



WILL: The Guiding Factor

BY JERRY LAZARUS

You will have the support of “the angel of hope... the angel that would warn, the angel that would protect... ‘He hath given his angels charge concerning thee,’ by that very desire that “LORD, THY WILL BE DONE IN ME TODAY.” (2533-7)

AS STATED IN THE CAYCE readings, the most powerful influence for any individual is the knowledge and application of the Christ ideal—a term which is synonymous with truth, spiritual or universal laws, or simply, the law. (440-14) The understanding and application of the ideal results in soul development. And, without using the will to apply the ideal, there can be no development. Exercising our will is given equal importance in the Cayce readings to having an ideal—so much so that books could be written on this topic. (1718-1)

What is the purpose and function of the will? Why is there a need to awaken the will, and how may we do so? How can we explain the paradox of being told to use our will but also pray: “Not my will but Thine, O Lord, be done in and through me?” (254-85) (Luke 22:42)

We were created to be companions and co-creators with God, so He made us in His image and likeness by giving us both a mind and free will. This gives us the ability to choose for ourselves. (1567-2) It is the will that gives us individuality and makes us aware of ourselves. (853-9) Without this awareness, we cannot become God’s companions. Free will puts us at the apex: “man is nearer to limitlessness than anything in creation.” (281-55) And each soul was “created a little bit higher than all the rest of the whole universe, and is capable of harnessing, directing, enforcing, the laws of the universe.” (5-2) How can we become co-creators and enforce the laws without a well-developed and awakened will? Our earthly incarnations provide the greatest latitude for using our will. In all the problems and issues, challenges and troubles, opportunities and achievements, the use of will is involved.

The Crossroads of Choice

To exercise and develop our will, God gives us the ability to choose within a context: “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil.” (Deuteronomy 30:15,19) Will is best exercised, or practiced, within the opposing forces of good and evil, “the crossroads of choice.” (683-2) (1797-3). Only by exercising the will—by making daily choices to do good over evil—are we able to develop ourselves.

The opposing forces arise in two distinct ways: our karma and astrological influences. “Thus we have continually the conflicting influences, or good and bad constantly before” us to make choices and exercise our will. (1435-1)

Karma: Good and bad karma from past lives is expressed through our emotions—being patient or holding a grudge, for example. Karma arising in our current lifetime compels us to choose between good and evil, again and again. In our choice lies our destiny. Good leads to life, and evil leads to death.

Astrological Influences: The tension of opposites is also found in our astrological influences, which we bring to an earthly lifetime from our sojourns on the other planets of our solar system. These are both benevolent and adverse influences. To effect soul development, we are to use our will’s forces to overcome the adverse influences and cultivate the benevolent ones. (963-1) However, because of free will, we may choose to do the opposite, also effecting setbacks. Additionally, we can take an astrological influence and misapply it. For example, from Venus comes the influence of love, which may be developed into love for others and beauty, or into “licentious, selfish” love. (5755-1)

In life readings, Cayce gave the astrological influences with a caveat: “without the will power taken into consideration,” or “irrespective of the will forces.” (254-2) (4562-2) Will can trump any and all influences and urges, so the influences may or may not be manifested in an individual. It is use of the will “that makes for growth or retardment in any given” lifetime. (1992-1) The will is the gatekeeper. What we entertain in our minds is allowed by the will.

Thy Will Be Done

In reading 900-220, Cayce was asked to define will: “Will is that faculty of the body-mind with which man either expresses the selfish desires of the flesh or THE WILL of the Father. See?” This, Cayce said, is what is demonstrated in the story of the Prodigal Son. His initial use of the will was selfish: “Father, give me MY portion. I WILL go into the world and seek.” After experiencing suffering from his misuse of the will, he chose to do God’s will instead: “I will arise and go to my Father.” This is awakening, and he was received into heaven by an all-merciful God. (Luke 15:11-32)

When we pray, “Not my will but Thine be done,” it doesn’t mean that we are not using our will but that we are not misusing our will by violating God’s laws. “My will” implies selfish desires, with little regard for and often at the expense of others. By the selfish use of our will and abilities, we experience heartaches and suffering, disharmony and disease. Realizing the error of our ways, we begin to seek and discover God’s will as The Way. We realize that our mistake was to try to create without God; we need to be co-creators, working in harmony with God. By doing

