

The eternal mind and will of God (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 0 0] dependent entirely upon the Lord for his help I pass your attention to John chapter 13 and verse 7 the gospel is recorded by John chapter 13 and verse 7 Jesus answered and said unto him what I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter Jesus answered and said unto him what I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter it is recorded somewhere in the gospel never man spank like this man although it is such a privilege

I believe we don't realise it enough well at least I don't but we should have recorded the words of the Son of God as they were as they are left on record by holy men of old and we have in these few words which could really be described as the eternal mind of God and the eternal will of God because what he said he will do and what he did though these things are at times hidden from our view and sometimes clouded over with unbelief it will only be revealed as when the eye of faith is opened and gracious faith given to trace out the purposes of God in the matters that concern our own soul's salvation and indeed the pathway in which we if we are the children of God are appointed there is that account with well there is account in many of the scriptures of course and if you walk a path which you can't lay straight perhaps it's one of much prayer and supplication much crying unto the Lord for his appearance and yet he seems as though he hides his face or withholds those answers you are in very good company my friends because the people of God in all ages have been brought to those times and places where they have to indeed acknowledge they can't see the purposes of God in them there's a hymn in our book and it's a very true word and all Gabriel asked the reason why and all God the reason give and I'm convinced in my own mind and I believe by my own experiences that there is not a knowing why at least not as yet we do not know why and for what purpose this and that has come into our pathway but it's sufficient oh for grace to submit to that sufficiency that an all wise God has his hand in every matter concerning his people and so the matter is in a safe hand though we know not the reason why there is a word which comes to my mind in the last chapter of the Gospel of Luke when the Lord Jesus Christ met those two disciples on the road to Emmaus

I glanced at it a moment ago and there we have the same evidence the Lord Jesus Christ drew near and went with them and their eyes were holden they should not know him and so he drew from their hearts the matters of which they reasoned together about and were sad and so they thought him being a stranger they would explain in a measure what these things were two bedrock truths of salvation the Lord Jesus Christ being crucified and dying and the remarkable resurrection or at least the empty tomb but these were the words that we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed his trail and beside all this today is the third day since these things were done it was in a measure a mystery to them was to all those in that day when the Lord Jesus Christ was taken from them for a few moments as it were in comparison what I do thou knowest not now these chapters actually from 14 to 16 were the last words of the Lord Jesus Christ before he should suffer and throughout those chapters we have not only what lay before him often told his disciples but mingled also with comfortable words let not your heart be troubled you believe in God believe also in me you now therefore have sorrow but I will see you again oh and again

I will not leave you comfortless I will come to you but it is very evident as we have the scriptures of truth that they themselves were a mystery to what it all meant and some of them at least if not in spirit but in actions went back and they went back as Peter himself went back to his fishing not backsliding in heart but backsliding in walk well the word is Jesus answered and said unto him what I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter I feel we must begin where the Lord Jesus Christ is in this spot and place before him was a time a time that was set an appointment which God from all eternity had decreed and the first revelation of this time was in the fall of man when he said when he said to Satan that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head throughout the long history of the Old Testament saints prophecies and promises of the day of Christ and they were just about to walk into and be aware of and all these promises and prophecies come into pass but still it was a mystery what I do thou knowest not now how solemn it is my friends when and it is so you must surely agree when the Lord puts his hand for your pathway when the Lord decrees and appoints this way to walk and that way to walk this burden to carry this trial to affect your spirit this loss or this cross and as it were was seen to withhold the purposes of it he hides the purpose of his grace it's very easy to sing hides the purpose of his grace to make it better known but my friends walking it out day by day and hour by hour it is it needs much grace many times too do you not feel and find as you go on that though you lay these things before the Lord in prayer and supplication there is a withholding of the answers have you ever walked where the woman from the coast of Tyre and

Sidon walked a Syrophoenician woman and her and Christ Jesus were brought together and the matter was this the burden of her heart was her dear daughter's affliction what deep things these are close things relative to your own comfort and consolation and she laid it before the Lord and he answered her not a word if you ever walked in those places my friends you'll know this you'll wonder at the mystery I walked for several months under that experience and it went contrary to everything I believed in everything I was brought to believe in that there was a God in heaven that there was one at God's right hand who presents the petitions of the children of

