

What Was God Thinking?
Chapter 3: The Mystery of Relationship
(by John Henry Alan; edited by Bob Clarkson)

We have been chosen to be apostles (sent ones) and saints (redeemed ones). 1 Corinthians 1:1-2. We are sent into another world, the world of God's will (as opposed to the world of our own will). It is a world wherein any self sovereignty is gladly surrendered to God's sovereignty. This is a free uninfluenced, by wish, will or determination, a divine agenda for life, out of the hands of the surrendered. The choosing of God gives a call that only He can give. The only thing any man can do is to respond to it.

There are but two worlds; two wills; dominated by either/or but not by both. Either man is king and decides events, actions and words; he decides who, what, when, where, why and how, or God is king. Man as king determines what is of value, what is accepted or rejected; what is esteemed and what is despised. Man's "will" runs through or rough shod over everything and everyone else. I decide and decree what will happen or be allowed. There is a constant flow of these decrees and judgments upon all other humans.

It might be a fair analogy to liken man as sovereign as that he is a parent to all other men. They are all his charges. The man sovereign boasts that his ways are right and are the ways of the divine. The man sovereign

refuses to consider his own mortality and short life as compared to the millennia of human existence. He struts his own wealth and vanity. Man asserts his will and claims ownership of things and people. Man sovereign demands respect, loyalty and worship from others.

God sovereign, on the other hand, is mostly treated like a visiting royalty in a foreign country admitted entrance to man's country. Men use God's name in vain to add to the authority of their words and declarations. Men abuse God in pursuit of their own ends or as a lucky charm or to obtain diplomatic immunity from the consequences of their crimes against other men. Regardless of man's flattery of God in religious gatherings he holds firm his right to be king for himself.

“As long as a man is allowed to play out, he will honor God with his attention, but always God must remain a guest and never seek to be Lord.”^{1awt}

Man, by and large, makes it clear by his actions that the world is his and how it will be run. Man is both judge and jury in all legal matters. God is but a subject of the “royal” man to serve man despite the Divine Crown on His head. Even man's prayers betray his expectations that God should grant man his every wish or whim. Just visit any church and hear the selfish prayers which implore God to remove man's pain and misery and grant him comfort, pleasure and safety. Seldom is there a

reference to the Will of the Divine Sovereign except as a postlude to the exhaustive list of indulgent requests.

When we enter God's Sovereign space, everything is different. Mostly God's kingdom is opposite from and contrary to man's. The two kingdoms although in some ways alike, having sovereigns and subjects, are largely juxtaposed to one another. One is of the 'self-caring' sort. The other is of an 'other-caring' sort. Selfishness reigns in the human heart rather than selflessness. In the flesh kingdom one cannot enter into the king's presence except by invitation of the king. Refusal to appear constitutes an affront to majesty! This would very likely have dire consequences to the offender of the king.

In contrast, in God's kingdom all subjects serve at the pleasure and for the pleasure of the king. This is a kingdom where all subjects are sovereigns who have voluntarily submitted their own sovereignty to God's sovereignty. Man responds to the call of God. Man does not create his own call and respond to it. This would be like the waywardly well-meaning but disobedient child who fails to do an age appropriate task required by his father, but does some other task, more desirable to the child, who thinks the substitute task will please his father, when in fact such a disobedient "good but undesired" task would most likely anger the father.

When we commingle the Divine Will with the human will there is nothing but confusion. Well-meaning men will take upon themselves a ministry to which God has not called them. Some men having never been redeemed by faith try to carry on God's Holy work. And unfortunately most who follow either of these "self-appointed" ministers are somehow convinced that they are following noble, legitimately "called" men of God.

Yet, "One cannot be wrong,
sincerely enough, to be right!" ^{4jha}

Is not the weakness of the church and its stunted growth today due to attempting to live the new will (God's) by the ways and means of the old will (man's)? Bold and selfish prideful leadership drags along a weak band of followers accomplishing little or nothing in line with the Will of God. Strength and worldly success are the credentials which are used to authenticate authority or qualification to lead God's people, yet this is the very antithesis of Jesus' leadership style. Jesus taught us to get to the bottom in humility in order to lift others up. Man's lordship has cost the church too much and man's logic has foisted the pursuit of self righteousness (behavior management) upon all as a sign of spiritual maturity and obedience to God.

It is time to exchange masters and follow the Lordship of the Holy Spirit within us. But those who have attained unto the humility of Christ by virtue of being told that they cannot tell others "to follow their lead as they

follow Christ” (Apostle Paul did!) for in so proclaiming their maturity would be accused of prideful immaturity by reason of immodesty. Yet, Paul is clear in other passages of Scripture that those who know they have matured, need to encourage others to follow their example. This foolish notion that one cannot be honest about his achievements in the faith lest this be a prideful thing, is spawned by socialites who use “false humility and personal deprecation” to deceive others into thinking they are humble while the opposite is true. When our Master, Jesus, spoke absolute truth about his Goodness and clearly superior being, He too was accused of arrogance and eventually crucified for it. It is wrong to be “falsely humble.” And it is wrong to be “arrogant. But it is never wrong to be truthful no matter how mature you have become. If you are concerned about your reputation for proclaiming spiritual maturity, then you are still prideful and might be best served by your silence.

