

Romans 15:32

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Walking in the Will of God

by Dr. Wayne A. Barber

I want to talk about this subject of the will of God. It fascinates me. The Apostle Paul subtly shows us a secret about his life in verse 32 of Romans 15. Now we're not that far yet in our study but I want you to look at it. In verse 32 of Romans 15 he's finishing up a statement. He says, "so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company."

I want you to see something about the Apostle Paul you cannot miss in the scriptures. In Romans 1:1 Paul said, "I'm a bond-servant to the Lord Jesus Christ." "I am a love slave to Jesus. I've made a choice. I'm not going to pursue my will or my agenda. I'm going to pursue His will and His agenda in my life 'til the day I either see Him coming for me or I die and go to be with Him." That was the

resolve of the life of the Apostle Paul. His own personal desires had been put aside for the will of his master.

No wonder. We have been reading in Romans about how he'd been hindered from going over to Rome. Look back in 1:10 when he first mentions this. He just enlarges on it in chapter 15. Be careful to notice the will of God in this verse. He says, "always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you." Something had hindered him all of these years and he was praying that by the will of God he would be able to go to Rome and see these believers.

Look over at 15:20, and he enlarges upon the thought of why he's been hindered. What's he been doing? What has kept him from going to Rome if he has longed to go there for so many years? Romans 15:20 says, "And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation." God had specifically spoken to Paul that he would go to the unreached. He would not go where others had gone. He would go where Christ's name had not been named.

In verse 22 he says, "For this reason I have often been hindered from coming to you." He was busy about the will of the Father. He was busy about that which God had for him. He longed to go to Rome but he had a priority. He had the priority of God's will in his life. He was busy about pursuing it; therefore he was hindered from going to Rome.

You know, the subject of the will of God is fascinating to me. The more I get into it the more fascinated I become. The word "will" throws us on the right course immediately. It is thelema. The little ma at the end of it means the result of the will or the will itself. The word thelema has to do with that which God does of His own good pleasure, that which God loves to do, that which God does which is non-oppressive. It is not difficult to bear up under. It is beautiful.

It is precious to think about that which our God loves and desires to do in our life. It's amazing to me how many people have bought into the lie that Satan has spread to believers and nonbelievers alike that the will of God is oppressive and hard to bear. I want you to know something. If you're not living according to the will of God, you have bought into the lie that the will of God is something difficult, something that short changes you of the joy you're looking for, something that keeps you away from the pleasures that you're really wanting to have in your life. The will of God offers you something that is beyond anything you've ever experienced if you have not yet come to know Christ. It is the most precious thing. It's what God, the God of love, the God of grace, the God of glory, lovingly desires to do in a person's life.

I was in a church many years ago where a lady came to me who had two sons. One of her sons had a great musical ability and was being used by the Lord in many places. He would go and do concerts. He was a tremendous guitarist. He had a beautiful testimony and a wonderful gift that God had given him of sharing the Word and his testimony to others. One night after leaving a meeting he was on his way home, a car went out of control on the other side of the interstate, crossed the median, hit him head on and took him right on into Glory. His younger brother grew up thinking that if you love God and you're surrendered to His will, you're going to end up with a tragic death. It's not going to be what you're looking for. So his younger brother bought the lie that God's will is oppressive and hard to bear. He went instead to drugs and, as a result of that, ended up with a devastated life.

Listen, folks, there is a way that seems right but that way leads to destruction. Anything of the flesh is destructive. Everything of the will of God is that which is non-oppressive, easy to bear, and it flows right out of the loving heart of God. It's wonderful to talk about the will of God, to be able to walk in the will of God. We've seen in Romans something about the will of God. Turn back to 12:1-2. How many times have these two verses come up in our finishing out the end of the book? These two verses frame the well out of which the rest of the book of Romans flows. All of it, it's right here. This is the spring that they flow out of: "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Now let's look at those words just for a second. "Good," agathos, means a kind of good that is benevolent, beneficial to you. It's the kind of good that you can't find anywhere else. The word "acceptable" is the word that means it's non-oppressive. It's easy to bear. It's well-pleasing. And the word "perfect" means it absolutely accomplishes exactly what God wants and, not only that, it fully satisfies the individual that's a part of it. Now the Word of God teaches us that. The Word of God says that the will of God is good. It's acceptable. And it's perfect. Why? Because it comes right out of the very heart of a God who has loved, the very heart of a God who has demonstrated that love for His creation by sending His Son to die for them. Why would we think the will of God was anything else? It's good. It's acceptable and perfect. The Apostle Paul, in Romans 12:1-2, tells us that God has given us this privilege, and we need to be grateful for we can now prove that for ourselves, test it out for ourselves.