“Having given free will, then—though having the foreknowledge, though being omnipotent and omnipresent—it is only when the soul that is a portion of God CHOOSES that God knows the end thereof.” (5749-14)

so, our desires become selfless and our life one of service to others. *“In lightening the burdens of another the whole of will’s power is strengthened manyfold.” (911-7)*

Our will is active when we defy God; our will is also active when we are doing the will of God. The difference is in our purpose or intent: selfishness vs. selflessness. It is our selfish choice that separates us from God, and by doing God’s will we attain at-oneness with Him. Nothing can separate us from God but ourselves. (877-1)

When we pray, “Thy will be done, not mine,” we’re saying: “Let my will be one with your will; let my will be one in purpose and activity with God.” There’s no greater prayer than “Thy will be done,” and we can manifest that by praying, “Let the thoughts of my heart, the words of my mouth, and the activities of my hands be acceptable in your sight, O God.” When we pray “Thy will be done,” our will is not in a passive state, for it longs to align with and make active God’s will. We’re willing to be led and guided by God, and we’ll carry out the inner guidance received. This allows the very Spirit of God to flow into us and “the Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit.” (Romans 8:16) (2072-14)

Right About Face

If we subscribe to the idea that all our life events are preordained or “meant to be,” we are shortchanging the role of the will. We face many adversities because *“will and choice [are] misdirected.” (262-115)* This needn’t be. Inherent in the will is the power to choose and change outcomes. (262-86) This is precisely why some dreams come to us; they reveal outcomes based on our current trend of thinking. Being forewarned, we have

the will to apply truths and change our thinking, and consequently the outcomes. By continually choosing to do God’s will in the face of evil—animosities, jealousy, gossip, indulgences, temptations, and so on, we are exercising our will correctly. When we choose to do evil, we pay a price for it—that choice is not according to God’s plan, but the consequence of our

Then, let the prayer of each be—three times each day... not merely say it, but feel it, be it: “LORD! THY WILL BE DONE IN ME, TODAY. LORD, THY WILL BE DONE IN ME TODAY.” Then, as ye go about thy daily tasks... let thy words, thy acts, thy thoughts, be ever, “LORD, THY WILL BE DONE IN ME TODAY.”

unwise choices, the bungling of the universal laws. God has not willed that any soul should suffer or perish at any time but has prepared a way out of every temptation we have succumbed to. (2 Peter 3:9) *“Man’s undoing, then, [is] within himself, by gratifying the desires, the weaknesses of the flesh.” (900-15)*

Instead of self-condemnation, or blaming God, others, or circumstances, we should “right about face” with a prayerful, contrite heart. (3509-1) God has placed in our hands the magnificent ability to make changes. Anything short of this is a failure to correctly use our will. Without

the spiritually motivated use of our will, we just limp through life. God’s redemptive mercy is directly proportional to our will to choose and act—as in the case of Zacchaeus the tax collector who climbed higher and gained a broader vision. (307-4) (Luke 19:1-10)

In matters of choice, the Cayce readings placed the responsibility upon each individual: *“there must be something within that answers... It will NOT be given from here... the entity must decide,” “make the choice within self.” (333-6) (264-50)*

In life reading 1752-1, Cayce told a 35-year-old woman that *“the will is the factor so lacking in execution,”* as he laid out her astrological influences, virtues, and shortcomings. She looked to others to make her decisions. Instead, she needs to analyze herself and study *“the manners of controlling self by self’s own will.”* We must make a distinction here: Cayce isn’t saying that we shouldn’t listen to others’ counsel or opinions, but we cannot abdicate our decision-making responsibility. Cayce told her to exercise her will *“to be more dominant, but with that dominance tempered with mercy and justice and love and faith and hope...”* In other words, the purpose must be set in the ideal, and not in *“selfish motives.”* By taking stock of ourselves, we may come to understand the use and misuse of our will. By turning within, seeking God’s guidance and help, we can choose the correct path.