[11 : 06] God perfumed with his merits there's a blessed spirit that instruction teaches the children of God how to pray but all that is true my friends but the answer the appearance the deliverance and the blessing the Lord withholds and he does so and I was going to say and he does it in a way of purpose because nothing the Lord does does he do for any reason or purpose to unduly affect or afflict the people of God but coupled with those silent times is this but the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perishes though it be tried with fire may be found unto praise and honour and glory of the appearance of Jesus

Christ the Lord works he is an eternal God and all decrees and purposes in the mind of God are according to his holy mind and will what that dear woman felt like when he answered her not a word what she felt like when the disciples said send her away and isn't that what Satan will do to the praying people of God oh why continue to pray the matter is beyond you and beyond any hope or help and yet the apostle wrote you know to the Colossian church continue in prayer watching unto the same the mind of God is eternal and the will of God is eternal it is unalterable there is no change in it what I do thou knowest not now now that dear woman laid her case before the

Lord and she was enabled to leave that case in the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ what discouragement she would say well it so seems to be doesn't it what discouragement but then in the Lord's own time and way he drew out of her heart something you know which many a praying soul forgets and I have to fall in guilty to this you remember he said to her that it was for the children it is not that the children's bread should be given to dogs and she said truth Lord truth Lord how many times when you've laid your burdens before the

Lord how many times when you've had to put this trouble that trial laid at Jesus' fate that it has not been brought to your spiritual mind and thought that you're not worthy that there's nothing in you that would merit esteem as that dear old minister used to say in years gone by however what is there in me to merit esteem or give thee my creator delight but my friends that falling before the Lord in absolute submission brought the answer of peace what I do thou knowest not now the trial of faith now I never meant to say that I wanted to begin with the Lord Jesus Christ that we was led honourable and there may be purposes in this word what he was about to do as I were not to understand and if you go back to that word in the twenty-fourth of Luke when a man when a child of God

I mean or when the children of God begin to reason out the ways of God my friends I'll only end in confusion they'll only be brought to confusion because the ways of God cannot be reasoned out they're eternal purposes in that hymn that we sing so often and learn I suppose from our childhood one of the earliest things I can remember is this hymn judge not the Lord by feeble sense but trust him for his grace behind a frowning providence he hides the smiling face his purposes will ripen fast unfold in every hour the bud may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower blind unbelief is sure to wear and scan his work in vain

[16 : 51] God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain oh my friends may you and I be delivered from reasoning out the Lord's dealings well here the Lord Jesus Christ was therefore about to suffer he was to accomplish that glorious covenant plan of the salvation of his people he was about to lay his life down here was the words of the surety of all his people here was the words of one who was to offer himself as a substitutional offering what I do thou knowest not now these saints of God and such were those that were believers in Jesus would have been steeped in old testament traditions and would have been well aware of what the sacrifices meant what the offering of a lamb before the high priest meant what the shedding of blood meant what was indeed they would have perhaps understood in a measure the prophecies of the old testament scripture but the coming to pass of this great work what I do thou knowest not now that the dear Lord and saviour

Jesus Christ should go to Calvary that he should lay his life down that he should suffer in the room place instead of his people that he should die this man this good man Jesus Christ who went about doing good healing the sick he was to give his life a ransom for men now and they couldn't see the wisdom in it all they couldn't understand it as we reminded you from those words in Luke 24 but you know there is the most blessed day with the people of God in those days and in these days we read the words of the Lord Jesus when he said oh fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken and beginning at Moses and the prophets he expounded unto them in all the scriptures things concerning himself and you know when that day comes that's a blessed day that's a blessed day in the experience of the people of God the in the book of Job we read of one called

