

THE WILL AND THE WAY

Tommy Peeler, adapted

A woman wanted to talk to my wife and me privately. She seemed worried but was generally not a high-maintenance person. She told us that she was put down to teach a children's Bible class at church, but she had a problem because she could only read a little. She had a desire to teach the Bible to children, but she did not feel qualified, and she was embarrassed for anyone to know why.

We eventually came up with a thought. Her children were all old enough to read. She decided she would have the children read to her what she was scheduled to teach. She thought that would be good for her and her children. When she came to class, she had often listened to the chapter or two that she was teaching over 100 times. She memorized it to tell it back to the students. She kept her students on the edge of their seats.

First, God often uses those we might least expect Him to use. Second, sometimes when there is a will to serve Him, there is also a way.

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function. His diabetes and cardiovascular symptoms went away and physically, he could do what he wanted.

The parable is this. All three guys had lived their lives without God. Their spiritual health was near zero. They determined to change that and went looking for God and visited three different churches.

The first church emphasized Bible study, but gave no encouragement or example in interacting with sinners and performing works of service. Its members, by and large, were giants in Bible knowledge, but midgets in works of service, i.e. the skinny guy.

The second church emphasized works and were socially active, but had minimal Bible study and doctrinally accepted anything. They were, by and large, giants in works of service, but midgets in the knowledge of God, i.e. the muscle-bound guy.

The third church took a balanced approach. They emphasized Bible study, but also encouraged, by word and example, works of service. It had a tremendously symbiotic effect. Works of service helped in the understanding of God's word and created an individual that mimicked Jesus Christ Himself, perfect in form and in function.

Who do you want to be?

BOUND BY TRADITION

Tim King, adapted

It begins as wisdom—a safeguard to preserve what's good. But over time, its protection can turn into restriction. What once guided is now governing. And before long, a simple practice is elevated to the level of God's command. Jesus confronted this head-on: *"You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men"* (Mark 7:8)

The religious leaders of Jesus' day weren't condemned for following tradition—they were condemned for exalting tradition above God's actual Word. They took human customs and enforced them as divine law, burdening people with expectations that God never set. And it still happens.

A church tradition might begin as a way to honor God—practices passed down with good intentions, often beneficial and even wise. But when a preference turns into a requirement and that method becomes untouchable, the focus shifts. Instead of Christ being the standard, tradition becomes the measure of faithfulness. And slowly, without realizing it, what once pointed to God now replaces Him.

"See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8)

Not all tradition is bad. Scripture itself speaks of traditions that are meant to be upheld—the ones handed down by the apostles, rooted in Christ's authority (2nd Thessalonians 2:15). These are not human inventions but divine teachings meant to anchor believers in truth. The danger comes when man-made traditions, no matter how well-intended, are given the same weight as God's commands. When what was once a tool for faithfulness becomes a test of righteousness, we've lost our way.

If Christ stood before you today, would He recognize the faith you live and lead as the one He preached? Or would He mostly find a system of man-made expectations that bear His name but not His heart? Would He find His disciples clinging to tradition—in His name—while neglecting His commands?

So the question is: Am I holding fast to God's truth—or just the expectations of men? Because one leads to life. The other leads to bondage. And Christ never came to make men captive—He came to set them free.

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"Part-time Christians cannot
defeat full-time devils."

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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THE PARABLE OF THE ATHLETIC CLUB

Robert Perkins

There were three men who were plagued with being overweight and its attendant side effects: Type II Diabetes, cardiovascular problems, and just not being able to live the kind of lives physically that they wanted to.

They all three joined a gym. The first one started controlling his diet and seven days a week was on the elliptical machine. By the end of the year, he had lost all his weight, his diabetes went away, and his cardiovascular symptoms were greatly improved. He had a problem, though. He had not done anything to improve the quality of his muscles and looked like a walking stick. He was still physically weak.

The second guy changed his diet and was drinking and eating a lot of protein and limiting his carbs and fats. He spent all his time lifting weights and building muscle mass. At the end of the year, he had transformed himself. His diabetes went away and his cardiovascular symptoms were improved. His problem, though, was he was almost grotesque in the muscle mass he had accumulated and, with the smallest amount of exertion, got winded. He had neglected doing cardio.

The third guy listened to his trainer and on odd days did his cardio. At the end of the year, he was the perfect combination of form and – Continued on page 2 –

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