There’s little development for the one who is complacent, lukewarm, or afraid to act. (520-1) It is even better to do the wrong thing, Cayce told one individual, than to do nothing at all. And that is the lesson in Jesus’ Parable of the Talents. The one who failed to do anything with the talent given him was the one that his

“For with free will we become as the children of the Father. Without free will we become as automatons, or as nature in its beauty—but ever JUST THAT expression; while the soul of man may grow to be equal with, one with, the Creative Forces.” (1435-1)

master rebuked, and his talent was taken away. (674-3) (815-3) (Matthew 25:14-30) So is the plight of the one who, being afraid of “picking up bad karma,” refrains from difficult choices and actions. God can give correction only to those who keep the will active as long as we are sincere in our intentions. With the correction, we can learn and grow. For God, “*the try is counted for righteousness,*” which will bring joy into our lives. (3440-2) This is why applying the ideal in our daily living is so stressed in the readings, and no realm provides opportunities to do so more than the earth. (991-1)

What, then, is WILL? That which makes for the dividing line between the finite and the infinite, the divine and the wholly human, the carnal and the spiritual. For the WILL may be made one WITH HIM, or for self alone. With the Will, then, does man destine in the activities of a material experience how he shall make for the relationships with Truth. What is Truth? That which makes aware to the inmost self or the soul the Divine and its purposes with that soul. (262-81)

Will and the Christ Ideal

Will can be best exercised when we face temptations, adversities, and opportunities. By choosing to live the ideal in this context, not only is the will awakened but also the forces of good in us: “love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” (Galatians 5:22-23) The forces of good are what constitute the ideal.

Willfulness and brashness are of the carnal, material mind, which is rebellious and destructive. “*And while a man may defy the laws of nature, defy even the*

laws of his Creator, he must pay and Pay and PAY!” (830-2) Conversely, “*he that maketh the will one WITH those Creative Forces or constructive influences may build and BUILD and BUILD!*” (1210-1) By applying the ideal in our daily lives, our spiritual regeneration will begin, and we’re on our way to be crowned by the glory of God and become companions and co-creators with Him. (601-11) (James 1:12) The defying of God’s will and then finding God’s will is our grand journey of soul development.

Awakening the Will: Take a Stand

The readings challenge us to take “*a definite stand,*” to declare our purpose in the Christ ideal, which will bring “*stability for self.*” (1733-2) Elsewhere in the readings, Cayce counsels: “*Not haphazardly, not by chance,*” but “*hold fast to that as ye purpose in thy heart*” and have the “*determination to carry on!*” (2475-1) (165-26) And to so live the truths, “*KNOWING and DARING to do that that is right in His sight*”—an act of the will. (228-3) There’s that boldness and courage, tempered with mercy, that comes from doing God’s will.

Joshua, the great leader who led the Israelites into the promised land after Moses, challenged them: “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve.” (Joshua 24:15) Then he declared his stand: “*Others may do as they may, but as for me—I will serve the LIVING God.*” (255-12) (Joshua 24:15) And this same soul, who later incarnated as Jesus, also took a stand when he declared at age 12: “Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?” (Luke 2:49) His entire life is a testimonial of this purpose crystallized. In his ministry, he

again reiterated His stand: “I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.” (Matthew 26:42) (John 6:38-46) His spiritual determination blossomed in his speech and actions. Having perfectly lived the law, he was no longer bound by the law, but the law obeyed him! (900-315) He could stop the mighty winds, walk on water, multiply food, or give life to any condition he faced. He was “*capable of harnessing, directing, enforcing, the laws of the universe.*” (5-2) We, too, can attain to this same consciousness of freedom: “You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32) To do so, we need to use our will to choose and live the law, which is God’s will. Paradoxically, in doing so, our will is guided, strengthened, and fully awakened.

God doesn’t want as His companion any soul who hasn’t chosen to become equal with Him. When Jesus said: “I and My Father are one,” people sought to stone him because he made himself equal with God. Jesus reminded them: “You are gods.” (John 10:30-34) (Philippians 2:5-6) (2981-4) When we choose to return to God, just like the Prodigal Son, the will is the “*guiding factor*” that’ll carry us back, along with the ideal, the guiding principle. (633-2) (3744-4) And, the awakening of our divine will is central to becoming gods! 🙌

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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