

# **ARE WE DOING GOD'S WILL?**

By John Gregg

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Brother John Gregg gave me a copy of the following writing and wanted my opinion. In my opinion John has done an excellent job with this. John is my best friend; but I want it understood that our friendship has no bearing on my opinion of John's efforts. As you will see as you read this John did not give his own opinion; he has backed up everything that he wrote with Book, Chapter and Verse! I have no idea how long it took him to write this, however, I do know that he put a lot of thought and work into this.

John told me that he is carrying two copies of this in his truck so that he can give a copy to anyone he comes in contact with who seem to be interested in God's message to them.

John has no idea that I am putting this in book form; but I feel it is the least I can do, considering all that John does for me.

John is a faithful Christian who is concerned about the souls of his family and friends. John is not only concerned about the souls of others; he is concerned about his own soul and does everything that he possible can do to be pleasing to God.

Good job John. I highly commend John for this and highly recommend it for anyone to read.

*Buddy J. Duncan*

## ARE WE DOING GOD'S WILL?

*(Ephesians 5:17) Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*

*(2 Timothy 3:16) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*

I have heard people say, "It doesn't how we worship God. We are all going to heaven. We are just taking different roads." What they are saying is that practically anything goes in worship service to God. But just because some people believe this and say this does by no means make it so. The Bible is our only guide to how we are to conduct our lives and how to specifically worship the Almighty God. How many roads are there to heaven? Matthew 7:13, 14 Jesus says that *"There is a narrow gate and a wide gate and broad way. So there are two roads and only one road that leads to heaven. Jesus says "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it, because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which lead to life which leads to life and there are few who find it."*

Ephesians 5:15-17 the apostle Paul, when he was addressing the church in Ephesus said, *"Do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is"*. In Matthew 7:21 Jesus was talking to the multitudes said. *"Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven"*. The apostle John said in 1 John 2:17 *"And the world is passing away and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever"*. Are we doing God's will? The way to know is to read our Bibles and not to rely on what we feel. Your feelings can be very much deceiving. In Proverbs 14:12 Solomon said, *"There is a way that seems right to man; but its end is the way of death"*. 2 Peter 1:20, 21 *"Know this that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for the prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit"*. Acts 10:34 *"God does not show partiality."* God tells us all the same thing thru His Holy Word. He does not intend for us to get different meaning from His Holy Word as some people will indicate that they do. 1 Corinthians 14:33 *"For God is not the author of confusion but peace, as in all churches of the saints."*

Some people will claim that God speaks to them privately. But Jesus clearly tells us thru the Scriptures in Luke 10: 22; 12:2 also Matthew 10:26 and Mark 4:22 *"All things have been delivered to me by my Father."* For there is nothing

covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. Everything has been revealed in God's Holy Word, there is not anything that has been left out. It is complete. It is all that we need for our salvation the way that it is. And it is all written down for us to observe in our Bibles. We don't need another revelation, another gospel. The apostle Paul said in Galatians 1:8, 9 *"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. <sup>9</sup>As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."* It was so important to Paul to deliver this message, that he mentioned it twice. So we need very much to heed this warning.

The way that God communicates with us today is thru His Son Jesus Christ. Hebrews 1:1, 2 *"God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds."* Matthew 17:5 *"While he (Peter) was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"* So as we read the New Testament we should get a clear understanding of the way that God intends for us to hear His word.

God has plenty to say about adding to or taking away from His word. The apostle Paul writing to the Corinthian church 1 Corinthians 4:6 *"Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other."* All thru the Bible, the old and new testaments God has warned mankind not to add to or take anything from His Holy word. Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Galatians 1:6-10 and Revelation 22:18, 19 *"For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; <sup>19</sup>and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."* But thru the ages mankind has done what God has warned him not to do, with the help of false teachers. The apostle Peter in his second epistle of the book of 2 Peter 1:1 *"Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ"* and 2 Peter 2:1 *"But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction."* The apostle Paul in the second epistle to Timothy – 2 Timothy 4:3, 4 *"For the time will*

come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; <sup>4</sup>and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.” The apostle Paul when he was on his missionary journey and stopped at Miletus Acts 20:17-19 *“From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. <sup>18</sup>And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, <sup>19</sup>servicing the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;” Acts 20:29, 30 “For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup>Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.”*

Jesus needing a drink of water came to a well, where a Samaritan woman was drawing water and he told her in John 4:23, 24 *“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. <sup>24</sup>God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* John 17:17 *“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”* Jesus was telling the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 15:8, 9 *““These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. <sup>9</sup> And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”* Jesus us a parable of what will happen to us if we follow these false teachers in Matthew 15:14 *“Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.”*