The word dokimazo is the word for prove. It means to put something to the test to see whether or not it's worthy. I want to say something to you. If you're living in sin, if you're chasing after something of the flesh, you're one miserable individual and you're

looking for an answer. But the answer is not going to be in church and the answer is not going to be in people. The answer is in Christ and being a part of His will in your life. Once you taste what He has for you, salvation being the beginning, you will never ever want anything else.

I've had my son on my mind lately. Years ago when he was small I had him convinced that ground sirloin, chopped steak, was real steak. One night a family in our church invited us over for a cook-out, and they had steak. I mean the kind of steak that you can cut with a fork. Of course, you use your knife to be polite. But my son got a bite and a taste of that which was real. He still couldn't say his words very well, but from then on he would always say, "Daddy, I want that tough steak." What he meant was the kind that you have to use your knife to cut.

That's what I want. I don't want that other stuff anymore. I want this because once you get a taste of it you just don't want anything else. That's the way it is with the will of God. Why would we think the will of God would be oppressive, hard to bear? Why would we think it would not be good and acceptable and perfect? I'm telling you, it's a lie to believe that God's will is anything else. And it's a privilege to be able to be a part of testing that out for ourselves. How do you do it? It's very clear. You present your body a living sacrifice as an offering to Him. What you're saying is, "God, I put my agenda aside."

Chapter 6 of Romans talked about when we used to live according to our agenda. Paul says, "You're now ashamed of the things you once did." Why would you go back and live that way again? We put that aside and we say, "God, I'm sick of it. I'm tired of it. Thank you for salvation. Thank you for rescuing me from me and now, God, I want to be part of your will in my life." And when you're willing to do that, you get to test it out for yourself. You get to prove it out and find out how worthy it really is. It truly is good. It is acceptable and it is perfect.

The phrase, "the will of God," is what I chased down in my studies. I started to chase the word thelema. It is used sixty-four times in the New Testament. But I found that the phrase, "the will of God," is found twenty-three times in the New Testament. I didn't choose them all. But as I was going through it, some principles just sort of fell out in front of me and I put them down and I really believe I want to share them with you. I want to just show you some principles about walking in the will of God, walking in the non-oppressive, easy to bear will of God. His Spirit lives within us to enable us to do whatever God tells us to do. And the result of what God does in our life is precious. The Psalmist says, "I will withhold nothing that is good from them that are righteous." He was speaking of that which is beneficial in our life spiritually and eternally.

Well, let's look at the things that I came up with anyway and at least give you an idea. Walking in the will of God. Paul walked in it. We are to walk in it. First of all, walking in the will of God is the mark upon those who are in the family of God. Now we're living in a day where everybody and his brother says they're a believer. They say they're a Christian, but they have no clue what that means. It may mean that they have a white house. That means that they're saved or something. Listen to the words of Jesus in Mark 3:35. He says, "For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother." Now who are the people who are part of the family of God? Those who do the will of God.

The word "does" in there. The verb is not present tense which I thought it would be. It's aorist tense which makes it even better to me. When you step back and take a snapshot of a person's life, from A to Z, all that you know about them and if that person consistently seeks to obey the will of God then you can write it down. That person is a part of the family of God. Now he's not talking about perfection. He's talking about predictability. He's talking about a person who, even when he fails, obeys by confessing and repenting of his sin. That's obedience itself. We'll never arrive down here. We're talking about an attitude that is predictable in an individual's life. It signals the fact that he's a part of the family of God because the very Spirit of God lives in him to will and to work. It's God putting that desire within him.

