

## THE ONLY PERMANENCE

"He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:17b).

This matter of the will, with respect to both God and man, needs to receive more attention. We frequently consider the mind and the emotions, and particularly the emotions. But here is this amazing capacity of our being called the will. To be sure, thinking, feeling, and choosing are interlacing and interlocking functions of personality, but they are distinguishable nevertheless. One thoughtful person wrote, "Will is the dreadful price we have to pay for being human."

There is a large and important sense in which life is made or marred, blessed or broken, at the point of the will. With tremendous solemnity Jesus declared: "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." With such words ringing in one's ears he can understand what a wise teacher means when he says: "Religion is the interaction of your will with the will of God, the interplay of your own soul with the soul of the Universe, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." And he adds, "When a man says 'I will' to God, all heaven thrills with gladness."

Let us then come to grips with the truth of our text: "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." It is the Apostle John writing -- writing as an aged saint to his spiritual children, giving them and us words of matchless beauty and wisdom.

These words speak of something that passes away and of something that remains. They set forth clearly a wonderful contrast between something which is evanescent and something which is enduring.

### I. Everything In Worldliness Is Evanescent.

1. The worldly man's possessions are evanescent.

Though he has piles of money they will pass away like a morning cloud.

2. The worldly man's purposes are evanescent.

His great schemes are only splendid dreams which pass away in the waking hour. "Pleasures are as poppies spread."

3. The worldly man's productions are evanescent.

Architecture, painting, commerce, literature, legislation -- what are these? A glaring pageant that passeth away.

The world referred to is evidently not the material globe, but rather those beings and things to which we attach ourselves, the things that absorb our interest and constitute our world. The world which passeth away includes human desires, longings, inclinations, propensities, and possessions. "The world" means the whole aggregate of things visible and material together with the lives of those who are apart from God. It is the external system which occupies the place of God. This sphere of human life is passing away.

### II. Everything In Godliness Is Enduring.

"He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Such a man cannot be moved.

- (1) His principles are abiding.
- (2) His possessions are abiding.

"The Lord is his portion." No moth nor rust can corrupt his treasures.

- (3) His prospects are abiding.

His hopes are not fixed on objects that are passing away, but on an "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

What is the will of God for us?

1. God has a will with reference to our salvation.

"And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life." It is not His will that any should perish.

2. God has a will with respect to the character of our lives.
3. God has a will with respect to the steadfastness of our loyalty.

"And now, little children, abide in Him: that, when He shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." God asks obedience of us because obedience brings blessings. God would have us go His way because it is best. His will, program, and plan are the very best possible for your life and mine.

The will of God for your life and mine is a charmed circle of salvation, safety, and security for this life and for the next. Inside that circle is all that is needed for happiness, success, and the highest usefulness. Obedience to God's will guarantees lasting joy.