted many times to try to get God's people to understand that apart from God's Holy Spirit, man has no righteous power within him. "Then he [the Eternal God] answered and spake unto me [Zechariah], saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel [Zerubbabel can be a type of anyone in the likeness of sinful flesh that the Eternal God has called and begotten—even Christ!], saying, Not by might, nor by power [of the human will], but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

If you want to know why Mr. Armstrong was so effective and so powerful in God's work before the apostasy of 1974, this was the reason. Mr. Armstrong knew that he could

not do the work of God by human power or human will. He knew that we are the work of God's hands. He could only do God's good pleasure by the power of God's Spirit. The work of God's hands is not done by human will. Godly character is not created by human will at all.

For if ye live after the flesh [the carnality of the will], ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify [make a corpse of] the [sinful] deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Romans 8:13–14).

God is now working His purpose in our lives if the carnality of our wills is giving Him the consent to do so.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my [Paul's] presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation [with the revealed truth originally given] with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure (Philippians 2:12–13).

God's pleasure is to create a family of spirit God Beings to rule with Christ as His wife and helpmate during the second and third judgment periods.

For we are his [Christ's] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works [of fulfilling God's will], which God hath before ordained [prepared aforetime] that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:10).

God's will is that we live by every word of God. Good works encompass God's commandments, His statutes and His judgments. He prepares good works for us to perform—then He rewards us when we perform them. Our responsibility is to learn God's will and then to ask Him to manifest that will in us. Salvation never originates in the human will of people. It always arises out of the lovingkindness of God flowing into us, giving us the desire to comply in fulfilling His will. Even our belief and faith in God does not originate in ourselves—this too is a gift. No, you cannot accomplish anything spiritually with the human will. Zechariah 4:6 makes that very clear. The human willful effort is what you use to follow the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and then use that Spirit! If we are to overcome what we are by nature, it is going to be by the Holy Spirit—the power of God. It takes God and the power of His Spirit to will and to do of His good pleasure. It is about God re-creating Himself. How could the human will do such a thing? God is creating a God Family out of you and me. That process is going on right now; it is the purpose of our calling! God is creating God!

Our responsibility is to use the Holy Spirit appropriately. Paul told Timothy:

Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God [through the use of His spiritual tools], which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear [of bewilderment and disobedience]; but of power [to put on the mind of Christ], and of love [*agape* law-fulfilling love], and of a sound mind [bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ] (2 Timothy 1:6–7).

It is up to each of God's called-out ones to stir up the Spirit of God by putting into action the words Christ spoke, which are spirit and life eternal; and to strive with the power it gives us, to overcome the pulls of the flesh and, by a resurrection, to be born into the Family Kingdom of God. Only God can re-create Himself. Human will has to be led by the Holy Spirit and participate in it, because God will not do it by fiat—without our authorization and consent. With our consent, God is creating God, but it is all done by Him. It is all done by the power of God's Holy Spirit. We just have to make sure we are submitting to and following God's Holy Spirit. The will has to be used the way God wants us to use it. God's Spirit works in us, and it is God's will that gets righteous, character-building done.

Jesus Christ said in Matthew 7:21: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of [from] heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." How much are you really doing the will of the Father in your life—living by every word of God? Can you do the will of your Father with human will? Can you help build the eternal Family of God by human effort? Absolutely not! Now, you have to cooperate with God in doing it; that is where the character comes in. But still, it is God's Spirit that does it and that empowers us to do it. Overcoming what we are by nature and living by every word of God is like tying a rope around your house, then around your waist, and trying to move it. It is not possible! But when God sees us exerting ourselves against all odds to serve Him, God moves the house. When we put into use our human wills to do God's will—against all odds—we are giving God consent and authorization to will and to do of His good pleasure in us. God's pleasure is to fulfill His will in us.

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17). We have to learn God's will. We do not know it by instinct, nor will we learn it through our own private Bible study. God reveals His will to us through His chosen servants. God's will is revealed to us through divine revelation.

And be not conformed to this world [what proceeds from carnal human minds and wills]: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind [through the

power of God's Holy Spirit], that ye may prove [by doing] what is that good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Romans 12:2).

God's good, acceptable, perfect will is revealed to us through divine revelation. And once we have it, we are only going to maintain its possession through faith in the doctrine once delivered. God's perfect will is that we allow Him to create within us His holy, perfect, righteous character. Receiving God's Holy Spirit includes receiving God's perfect will. Mr. Armstrong taught us that perfect, spiritual character is the ability of a separately-created entity with mind and free moral agency to come to the knowledge of the right, as opposed to the wrong, to decide and will to do the right, even against all desires or pulls to do the wrong, and finally to overcome pulls toward the wrong until doing the right becomes fixed nature. Righteous and perfect spiritual character is God's character—the way of His Law. That character must come from God, by the choice of the separate entity that includes God's will. That means that we must choose to follow God's way against all odds. That is how we are involved in the character-building process. However, even that choice (human will) is inspired by God's Holy Spirit. It is all about cooperating with God as He re-creates Himself in us.

The fact that the Spirit of God is the power, mind and will of God can be seen in God's Word. Genesis 6:3 says: "My spirit shall not always strive with man." If you are not going to stir up and use God's Spirit continually, it will become dormant in you. You will again fall prey to the carnality of your human will and nature.

But the Comforter [God's divine power], which is the Holy [Spirit], whom the Father will send in my name, [it] shall teach you [Christ's chosen disciples] all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you [during my three-and-one-half-year ministry] (John 14:26).