Wasted millions of dollars and wasted tomes of time have been spent in pursuit of the will of the flesh, while ignoring the Will of the Holy Spirit. Our human compassion compels us to be kind to everyone. God’s Divine Compassion compels us to minister only to the specific one’s His Holy Spirit directs us to serve in the moment. General or random acts of kindness have no place in God’s Will or ways. Further, the apathetic acceptance of “salvation” as a small thing and an end in

and of itself or a patronizing admittance of Christ into the life hoping to receive salvation, falls far short of salvation. Salvation is not a formula for admittance to heaven, like a secret word in an elite social club.

Mutuality of Relationship

Salvation occurs ever, only and always as a complete acquiescence of the spirit of man to the Spirit of Christ. It is His Spirit that quickens (“makes alive”). Properly understood, the quickening of the spirit is to say that the spirit of man has no power to make itself alive or to affect its own salvation. It is only the union of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man which creates the “new Spirit/spirit” or the “new man.” God does the offering of relationship. We can only accept or reject His offer.

“God has made us in His likeness and one mark of that likeness is our free will.” ^{1awt}

Whoever desires God may come into relationship with Him. God gives each man the choice to reject God’s will and remain sovereign to himself. God has also given each man the freedom to choose to submit to God’s sovereignty. But He will not force anyone to do anything. Thus entry into the Kingdom of God, since “it is a kingdom in the hearts of men,” requires voluntary submission in love to Him. The human counterpart to this is marriage wherein each person submits to the other to put the other first. God has no interest in conquering men because that would only produce servile fear at best and absolute hatred toward God at worst. The

relationship paradigm explains much of what we call mystery. That part of the mystery which is not explained by relationship is the part in which I inexplicably fall in love with God and want to submit myself to Him, for no reason other than that love, to give myself completely to Him.

Every relationship requires two personalities to choose one another. Even relationship between God and man requires that both choose each other. “Non” choice is a “no” choice. God is only interested in establishing personal, mutual affection with any person and every person who wants Him. All control is God’s with respect to everything and everyone in the universe except those to whom He delegated control over their own life, which is every man. It is the supreme selfishness of self sovereignty which resides in the DNA of every man that creates the possibility of both criminality and relationship. And it is the relationship paradigm of God with man that distinguishes and sets man apart from all other created beings. At the risk of being hated or rejected by many men, God determined that an intimate relationship with the few, who chose to love and accept God, was worth the risk of the many who would reject Him. Relationship can be distinguished from every other form of human connection by the mutual choosing of affection between any two human beings.

Man's free will to choose or not choose God does not in any way diminish God, nor reduce His knowledge, His power, or His worthiness of man's worship. However, the sweetness of love relationships makes them delightful and delicious enough such that even a small portion is as satisfying as a four course feast. Further, to truly love another, one would be willing to stay away from one they love if that would make that other person happier than being in his presence. Similarly God does not condemn people to solitude or loneliness. He simply honors any man's request to leave God out of his life. No one goes to eternal separation from God except those who choose it for themselves. God is a perfect gentleman and honors every such request. God would be intensely selfish, and not loving at all, if He would force anyone against their own will to spend time or eternity in His presence.

When one loses the sense of majesty of God, with it he also loses the admiration of lovers. When one sees God as one who caters to one's will, he loses the respect of lovers. When one loses the sense of the sovereignty of God, one loses the other-caring of lovers. One does not need to grovel in self deprecation or false humility. That is completely unbecoming to any lover. To question many things or ways of another shows contempt for them and greatly diminishes any love which might have been shared as lovers.

Humility and reason go hand in hand. Sanity requires a healthy respect for the magnificent, majesty of God. Worship of self, using God and others as servants, is a sure way to alienate any who might have been interested in a relationship. The very self-absorbed have the greatest tendency to sink into depression and despair. Is it any wonder then that the church, which has become self-righteous, absorbed in self-promotion, has also begun to decline and very rapidly at that?

Credits: 1awt; 2wj; 3HB; 4jha; 5lg

- 1 Aiden Wilson Tozer
- 2 Wayne Jacobsen
- 3 Holy Bible
- 4 John Henry Alan
- 5 Louie Giglio

What Is God Thinking?

TRUST: God's Truth versus Relative Truth

Several points of God's truth:

God's love is unconditional and unfailing.
Grace is a by-product of unconditional love.
Grace is favor showered upon the undeserving.
Grace cannot be cheapened. Its cost is too high.
Gracious gets vicious when behaviors don't change.
Sin is a matter of motive, not expression.
Forgiveness is most therapeutic for the forgiveR!
The testimony of a 'Christ-In' is unconditional love.
All our sins were put on Christ on the Cross.
Justification is to God: 'just as if I'd never sinned.'
Christ's perfection was imputed to us by God!
Sanctification is being '**set apart**' for God's use.
Sanctification is '**declared righteous**' by God!
Sanctification does **not** require living a sinless life.
A disciple is one who **loves what his master loves**.
Affection always affects one's course of action.
One can pose as a lover while full of hatred.
Lovers always desire to pleasure their mates.
The proper response to sin: thankfulness; Jesus paid
Good behavior does not produce love.
Love always produces good behavior.
Unmet expectations create disappointment -- anger.
Culture + Desire + relative/absolute Truth = Belief.
Relative truth is prevails. It comes from relatives.
Apology is inappropriate when devoid of sorrow.
Jesus never apologized for speaking truth!