Here are a few things to think about. Are miracles still in effect today? Some religious groups claim that they are. What were the miracles and who performed them that we read about in the Bible? Jesus performed the miracle and why did he do it. Yes he had compassion for the people but that was not the reason. When Jesus began teaching, he had to perform miracles to establish the claim that he was the Son of God. If there had been no miraculous signs accompanying his work, teaching God’s word, the people would have no assurance that he was the Messiah. John 3:1, 2 *“There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. <sup>2</sup>This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”* John 20: 30, 31 *“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup>but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”* Many signs are written and some of these are John 9:1-12 The blind received their sight; Matthew 21:14 the lame were made to walk; Luke 17:11-19 the lepers were cleansed; Mark 7:31-37 the

deaf were made to hear; Matthew 8:28-34 demons were cast out; Matthew 8:27 the wind and sea obeyed him; Matthew 14:22-33 he walked on water; Matthew 14:13-21 thousands were fed with only a few loaves and fishes; John 11:32-45 he raised the dead; so John 20:30, 31 tells us the reason Jesus did these miracles was to produce faith.

After Jesus ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles whom Jesus had chosen. Jesus had promised that the Holy Spirit would guide them in the preaching. In Acts 2:4 we read that the Holy Spirit gave them utterance (act of speaking; manner of delivering speech). The Lord also promised that signs (miracles) would accompany them. Thru the apostles many wonders and sign were done. One of these signs was speaking with new tongues (other language) *Mark 16:17* “*And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;*” On the Day of Pentecost the apostles spoke with other tongues (Acts 2:4). There were Jews present from every nation under heaven (Acts 2:5), And every man hear them speaking in his own language where we were born (Acts 2:6), They marveled and said and how we hear every man in our own language where we were born (Acts 2:8). They also said we hear them speaking in our own tongues the might works of God (Acts 2:11). We see that this speaking in tongues was not a lot of gibberish sounds that some make whey they claim they are speaking a mysterious tongue that only God understands. The tongues were the speaking in languages that could be understood by the people who lived in various countries where such languages were common. The people on the Day of Pentecost heard in their own tongues or languages where they were born. They did not hear a tongue that was never known by any body at any time or place. The speaking in tongues was only one of the signs that followed them. They healed the sick, cast out demons and did many other wonders. the apostles also had power to bestow miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit on other Christians they chose by laying on of the hands. But those Christians could not transfer those Spiritual gifts to others. Here is the proof; (*Acts 8:14-17*) “*Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,* <sup>15</sup>*who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.* <sup>16</sup>*For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* <sup>17</sup>*Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*” These Samaritans had been baptized and they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit as promised in Acts 2:38 but they had not received miraculous power. The apostles sent apostles Peter and John to lay hands on them so that they would have the power. They most likely traveled by walking. That was the number one mode of land travel at that time. Why didn’t Philip, a man who had done many signs in

their midst (Acts 8:5-8); perform this power on them? Apparently since he was not an apostle, he could not. If so why were the two apostles sent to lay hands on them so they could have this power? Philip received this miraculous power as a result of the laying on of the apostles' hands. It had been mentioned that many signs accompanied Philip's preaching at Samaria (Acts 5:8). Where did he get this power to perform miracles? The answer: He was one of the seven chosen to look after some benevolent work in the church at Jerusalem; "who they set before the apostles and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them (Acts 6:1-6) This power came to Philip thru the laying on of the apostles' hands. In Acts 19:1-7 we read of 12 men baptized by the apostle Paul. They had received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), but they did not receive the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. This could come to them only thru the laying on of the apostles hands. (Acts 19:6) *"And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied."* Thru these previous scriptures we see that miraculous gifts could only come by the laying on of the apostles' hands on others, no one else could. So when the last apostle died, the power to give the power of the Holy Spirit to receive miraculous gifts ended forever.

The apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:8-13 how long these miraculous gifts were to continue. "Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." These miraculous gifts were to continue until the knowledge of the Son of God was completely revealed, until the Scriptures were complete and confirmed. At the completion of Revelation there was no need for inspiration, nor for miracles to confirm the message.

The apostle Paul, immediately following his discussion of spiritual gifts, 1 Corinthians 13, explains the expiration of such gifts: 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 *"Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part and we prophesy in part. <sup>10</sup>But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away."* It is evident that those spiritual gifts were not intended for all time to come; Prophecies shall be done away; tongues shall cease; knowledge shall be done away, when? The answer, when that which is perfect is come (verse 10). They had known and prophesied God's will in part. His revelation was revealed to them a part at a time, until all had been given. But that which is perfect was come, that which was in part was done away, The perfect scriptures was completed with the book of Revelation, therefore the miraculous gifts have ceased.

