

Colossians Series

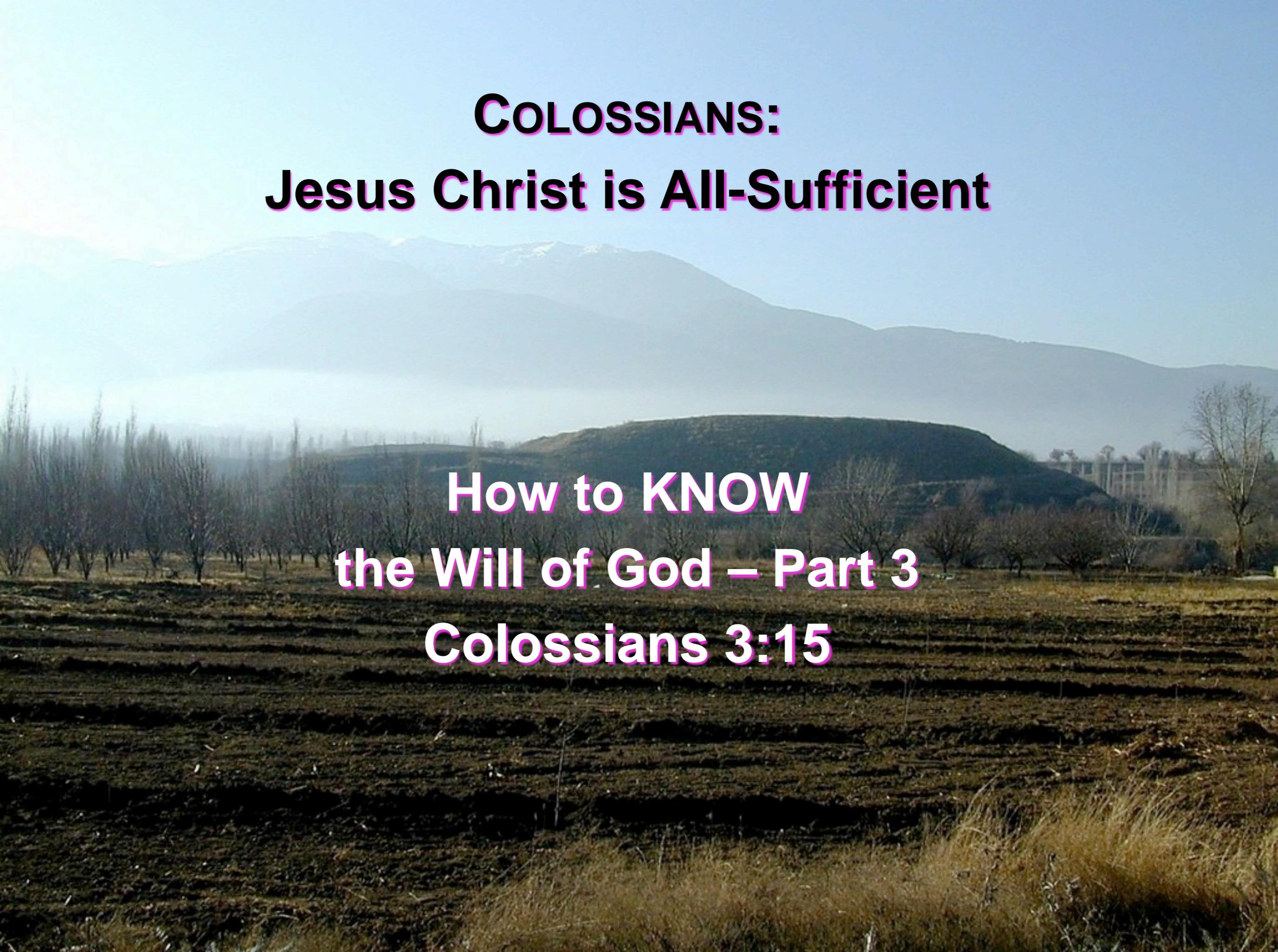
Lesson #61

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Dean Bible Ministries

www.deanbible.org

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A landscape photograph showing a field of bare trees in the foreground, a dark hill in the middle ground, and a range of mountains in the background under a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

COLOSSIANS:
Jesus Christ is All-Sufficient

How to KNOW
the Will of God – Part 3
Colossians 3:15

You have heard it said....

- **That God has a perfect will for every decision in our lives**
- **That we should live in the “center” of God’s will**
- **That God reveals to us precisely what this will is**
- **And that one of the keys to discerning this will in an inner state of peace or tranquility when that decision is made.**

But I say to you...