Elihu and in one of the chapters there 33 he speaks there of an office and it's the office of an interpreter if there be a messenger with him an interpreter one among a thousand to show unto man his uprightness then he is gracious unto him and saith deliver him from going down to the pit I have found a ransom this is what Christ was and this is what Christ is to his people this good man who went about and was so kind to heal poor people who were blind but I do thou knowest not now now my friends the way of salvation that covenant of eternal grace behold the scene of much disgrace is Jesus in the sinner's place cannot be understood with the natural mind it has no attraction to the natural mind but it only becomes reality in the cry and the need of it my friends when the

Holy Spirit works within your heart and mine and need for it what I do thou knowest not now and oh surely my friends only poor wretched sinners convinced of their sin will be brought to see the wonder and the mercy of Christ Jesus being crucified in their room and place instead sinner thou hast done the deed thou hast made the saviour bleed that's the truth what I do thou knowest not now and I believe this I believe it by experience my friends when a soul is convinced of sin when the Holy Ghost begins to teach them their fallen wretched state marriage you know whilst the eyes of those two disciples walking to

Emmaus were closed that is the eye of faith that is their eyes were holden that they should not know him and they went through that continued ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ till they came to Emmaus the effect of the Lord Jesus Christ ministry was that their heart burned within them and so he carried with them and sat down with them at the table and took bread and blessed it and broke it and gave to them and their eyes were opened that they might know him my friends if you have no peace in your soul because of indwelling sin if your conscience is troubling you because of the sin of iniquity of your nature and after many pleadings and groanings under the sense of sin and the solemn realisation of its contending power my friends you will groan and sigh till

[23 : 46] Christ is revealed you cannot take salvation to yourself can't lift a finger for your own spiritual comfort but what a mercy my friends is that this precious truth does abide what I do thou knowest not now and groaning and sighing over a sense of sin and iniquity offending a holy God will make your conscience very tender the prodigal said I will arise and go to my father what caused him to do that my friends the very opposite what caused him to go away from his father's house when he went away he had sufficient to spend his substance in riotous living but when he began to be in want that's when the eyes of faith were directed homeward and to his father before him he wasn't a wretched sinner when he left his father's house but he was a poor sinner when he went back to his father's house he wasn't destitute when he went away in those broad ways of destruction my friends but when he began to be in want and no man gave unto him and so it is with sinners this is hell I believe the spirit of God will teach you the preciousness of Jesus

Christ and there is something else you know which people don't often talk about today my friends and that is not only being destitute of comfort but hopelessly so there isn't a grain of comfort in that you may see the people of God weeknight and Sundays and you may rejoice in their state and condition my friends but you can't put yourself into it oh that we might have real sinners in Zion today but groan and sigh under a sense of sin I believe the man called the publican in the gospel of Luke that cried out of absolute need was in this place he could not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven but smote upon his breast saying God be merciful to me a sinner oh how hopeless was his case he was a publican despised of course but he was a sinner by birth and practice and he was aware of his own wicked heart and wicked ways that put a cry in his heart sanctified it made him realise his dreadful condition and there was only one that could help

God be merciful what I do what I do now these that were steeped therefore in Old Testament sacrifices not all the blood of the stone Jewish or to slain could give the guilty conscience ease or wash away the one stain well it might be that you in your times of spiritual poverty and hopelessness you might have thought well I'll go up to the house of God to see if there's a word there and it might well be that there wasn't and you therefore deemed yourself as being hopelessly lost and at the end that you will suffer eternal woe my friends the mind and will and purposes of God in his people's case and they are his people to feel in this condition is that he shall smile them into blessing and bring them into deliverance what I do thou knowest not now oh my friends how long was it how long as it is

I remember I think it was one of the years that we came here on this day we spoke from those words in the 34th psalm this poor man cried and the Lord heard him and delivered him out of all his troubles and I remember saying thinking back on those words it doesn't say how long the man cried he doesn't give times and seasons my friends they'll cry and they'll have to cry until the Lord appears and brings deliverance and blessing what I do thou knowest not now but my friends the way of deliverance and the place of blessing blessing is found when it is by the precious spirit's work to take you to that place which is called