The Apostle John says in 1 John 2:17, "And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever." What he's saying is if you see a person who does the will of God, who seeks after not his agenda but God's agenda, then that person is a person who possesses the very eternal life of God himself. Obedience to the will of God then is the mark of God's people.

Listen to what Paul said about the Macedonian church. Now he's writing to Corinth but he's talking about these precious believers over in Macedonia. They're much poorer. They don't have the wealth of the Corinthian church but listen to what he says after he talks about how they freely gave of their offering. They were taking up a Gentile offering to take over to Jerusalem. There was famine in the land and they wanted to help out the Jewish believers over in Judea. Listen to what he says after talking about what they gave of their money. He says in 2 Corinthians 8:5, "and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God." Now that's a mark of God's people. They, by the will of God, according to the will of God, and by the means of the will of God, they gave themselves first to God and then to us. They became our servants as a result of giving

themselves to God. They were freely able to give the gifts that they gave. This obedience of God's people, that is the mark upon them.

I want to make sure you understand it's not some kind of mechanical, external, performance obedience. That's not what we're talking about at all. It's obedience out of the heart. It's a relationship obedience. It's the kind that comes out of a loving heart for God.

Listen to what Paul says to the church of Ephesus in Ephesians 6:5. He's writing concerning the slaves. Actually eighty per cent of the work force in that day was slaves, so we can easily bring this into the employee/employer situation of today for believers. It says, "Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." The phrase "out of the heart" is what he's talking about. It's a loving obedience that marks the people who are truly the children of God, the people who possess eternal life. It's a heart thing.

Jesus said in John 14:21, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him." Then in verse 23 he says, "Jesus answered and said to him; 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with Him.'" Obedience to the will of God is the mark of the people who are members of the family of God. You find a person who says he's a Christian and has no care for the will of God, you've got a huge problem because the very mark upon them that identifies them is that they lovingly are willing to obey the will of God.

Let me present a situation to you. Let's just say you didn't know what a duck was. So you went to the library. You got a book out and you studied everything you could study about what a duck is supposed to be. You saw pictures of what a duck is supposed to look like. You even saw how a duck walks. You studied how a duck quacks. You know some things about a duck. One day you come to church and let's just say somebody's playing a prank, and somebody opens a door and lets a duck in. Now, you look at that bird that just walked in. The duck comes in, comes up the steps, flies up and gets on the pulpit. You're sitting back there having studied what a duck was like, but you had never seen one before and you're looking at that duck and saying, "Now what is that big old bird that just flew up there? I think it might be a duck. It walks like a duck." Suddenly it turns and looks at the audience and quacks, and you say, "It quacks like a duck. Well let's see. It looks like a duck, it walks like a duck, it quacks like a duck. I just believe that's a duck."

Now that's simple reasoning. Folks, I want to tell you something. The people in the world have a little bit of a clue what a Christian is supposed to be. Some of them have never been around us. Some of them have never seen us in the way we live during the week. They come and say, "Well, this person claims to be a Christian. Let me just see. How does he live? Is he obedient?" He starts going down the checklist. They see you and they see me. I want to tell you something. We're killing our witness to the world when we are unwilling to surrender to the will of the loving God who sent His Son to save us and rescue us from sin and self. You see, we've got to realize that walking in the will of God is not an option. It's the very identifying mark of a person who has inherited eternal life and who is a member of the family of God.

Well, I kept checking that word. A second principle came to the surface. Walking in the will of God is the only thing that gives us purpose and creditability as believers. Turn over to Colossians 4:12. The Apostle Paul was writing to the church of Colossae, and I found the phrase. He's writing to a church that's been ravaged by the false doctrine of Gnosticism. I mean, these people are really confused. He's trying to show them that they're complete in Christ. The Gnostics were saying that salvation was not by Christ. It was through other ways. It was by mystical knowledge, and this knowledge didn't even come from the Word of God. They were all messed up, and it was confusing the church there. But in the end of his letter he reminds them of an individual who was one of them, Epaphras. Look at what he says in 4:12, "Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondsman of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God."