- **This is not biblical**
- **This is a form of mysticism**

Col. 3:15, “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.”

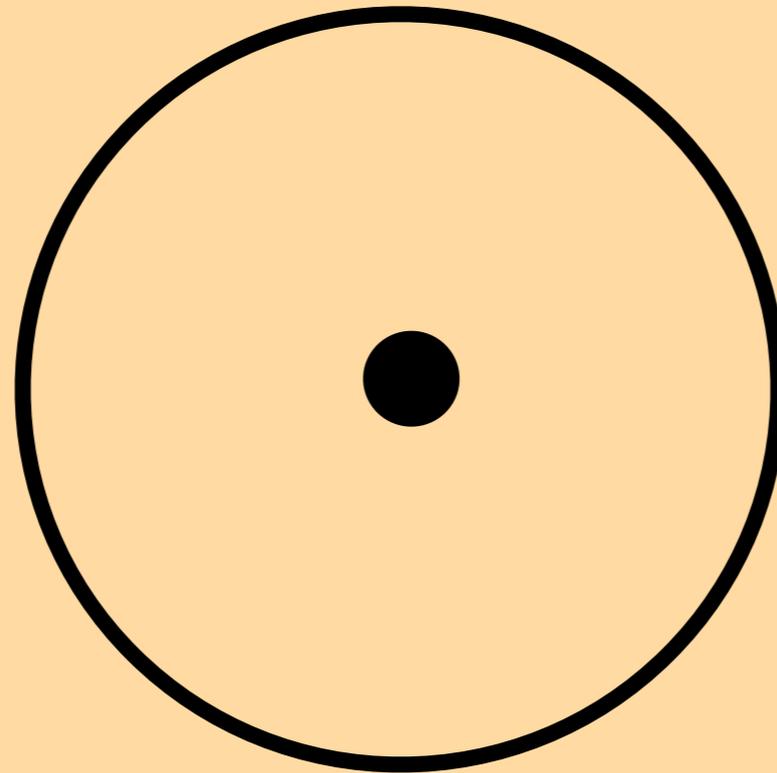
Col. 3:15, “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.”

**βραβεύω *brabeuō*
pres act impera 3 sing
to arbitrate; to act like a
judge or umpire**

Heb. 12:14, “Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:”

The Doctrine of the Will of God

Living in the Center of God's Will



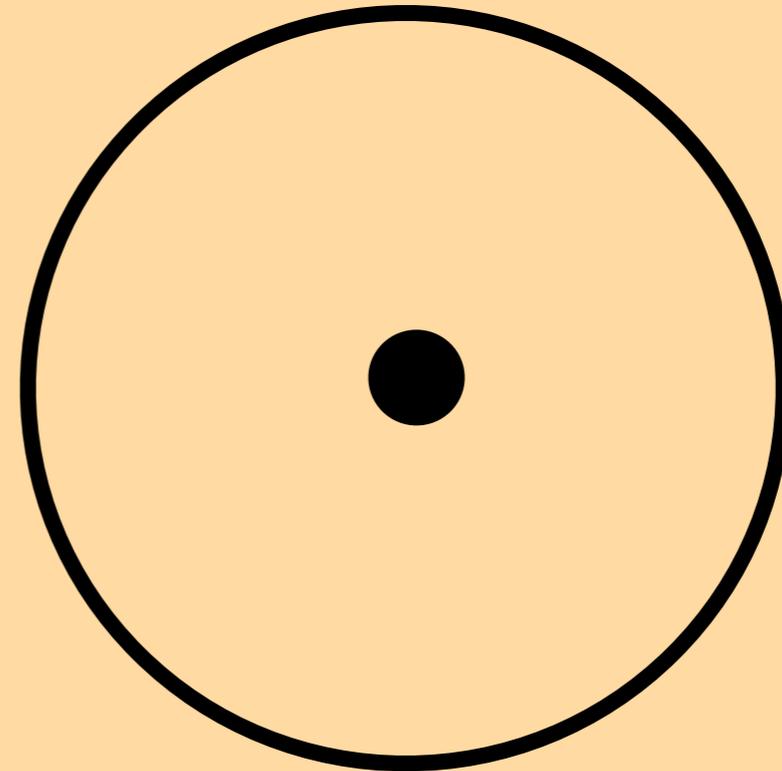
Living in the Center of God's Will

God has a specific will for how and what each believer thinks.