Some churches teach once saved always saved, when you are in a saved you cannot fall from grace. This doctrine does not align with Scriptures of the Bi-

ble. James 2:24 and 26 tells us, James 2:24 *You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.*” James 2:26 *“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”* James 2:20 *“But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?”* Why do you suppose the writer of the book of James, inspired by the Holy Spirit, mentioned this 3 times? Here are more scriptures on this subject: 2 Peter 1:10 *“Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;”* What things? The things mentioned in the 5 previous verses. It unmistakably implies, that if we do not do these things we will fall. 1 Corinthians 10:12 *“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”* If one cannot fall, why was this command given? The Holy Spirit would never issue such a warning if it be impossible for us to fall. The apostle Paul knew it was possible for him to be rejected. He said in 1 Corinthians 9:27 *“But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”* (Galatians 5:4) A Christian may fall away from the grace of God. So where does that put a Christian? He is eternally lost unless he repents and prays to God for forgiveness and starts doing the things that God commands him to do.

The apostle Paul said that men would apostatize (fall away 1 4:1-3. It is evident that they had the faith or they could not have departed from it. Many of Christ’s disciples separated themselves from him. John 6:66 *“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.”* Man cannot be saved apart from Christ, John 15:5-6 *““I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.”* This fire that John is referring to is eternal fire, hell fire. There are several other scriptures, but these are enough to show that a Christian can fall away and be eternally lost. Revelation 2:10 Jesus said, “Be faithful until death and I will give you a crown of life.” When and if we fall away, God does not leave us, we leave him.

Another subject is baptism. Those who realize they are in a lost condition may say, what must I do to be saved. Some teach faith only, leaving out baptism and repentance of sins. This doctrine goes against the doctrine of Jesus Christ. If all we had to do is believe in Jesus, Satan would make it to heaven, James 2:19 *“You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!”* We must believe but we must also do what God tells us to do. Faith in God is believing what God says. By faith Noah and his family were saved (Hebrews 11:7). But when? When he built the ark that God commanded him to build. Suppose had believed as a number of present day preachers and had said



“Faith only will save, there is no need to build an ark. A number of present day preachers will go to John 3:16 *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* Yes we must believe in him and we must do what he says and be obedient to other scriptures on this subject such as Mark 16:16 *“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”* Those who crucified the Lord Jesus learned what they had done said to Peter and the rest of the apostles *“Men and brethren, what shall we do”* (Acts 2:37) Then Peter said to them, *“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* Here are some other scriptures on baptism. Look them up and you will see why it is essential to be baptized. It is God’s plan, plus other steps to become a child of God. Acts 18:8; 19:4, 5 22:16; Romans 6:3, 4; Acts 2:41; Galatians 3:27; 4:5; 1 Peter 5:21 and John 3:4,5 *“Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”* <sup>5</sup>*Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”*

Luke the writer of the book of Acts shows us how baptism is to be performed: Acts 8:35-38 *“Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. <sup>36</sup>Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” <sup>37</sup>Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” <sup>38</sup>So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.”* <sup>39</sup>Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. To get the full understanding of the story completely, start reading verse 26 thru 40. These scriptures show that the one that is baptizing, and the one being baptized, go down into the water and the one being baptized is completely immersed. Some churches that do baptize sprinkle or pour water this goes against the scriptures. These churches are teaching err when they do this. This is just another example of false teachers. James 2:10 says *“For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.”*

Read all of the book of Acts, chapters 1 and 2 tells of Jesus ascending back to heaven, after he had risen from the dead and spent 40 days with his apostles, It tells about the Holy Spirit coming on the apostles and giving them miraculous powers. It tells about the apostle Peter delivering the first gospel sermon, verifying Jesus claim that *“I will build my church”* (Matthew 16:18). At that time the church was established. It tells of the men who crucified the Lord Jesus who

found out what they had done, they were truly sorry and cut to the heart. They said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Then Peter said to them, “Repent and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:37, 38).

Chapter 9 tells about Saul of Tarsus, who had been persecuting Christians, was converted and became a disciple of Christ. And later he became an apostle. Being inspired by the Holy Spirit he wrote nearly half of the New Testament. Acts is an exciting book but so is the rest of the New Testament. Will you consider these scriptures of the Lord Jesus?

James tells us in James 4:14 *“whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”* James tells us that life as we know it is very short; even if we live a long life, and it is compared to eternity, Our soul will live forever in one of two places. Are we doing God’s will?

Study God’s word and you will get a true understanding of God’s will. Don’t be spoon fed God’s word entirely. Be like the Bereans in Acts 17:10, 11, who searched the scriptures daily to see if what they were being told is true.

Look up and read these scriptures, using your own Bible: Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22, 23; Ephesians 4:4; Romans 16:16.

### **GOD’S PLAN OF SALVATION**

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32)
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6)
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30)
4. Confession (Roman 10:4-10; Acts 8:37)
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21)  
Romans 6:3, 4; John 3:3, 6)
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian living (1 Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10)