Calvary that's where the place of blessing is you know there was no doubt a multitude of people that sat down and watched the sufferings of Jesus without a slightest movement of the spirit believe that would be right to say that those who would have wished him gone would have sat there as it were to see him suffer and die we don't know how many were affected out of their own standing but there was one man there that was there was one man there that was he said to Jesus or first of all he said we indeed justly for we receive the due reward of our deeds but this man hath done nothing amiss he was on the place he was in the place of blessing he had a living soul he knew that he was condemned to die for his sin and he justified the verdict and the judgment but working within him was a grain of living faith and that centred on

[30 : 31] Christ and that brought a cry from his heart for Christ what I do thou knowest not now who would have given him room in a house of God a thief whose one intention was to take from others for his own possession and he lived that life out wretched sinner he was who would have him in a house of God he's in glory and he's in glory because of a work of divine grace that brought him unto the saviour Lord remember me will you pray that tomorrow morning when you go off on your day's concerns Lord remember me well he did and he received a gracious answer what I do thou knowest not now there was none of those high priests

Sadducees Pharisees captains of the temple unbelieving Jews oh the whole lot of them my friends did not know what he was doing they wouldn't understand his own words when he spoke I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again they wouldn't have understood those words the offering of himself so willingly in the room and place instead of his people what I do I will come sometime this day my friends to the pathway that you must walk and I must walk what I do but here we have the reign and rule of Jesus Christ and here we have the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God in that he should be the saviour of sinners what I do thou knowest not now

I think my friends of those many times when when seeking mercy for Jesus sake there seems to be nothing more than your own empty words come back to you how can it be that such a wretch as I shall ever find mercy how can it be that such desperate sinners as we feel to be my friends should ever have comfort and relief we may arise and go as the prodigal did I think of the times my friends when under conviction of sin there's a cry for mercy oh and again I say it my friends there are two truths that you and I must ever learn first we are not worthy and we've got no grounds of worthiness within ourselves nothing at all that would ever merit any way of deliverance or bring any path of comfort and

I believe the more we're taught it the more we value salvation but then there's something else that we shall learn too my friends and that's God's eternal love to his people because that's the only ground that is the only ground upon which salvation shall surely rest for a perishing people of God there's a fountain of truth in those words which are misrepresented God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but should have eternal life there is a nine of blessing there my friends because underneath the work of salvation is that eternal love to his people well you may have a visit and a view of it occasionally you might be able to say with that hymn writer on such love my soul still ponder love so great so rich so free say while lost in holy wonder why oh

Lord such love to me but oh the hiding of his face and the withdrawing of his presence what I do thou knowest not know the mind of God and the will of God are eternal and cannot be reversed the death of Jesus Christ was for his church and people for all sinners who by the Holy Spirit are quickened into divine life convinced of their sin people speak of the way of salvation and it is so Christ is the way the truth and the lie people speak so very simply and yet so easily of what is the way of salvation my friends but till the

[36 : 12] Lord opens your eyes you are blinded to that way you may be brought up under the sound of the truth and may you have a blessed God that you were but only when it's revealed and confirmed to your wretched condition that you're one of those for whom Christ died will there be any comfort or consolation what I do thou knowest not now no he performs his will and purpose and nothing can overtake it we often sing and it's true of course he sits on no precarious throne or borrows leave to be everything in this world land surely is in utter confusion because sin reigns and Satan's kingdom prospers oh but on the other hand my friends on the other hand every vessel of mercy knows where they are oh they may still be in the broad way that leads to destruction and they may well be in false religion often do we have to pray that the

Lord knows where his people are and in what condition they're in my friends none of them shall lose the way none of who shall be left behind Jesus is the one thing need for I without him perish must I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know here after what a precious promise my friends to those who seek to find a portion for their soul who feel at times a bitter disappointment many many many years ago 50 years ago perhaps not quite 40 40 odd years ago when under conviction of sin and feeling one's own wretched lost condition and going up to the