That says that you might stand perfect. The word "stand," *histemi*, means to stay put. It means to be steadfast. It means to be placed in a position immovable. And the word for "perfect," *teleios*, has the idea in this context of blamelessness in all the will of God. In other words, when you're seeking to live and obey the will of God, you haven't arrived and you're not perfect, but people can look at you and see that you are steady and unmoved in the pursuit that you have in the will of God. That gives you creditability amongst others.

Then he goes on to say, "and fully assured in all the will of God." The word "fully assured" is the little word *pleroo*, which has the idea of being filled up with assurance that God is accomplishing something through you and that you are cooperating with Him. This

is what gives you purpose in life. How many Christians have said, "I have no purpose in my life. I have no sense of direction in my life"? You can ask them one question. "Are you surrendered to the will of God in all the areas that God has for you?" If they can say, "Yes," then they have a problem because they wouldn't be there if they could say yes. But if they could say "No," immediately you've identified the problem. Because as a believer there's not going to be any stability. There's not going to be any creditability. There's not going to be any integrity to your life unless you have surrendered to His will. But not only that, you're going to be one person without any purpose in your life whatsoever. You have no purpose. There's no sense of God accomplishing anything in your life. So you just run from Sunday to Sunday hoping you'll grab a verse. Folks, the creditability, the purposefulness comes by walking in the will of God.

As a matter of fact, look over in 1 Corinthians 12:18. We find another form of this word "will," thelema. It is thelo. I want you to see that it is God's will that you be functional and purposeful in the body of Christ. It says in 1 Corinthians 12:18, "But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired." The word "desired" is thelo. In other words, that which he wills. It's the good, precious will of God that allows us to be functional and be put into the body as God designed.

So, what happens is when you're seeking the will of God, then God let's you in on it. Suddenly you discover, "I'm a part of something. I really am functional. I have purpose in my life." And as you seek the will of God, God puts your feet on the ground, gives you stability, gives you direction and gives you a sense of purpose. This is what we're all looking for. Only when you're seeking to live and to walk in the will of God are you going to have this. This is why the Apostle Paul could say in 1 Corinthians 1:1, 2 Corinthians 1:1, Ephesians 1:1, Colossians 1:1 and 2 Timothy 1:1 that he was an Apostle. How? By the will of God. He knew his purpose. Why? Because he had made a decision to be a bondservant to Christ and in doing so, he began to see revealed in his life that God had a purpose for him. He knew what that was and was able to live with that sense of purpose in his heart.

It's amazing to me the believers who doubt their own salvation. They don't understand until you come back to that place of surrender of walking in the will of God only then will you find what you're looking for—the stability. You'll find the integrity, the creditability and the purposefulness of your life when you've sold out to be a bondservant to Christ.

You're wondering why you're miserable? Come on! You're living in the very mind-set of that which God saved you from. Come on over into the will of God. Prove it out for yourself. You'll discover everything you're looking for. It's the preciousness of God that even allows us to participate in that which He lovingly has designed for us.

Thirdly, walking in the will of God gives us a witness to the lost world. We have no witness is we're not going to live this way. All these tie together. Mahatma Gandhi once said, "I would have been a Christian had it not been for Christians." We talked about oppressive governments in Romans 13. You talk about our government. Friend, don't talk about them. Pray for them.

You want to talk about an oppressive government. Nero was the deranged Emperor of Rome who was in power when Peter wrote 1 Peter. None of us would have survived, from the looks of Christianity in America today, back when these folks were living. They burned Rome and blamed Christians for it. They were persecuting them, killing them, and martyring Christians like you wouldn't believe. Paul called the pagan authorities who were watching the way the believers were living foolish men because they were foolish in the sense that they were ignorant of what the Christian faith is all about.

Look what Peter writes to them in 1 Peter 2:15. He says, "For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men." "Doing right" is the word that comes from agathos, which means good, and poieo, to do, to do good. Do that which is benevolently good for others, to treat others the right way is what he's talking about here. Who are the others he's talking about? He's talking about the foolish men. Who are the foolish men? They're the pagan authorities of that day. In other words, you're treating each other this way. Let it extend to even these kinds of folks and then you'll silence the ignorance of foolish men. They will look at you and identify who you are and what you're all about. There will be no confusion. Now, that doesn't mean you won't be persecuted for it. He didn't say that. But at least there will be a clear reason for the persecution that comes in your life. It's because of the direction that you're pointing. They have understood what a Christian is. He's an alien and a stranger to this world, sold out to the God who has saved him, and obedient to walk in the will that God has for his life and that's clear and will be understood.