God has a specific operational will for each believer.

God always has a specific geographical will for every believer.

God always has a specific will for every decision we make in life.



1. The term “will of God” describes three aspects of divine volition in relation to His creation.

- a. **God's sovereign will with regard to His creation, where He brings to pass what He wills and what He has decreed.**

Decretive will of God
Sovereign will of God
Secret will of God

We only know this after the fact.

b. God's moral will sometimes also called His revealed will: this refers to what God has revealed man is to do. This is also called God's desired will.

The Torah expressed God's moral will for Israel, not for the Gentiles.

God expressed His specific geographical will or specific operational will through special revelation.

c. God's specific will, functional, operational, or geographical is always expressed through special revelation.

Ezek. 4:1, “ ‘You also, son of man, take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem.

Ezek. 4:2, “ ‘Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around.

Ezek. 4:3, “ ‘Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel.

Ezek. 4:4, “ ‘Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. According to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity.’ ”

Acts 10:3, “About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, ‘Cornelius!’

Acts 10:4, “And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, ‘What is it, lord?’ So he said to him, ‘Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.

Acts 10:5, “ ‘Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter.

Acts 10:6, “ ‘He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do.’ ”

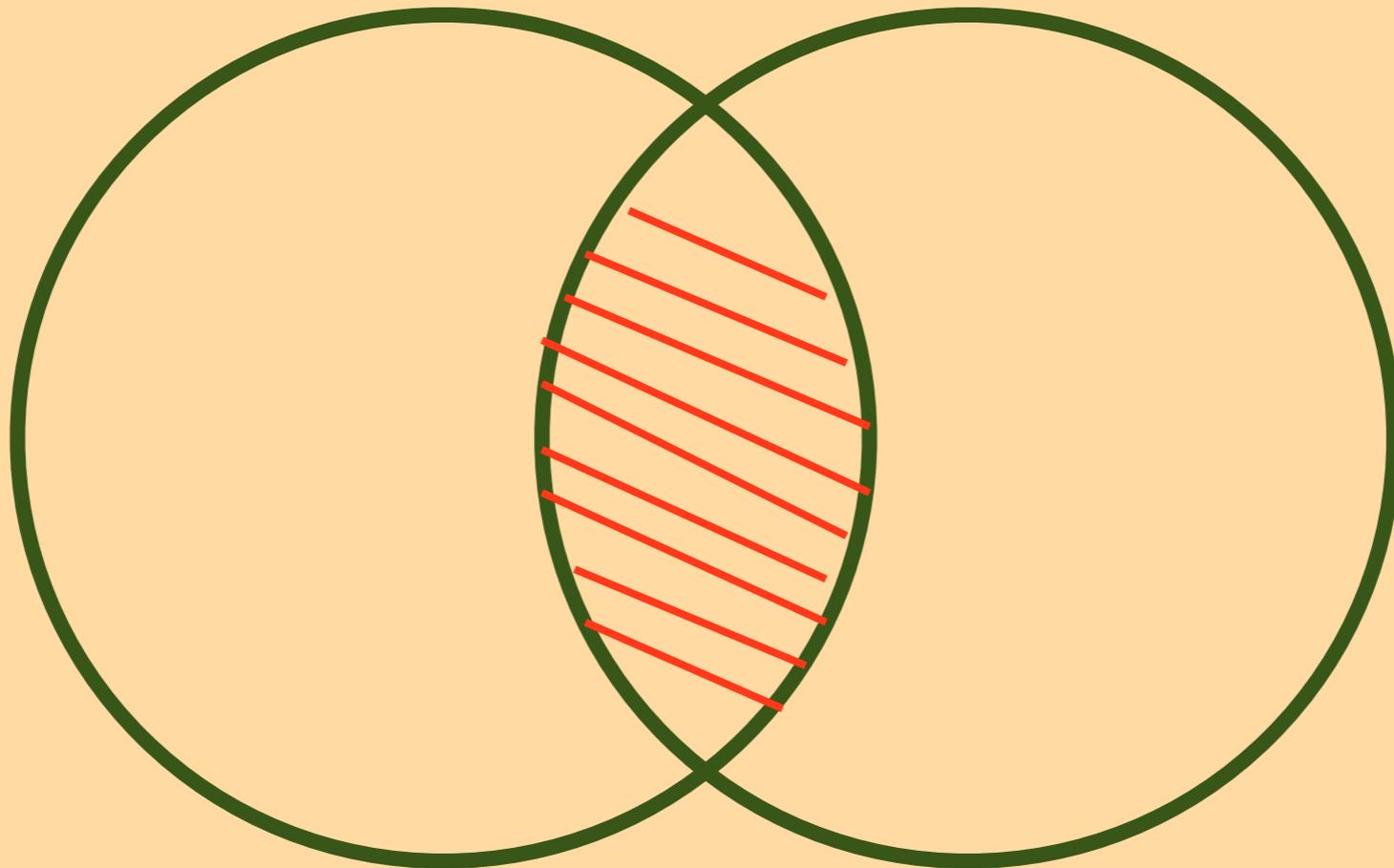
d. God's overriding will.