Lord's house and begging that it might be the day of blessing that there might be something that will give me hope and going home as we went completely in the dark and in distress and I used to read in the from the word of God those words of the song of Solomon when she said by night I sought him whom my soul loveth I sought him but I found him not oh time and again on the Lord's day night Lord's day evening after services when there was nothing you know what the man said here Wednesday night there is nothing man but I used to read those words and I used to read those I got to read in that part where it says but it was but for a moment that I passed from the watchman and I found him whom my soul loveth I held him and would not let him go and I couldn't read those words in honesty my friends but you'll come to those places but thou shalt know hereafter have you not got a spot of ground have you not got a spot of ground have you not got a sacred place where a sinner and a saviour come together can you look back some of you may be in the Lord's own time and according to his will all of you but it was a spot where you was met with divine mercy it might be in the house of

God and we wish it were because it is a sanctuary where the Lord's people gather when you come in condemned when you come in sore tempted when you come in tried because you feel well there's nothing for me there's nothing at all and it happens to be and I don't say that haphazardly but it happens to be the day of blessing and in the time and mercy of God that spot of ground is a sacred place you know and we've got one or two sacred spots in this vain world sin and woe where the Lord has met with us and we prove these words that thou shalt know hereafter what a sacred place those spots are my friends we read of Jacob when he came to Bethel and there he laid under the stars under the frown of his brother but under the smile of God the smile of God oh how dreadful is this place he said this is none other than the house of

God and the gate of heaven and we find him further on in his experience having sent his divided his lot his wives and children up and sent them away for fear of Esau's wrath and anger and there he was and Jacob was left alone and there wrestled with him one till the breaking of the day and Jacob wrestled with the angel and that angel was Christ I will not let thee go until thou bless thee and he blessed him there have you got some of those places but thou shalt know hereafter a place and a spot of ground divinely chosen a spot of ground that you won't go past in the eternal counsels of God to bring you out of the darkness and distress and sorrows of your heart over your own sin and the lack of comfort and mercy into a place of blessing this but thou shalt know a time is set to heal up thy woes oh like that good word in

[43 : 13] Habakkuk which speaks of the appointed time and it shall come to pass wonderful spots of ground my friends wonderful you'll never forget them I've got one or two in this county one or two in this county I shall never forget them like one or two at Hanover as well I shall never forget them where the Lord appeared against all opposition against all darkness and distress and he dispelled that darkness and he removed that distress told you time and again perhaps I don't know my friends when you go to the Lord's house cast down by reason of the hardness of the way and Satan at your heel and your own natural heart would say well it won't be a time today a blessing it won't be a spot of ground where you remember it'll be nothing it won't suit your condition your case and so one such day was an Easter

Sunday oh he was in trouble up to as far as we could be in trouble great distress and it was the resurrection day what would the resurrection day have to comfort you in any way shape or form today and so we went to the house of God and the good man read from this gospel of the death of Lazarus but he didn't preach from it he wasn't noted for his gifts and abilities he was a simple preacher of the gospel where was the blessing in the 12th psalm for the oppression of the poor for the sign of the needy now shall I arise saith the Lord I will set him in safety from him that puffed at him my friends those troubles you wouldn't wish for but they were times of blessing but thou shalt know hereafter you know when Joseph when Joseph was in

Egypt and the brothers of Joseph was to come up to come out of Canaan into Egypt to buy food on one such occasion where it seems as though it was nothing more than discouragement nothing more what did what did Jacob say to his sons go again to the man my friends in going again Joseph revealed himself who he was and it brought all those past times to be as it were passed into eternity and it was a time of blessing Jesus answered and said unto him what I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter the day of resurrection was the hereafter in this word the day of resurrection the door being shut for fear of the Jews came Jesus and stood in the midst and said unto them peace be unto you this was the hereafter of this text when he showed himself and he showed them his hands and his side well we must leave the word there the Lord bless his truth amen close this morning with number 209 the tune is Dublin 129 in number 209 grace like a fountain accommodation discord boeds and kto have died irri organism on the yet andière haveñ

ICO with her wealth and freedom help Come make disdain, I sing of hope to give.

Sing muut, I've overcome the flood, ilesuell myself allies A ■■■ ologues con derivation.

[50 : 10] Thy blessing upon thy word we beg.

And oh, pardon and forgive whatever's been amiss. Lord, bring us together in the afternoon. Grant us thy spirit and thy presence.

And may the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God the Father, the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, remain with us both now and forever.

Amen.