

Title: GOD'S WILL/OUR DELIGHT, MARK 13:46
(Chatham, NJ; 10/18/15, AM) [Pc – Topical, Leader Pattern – Acknowledge, Surrender, Delight]

Theme: When we accept the sovereignty of God over the sovereignty of ourselves, we find great delight in surrendering to it.

Purpose: To remind us that God's rule trumps everything else, even our personal desires, whims, and passions.

Introduction:

1. The sovereignty of God has been a matter for intense theological discussion for thousands of years.
2. Sovereignty is the supremacy to rule without interference or guidance from anyone else; God needs no one else to help, and he answers to no one; his power is complete.
3. From Augustine to Calvin to contemporary theologians, despite differences in how to apply it, all agree that God possesses the sovereign power all to himself.
4. The struggle for control and power has been with us since the fall of man.
5. Satan encourages us to elevate our desires and wishes over his, but peace and freedom can only be found when we submit to God's will.

I. Acknowledge the Truth of God's Sovereignty

A. Creator and sustainer of the universe

1. Psalm 104:1-9 recognizes that the Lord has command of all the earth
2. God's answer to Job came in the form of questions about creation, 38:4-5
3. The challenge of idolatry between Israel and her neighbors was over who controlled the elements: who brought forth the crops, who protected them from natural disasters, who could save them from the hands of their enemies

B. God's will was focused on salvation

1. Isaiah 53:10 – It was God's will to crush the Messianic servant
2. Yet God's will would prosper under his guiding hand
3. Jesus acknowledged that control of his life belonged to God: Mk. 14:36, "Yet not what I will, but what you will."

C. Jesus did not appoint himself to the role of messiah or high priest

1. No one takes the honor upon himself, Hebrews 5:4
2. At least, not legitimately, 1 Kings 12:31
3. Jeroboam and other evil kings did this regularly
4. Jesus was appointed by God, Hebrews 5:5
5. This became clear by the miracles and the resurrection: the power and presence of God were apparent in these

II. Surrender to It (Parable of the King Going to War, Luke 14:31-33)

A. The Gospel calls us to accept the authority of Christ

1. Islam claims the will of God is revealed in the words of Mohammed
2. In western societies today the emphasis is on the individual: we falsely claim the final say on morality and lifestyle; we have enthroned the sovereign self
3. There are several problems with this (Keller, *Preaching* 133ff.):
 - It assumes we know exactly what we want: our feelings can be mixed and even incoherent
 - We cannot truly "become ourselves" beyond any external valuations: looking inside to find who we truly are is really an illusion; we don't get our identity merely from within

- We are shaped by numerous other forces: we don't even get to choose our parents or the communities we grew up in
- We need some external rule to help us sort out the warring impulses within

B. Admit the truth about God and sin

1. Mike Minot is a former atheist turned Christian
2. After being challenged by a friend to re-think his atheism, he read all he could about why people believe God's existence is rational and believable
3. He couldn't deny what he was reading; in reality the Creator God really exists
4. He wrote *The Beckoning, Examining the Truths that Transformed and Atheist Attorney into a Believer in God* to describe his conversion
5. It is a belief that beckons all of us: God made all things
6. We must also come to hear God's message about what is wrong with humanity
7. John 8:32-34 unveils the ugliness of human nature: we are slaves of sin

III. Delight in It

A. God's sovereign will defines a way of life

1. Once we believe in a supreme being, we must come to grips with who He is
2. We believe Jesus Christ reveals the living God, creator of heaven and earth
3. The morality he reveals becomes a foundation for living that comes from a source outside of our own minds
4. The prologue to the Ten Commandments gave the Israelites the assurance that the source of these things was from the very God who had delivered them from Egypt, Exodus 20:2

B. A New Creation, a New Life

1. Paul, in 2 Corinthians, says that anyone in Christ is a new creation
2. Purpose and meaning are now defined for us by the purpose and meaning given us as Christians
3. The Resurrection draws us forward with hope by giving us a vision of life beyond the grave
4. Such things delight us and provide the foundation for living faithfully under the sovereign rule of Christ

Conclusion:

1. Mike Minot expressed it well when he said, ". . . no one's actions can either create or discredit the truth about whether God exists. God exists or doesn't independently of the actions of any person." (*Salvo*, Fall 2015, 52)
2. Whether people admit it or not, all are bound by his rule.
3. Let us acknowledge it and take delight in it: rather a God of love and mercy than one of cruelty and judgment.
4. Be blessed by living under his sovereignty today.