As a matter of fact, he talks about how they'll suffer. In 1 Peter 4:1 he says, "Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." In other words, the suffering has driven him to the end of himself to where he doesn't want his way anymore. He just wants Christ. Verse 2 of 1 Peter 4 says, "so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh [or in the body] no longer for the lusts of me, but for the will of God." In other words, you're now living in the will of God. You're living for His divine pleasure in your life. You're only wanting to please Him and walk in the will of God. You have no witness, folks, unless you're committed and surrendered to the will of God. If we're not willing

to walk in it, then we have nothing to say to anybody.

I said it before, but I want to bring it out again. Francis of Assisi made this statement to his congregation, "When you leave today, witness to somebody and if you have to, use words." If you have to, use words. It's your life, folks, that tells people you're sold out to God. And if you're not sold out to walking in His will, if you're still hanging on to whatever flesh desires, you're one person without a witness, you're one person without a purpose, you're a person with no creditability, and you really have no identity in the family of God. Even though you might be a believer, you have nothing on you that bears that mark.

The final thing, walking in the will of God is possible because He is faithful to reveal His will to us. You say, "Well, Wayne, I want to walk in the will of God, but you've stepped into an area now that I'm confused about. Sometimes I don't know what the will of God is." Well, welcome to the human race. Neither do I many, many times in my life. But I know who is faithful to reveal what His will is in my heart.

Look in Colossians 1:9. Paul prays a prayer for the same Colossians we talked about a moment ago. He says, "For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding." The word "knowledge," epignosis, has the idea of knowledge upon knowledge, but it really has the idea of participating in something more fully to where you better understand and know it. Many times you can know the facts but not have a knowledge of His will. And the way that you have it, he says is "in all spiritual wisdom and understanding."

What I get out of that is that Paul is praying that they'll know what the will of God is and God will reveal it to them, this knowledge above knowledge, with first of all, wisdom, the ability to take the Word of God and put it practically into their life, but then secondly with understanding. The word "understanding" means the ability to put all the things together, draw a conclusion and understand this is what God wants in my life.

In verse 10 he says, "so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord [that's the only way to walk—in a manner worthy to the Lord], to please Him in all respects." How? To walk in the revealed understanding in what His will is in your life.

Folks, there are some things in the Word of God for which you don't have to wait for a mystical thing to happen to you to know the will of God. There are just certain things that are said that are as clear as the nose on your face. But then there are also those times that you struggle. "God, what do you want me to do? These are all good things. Which is it that you want me to do?" What I get from this is that God is faithful to reveal it to the degree we're willing to do it. God will reveal it to us, and we can walk in the light of that will. We will have that understanding.

If anybody needed that in certain times in his life, the Apostle Paul did. Turn back to Acts 16:5. There is a thinking that's going on today that says that there is no specific will of God. There is a moral will and a sovereign will, but there is not a specific will of God. I beg to disagree. I want to show you this in the life of the Apostle Paul. God is very specific in what He wants us to do. He has a will for us. It's good. We seek after it. He will reveal it to us. Acts 16:5-9 reads, "So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily. And they passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and when they had come to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them: and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a certain man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him, and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.'"

I want you to see what he is doing here. They were trying to get into Bithynia and to Asia and to Mysia. Paul kept saying, "OK, guys, what are we going to do? OK, let's go to Bithynia." They get up the next morning and they try to go into Bithynia. The Spirit of God would forbid them to go in there, whatever that means. Somehow they were not allowed. They would come back, regroup, suck it up, go back, and try it again. The Spirit of God would forbid it again. It's like they'd beat their head against the door and they couldn't get it open. The Spirit of God wouldn't unlock it. So God forced them down to another area. He literally, if you could see this geographically, squeezed them right between the two areas He was trying to get into to a little place called Troas.