When we make decisions contrary to God's sovereign will He prevents us from accomplishing those decisions.

Example: Jonah

**God's Sovereign
Will**

**God's Moral/
Revealed Will**



God's Moral/ Revealed Will

Boundaries defined
by the mandates,
imperatives,
prohibitions in
Scripture



Inside of God's
moral, revealed will

Outside of God's
moral, revealed will

Dan. 4:35, “And all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, ‘What hast Thou done?’ ”

Prov. 21:1, “The king’s heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.”

Rev. 4:1, “After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.’ ”

Eph. 1:11, “also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,”

Rom. 9:19, “You will say to me then, ‘Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?’ ”

3. The specifics of God's decreed/sovereign will are secret, unrevealed, and unknown. They cannot be known until after the fact. Human history once transpired is the outworking of God's decree.

God's sovereign will includes His permissive will, which allows for the actions of volitionally free, moral agents (you and I), to make decisions contrary to His revealed moral will.

God's Moral Will

Do not eat from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Abraham, go and leave your family behind.

Israelites to enter the land and destroy the Canaanites.

Do not murder.

God's Sovereign Will

Adam and Eve ate.

Abraham took his father and Lot along.

Israelites fear the Canaanites and fail to trust God.

The illegal execution of Jesus.

4. We can only know the specifics of God's revealed or moral will. This includes all the precepts, mandates, and prohibitions of the Scriptures.

In the New Testament there are 565 imperatives (including prohibitions). There are also other ways through imperatival participles and hortatory subjunctives to express mandates.

**Rom. 2:17, “Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law [*torah*], and make your boast in God,
Rom. 2:18, “and [y’all] know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, [because you are] instructed out of the law [*torah*],”**

1 Thess. 5:18, “in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thess. 4:3, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;”

2 Cor. 6:14, “Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?”

5. Therefore God's Sovereign will includes His moral will, but His moral will, "thou shalt not" clearly is not always His decree.

The difference is His permissive will, what He allows, because He allows creatures the freedom to fail, to make bad choices.

When the creature does what God has prohibited than His revealed will is outside His decreed will.

6. Usually we become concerned about the will of God in the midst of some momentous decision. However, God's will affects every decision we make to some degree, from what car to buy and what clothes to wear to what school to attend or how we perform our jobs.

- 7. If we are to do all things to the glory of God, than even the most minute decision demands attention, but not every decision necessarily involves either,**
 - a. a moral issue or,**
 - b. a specific will of God in relation to geographical will or operational will.**

8. Since we can only know the specifics of God's revealed or moral will before the fact. Questions about the will of God relate only to REVEALED information.

**Prov. 3:5, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.**

**Prov. 3:6, “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and
He will make your paths straight.”**

9. Is there one and only one will for every decision or is the issue in many decisions, biblical wisdom for living?

Examples of God's specific individual will

NOTE: What God does in private He confirms objectively. cf., 1 Sam. 10:1–9

Jonah 1:1, “The word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying,

Jonah 1:2, “ ‘Arise, go to Nineveh the great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.’

Jonah 1:3, “But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going to Tarshish, paid the fare, and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.”

Acts 10:17, “Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision which he had seen might be, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked directions for Simon’s house, appeared at the gate;”

Acts 10:18, “and calling out, they were asking whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was staying there.”

Acts 10:19, “And while Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, ‘Behold, three men are looking for you.’ ”

Acts 10:20, “ ‘But arise, go downstairs, and accompany them without misgivings; for I have sent them Myself.’ ”

Acts 13:1, “Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.”

Acts 13:2, “And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ ”

10. Knowing God's will is based on the knowledge of doctrine that has been assimilated in the soul, that God the Holy Spirit teaches us doctrine and through that He guides and leads us (Gal. 5:18).