This verse shows the influence of the Holy Spirit in instructing men.

But God hath revealed them [the mysteries of God] unto us [His called-out ones] by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things [that pertain to God's will and purpose], yea, the deep things [the secret things] of God . . . even so the things [the spiritual things] of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world [the spirit of Satan—the prince and power of the air], but the spirit which is of God [which is a gift, upon repentance]; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God [when we bury the old man] (1 Corinthians 2:10–12).

The Spirit of God reveals the secret things of God only as we make a corpse of the old man and put on the new man—the mind of Christ. "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit

of your Father which speaketh in you" (Matthew 10:20). "For the Holy [Spirit] shall teach you [give instruction to you] in the same hour what ye ought to say" (Luke 12:12). In specific times of need, God will speak to us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

And I [the Eternal] have filled him [Bezaleel] with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship (Exodus 31:3).

If any of you [called of God] lack wisdom [of God's will], let him ask of God, that giveth to all men [those called of God] liberally, and upbraideth not [ungrudgingly, without reproaching or fault-finding]; and it [spiritual wisdom] shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering [not doubting]. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed [between two opposing wills] (James 1:5–6).

The Holy Spirit grants the wisdom of God's will, as well as other attributes. But we must ask in faith, not being tossed to and fro between opposing wills.

"For the prophecy [the foretelling of the will of God] came not in old [or any] time by the will of man [the human will of scholars]: but holy men [set-apart men] of God spake as they were moved [inspired] by the Holy [Spirit]" (2 Peter 1:21). "All scripture is given by inspiration [of the Holy Spirit] of God" (2 Timothy 3:16). The Holy Spirit of God inspired—set apart—godly human instruments to record God's words—which are not liable to error. What they wrote was not a concoction of human imagination, insight or speculation of the human will. "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezekiel 36:27). God's Spirit inspires the called of God to obey Him—to will and to do of His good pleasure.

"But truly I [Micah] am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might . . ." (Micah 3:8). "And, behold, I [Christ] send the promise of my Father [the Holy Spirit] upon you: but tarry [remain] ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued [clothed] with power from on high [on the day of Pentecost]" (Luke 24:49). The power of God's Spirit gives the called of God the ability to judge the self properly.

Take heed therefore unto yourselves [you ministers], and to all the flock, over the which the Holy [Spirit] hath made you overseers [shepherds in authority], to feed the church of God, which he [Christ] hath purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

Elders are not appointed or elected by the church assembly. They are made shepherds in authority by the Holy Spirit and should be recognized by those for whom they labor. They are not to be self-willed, self-pleasing, arrogant, overbearing—insisting on their own wayward wills as opposed to following the will of God (Titus 1:7; 2 Peter 2:10). Elders protect the flock by holding fast to the faith (the doctrine) once delivered. The Holy Spirit is the power that directs the ministry (Acts 13:2; 16:7). The Holy Spirit manifests within the called of God the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23). God's Spirit is the power, the mind, the character of God, as God works to fulfill His will in the lives of His called-out ones.

"But ye shall receive power, after [when] that the Holy [Spirit] is come upon you . . ." (Acts 1:8). Apart from the Holy Spirit, man has no righteous power within him. Man must be changed from the present state that he is in, from being carnally-minded, and must grow toward his true potential. That potential is described in John 1:12: "But as many as received him [Jesus Christ in the form of revealed doctrine], to them gave he power to become the sons [children] of God, even to them that believe on his name [Jesus Christ as life-giving power]." Man is engaged in a spiritual war between two opposing wills, and eternal life is at stake.

For though we walk in the flesh [the carnality of our own sinful wills], we do not war after [according to] the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [after the carnality of our own human minds and wills], but mighty through God [His Holy Spirit—His will being worked out in us] to the pulling down of strong holds [rationalizations of human minds and wills];) Casting down imaginations [false and proud arguments that oppose the faith—doctrine—once delivered], and every high thing [the spiritual pride and vanity of the unconverted mind] that exalteth itself against the knowledge [the truth once delivered] of God, and bringing into captivity [enslavement] every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:3–5).

Our actions reveal our thoughts. We should not cling to thoughts that do not conform to the faith once delivered. God's Holy Spirit is what performs His will in our lives. God's people must be delivered from the power of darkness, the carnality of what our own human minds and wills want to uphold. It is God alone through the power of His Holy Spirit, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness [the satanic thinking of worldly scholars], and hath translated us into the kingdom [Family] of his dear Son" (Colossians 1:13).

God's church today is His Family Kingdom in embryo. At Christ's return, a spiritual nation will be born—the Church of the Firstborn—a nation of people God has worked with through the power of His Holy Spirit, re-creating Himself in them so that they actually have the mind and character of God. This experience we are going through is such a display of



God's goodness. Even amid all the horrors in this world, what God is doing through the power of His Holy Spirit is so inspiring and uplifting. Everything about God's Plan points to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the expansion of God's spiritual Family! Then the whole world will come to see God's most exalted spiritual creation—the creation of a God Family—all done through the power of His Holy Spirit. When Christ returns, He will introduce His wife and helpmate to the world. Together they will expand the God Family by re-creating much of humanity into divine God beings.

Meditate on this God-Family vision and you will be closer to true repentance toward God, which has to be granted by God's Holy Spirit. True repentance toward God is: "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus"—bringing into captivity every thought to the concernment of conformity to the faith once delivered. May God *work in you*, both to will and to do of His good pleasure by the power of His Holy Spirit. May God bless you *in your endeavor* both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Your devoted servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert J. Litz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert J. Litz