You see, God knew what He wanted. Paul didn't. God revealed it to him. How did He reveal it? Was it by the Word? Not just by the Word. It was by his circumstances. It was by a vision. That night he had a vision. And a man in Macedonia said, "Come over and help us." He put the vision together with the fact that he couldn't get in any other area and with that fact that what God had called him to do, and he came to the conclusion, "This is what God wants in my life." God had taken all these things to reveal to him the direction He wanted in his life.

Where is Macedonia, folks? Macedonia is Europe. We saw over in Romans 15:18-20 he says, "I took the gospel from Jerusalem to unreached peoples all the way to Illyricum." Illyricum, folks, is modern day Bosnia, right in the heart of Europe over there. Listen,

there's another country that's also in Europe and that's England. If you'll think it through sometimes, you'll start shouting, "Thank God that Paul walked in the revealed will of God because he went to Troas." God pushed him out there and Macedonia began the gospel in Europe. It traveled right up into England. Why did we come to America? For religious freedom, and we have the gospel in America today because Paul had the revealed will of God in his life and obeyed it and took the gospel where God told him to take it. You tell me there's no specific will of God. Oh yes there is. The problem is we don't want it half the time. We'd rather rationalize our own will and call it God's. God will reveal it and sometimes it just doesn't come.

We're going to see later that doing the will of God and walking in the will of God involves priorities and planning. It involves a lot of things that sometimes we think don't somehow equate with doing the will of God. Oh, yes they do. But there's a divine balance. And that divine balance is, it's still God's will and no matter how much you come up with what that you think God would be impressed with, God has the right at any moment to shut it down and to squeeze you where He wants you to be. But you've got to be willing to let him do it. God will reveal His will. He's faithful to reveal His will. "Well, He hadn't done it yet." Well, it's not time yet. Keep on doing what you're doing and trust Him. When it's time, He'll let you know.

It is not the easiest thing in the world walking in the will of God but the key is the willingness to do whatever God tells you to do. To the degree we're surrendered is the degree God reveals what His will is in our life. I want to share a challenge with you. I want to just sort of challenge the men because I understand men. I know of the times in my life when I have chosen the wrong way. Men, have you made the decision in your life that you're going to sell out to whatever God wants in your life? I'll tell you what happens. When you make that kind of conscious choice, that doesn't mean you going to arrive in it, but you've resolved to live that way. Even if you fail, you're going to come back to it. It's an altar you're building. Then that becomes a center point, a pivotal point, for everything else that takes place in your life. You want to communicate to your kids how to love God? Then, love God in front of them and show them you love Him by committing and surrendering yourself to His will. That'll communicate more than any words can ever communicate to a child. He may reject it, throw it back in your face, but he'll go to his grave knowing exactly where you stood. It will be clear and understandable to that child.

Back when I played basketball in college they didn't play like they play today. We didn't have a point guard. We really had a two one two system. I was what was called the pivot man. Huh! The pivot man means you don't have to have a whole lot of brains but you just have to be the one who always touches the ball on every play. In other words, I stood in the middle and everything surrounded me, pivoted around me. I was supposed to touch the ball. The guard would throw it to me. I'd either hand it to him as he broke or the other guard or fake both of them and turn around and throw it to the forward or whatever. If the play somehow messed up they'd throw it back out to the guards, back to me again. I was always the pivot man, the man in the middle, the man the plays would work around. Hum! So you knew, basically, that if you were going to stop our offense, you had to start with the pivot man. Anybody with any defensive skills at all would know if you shut that down, you've shut down the whole offense because it had to come to the pivot man.

Well, friend, don't you think the devil is crafty enough to know that if he can get you out from under your commitment which is the pivotal point of your life to do the will of God and to walk in the will of God, he's got you where he wants you. Why can't we understand that? The very moment you choose your flesh is the very moment you just chose a road of destruction. But God, out of His loving kindness, keeps bringing you back. Finally, you come to that place and make that resolve, you're going to find stuff in your life you didn't know existed and the joy is going to overwhelm you. Walking in the will of God, that which God does out of His own good pleasure and lets us be a part of everyday.