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**R. C. SPROUL**

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R. C. SPROUL



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

*Can I Know God's Will?*

© 1984, 1999, 2009, 2010 by R.C. Sproul

Previously published as *God's Will and the Christian* (1984) and as part of *Following Christ* (1991) by Tyndale House Publishers, and as *Can I Know God's Will?* by Ligonier Ministries (1999).

Published by Ligonier Ministries

421 Ligonier Court, Sanford, FL 32771

Ligonier.org

Printed in China

RR Donnelley

0001121

First edition, sixteenth printing

ISBN 978-1-64289-039-6 (Paperback)

ISBN 978-1-64289-067-9 (ePub)

ISBN 978-1-64289-095-2 (Kindle)

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Cover design: Ligonier Creative

Interior typeset: Katherine Lloyd, The DESK

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The Library of Congress has cataloged the Reformation Trust edition as follows:

Sproul, R.C. (Robert Charles), 1939-2017

[God's will and the Christian]

Can I know God's will? / R.C. Sproul.

p. cm. -- (The crucial questions series)

First published as: *God's will and the Christian*. 1984. *Following Christ*. Wheaton, Ill. : Tyndale House Publishers, c1991. *Can I know God's Will?* Ligonier Ministries, 1999.

ISBN 978-1-56769-179-5

1. Providence and government of God--Christianity. 2. God (Christianity)--Will. I. Sproul, R. C. (Robert Charles), 1939- *Following Christ*. II. Title.

BT135.S745 2009

248.4--dc22

2009018820

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## Chapter One

# The Meaning of God's Will

Lost in Wonderland, Alice came to a fork in the road. Icy panic stung her as she stood frozen by indecision. She lifted her eyes toward heaven, looking for guidance. Her eyes did not find God, only the Cheshire cat leering at her from his perch in the tree above.

“Which way should I go?” Alice blurted.

“That depends,” said the cat, fixing a sardonic smile on the confused girl.

“On what?” Alice managed to reply.

“It depends on your destination. Where are you going?” the cat asked.

“I don't know,” Alice stammered.

“Then,” said the cat, his grin spreading wider, “it doesn't matter which way you go.”

The destination matters to the Christian. We are a pilgrim people. Though we do not wander in a wilderness in route to the Promised Land, we seek a better country, an eternal city whose builder and maker is God. Someday He will take us home to His kingdom.

So the ultimate destination is clear. We are certain that there is a glorious future for the people of God. However, what of tomorrow? We feel anxious about the immediate future, just as unbelievers do. The specifics of our personal futures are unknown to us. Like children we ask: “Will I be happy? Will I be rich? What will happen to me?” We must walk by faith rather than by sight.

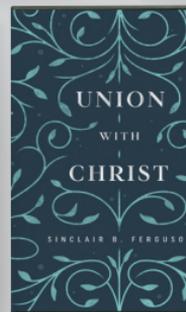
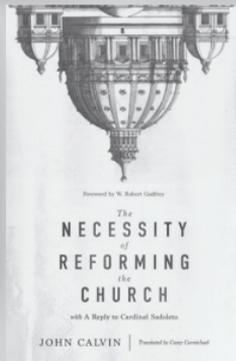
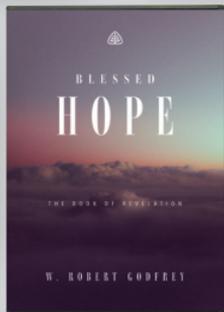
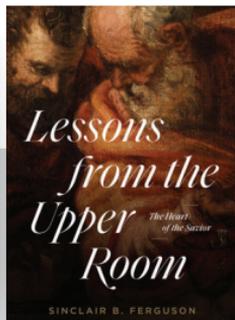
As long as there have been people, there have been soothsayers and wizards exploiting our anxieties. If prostitution is the world's oldest profession, surely fortune-telling is the second oldest. “Tell me of tomorrow” is the plea of the stock market speculator, the competitive businessman,

the sports forecaster, and the young couple in love. The student asks, “Will I graduate?” The manager muses, “Will I be promoted?” The person in the doctor’s waiting room clenches his hands and asks, “Is it cancer or indigestion?” People have examined lizard entrails, snakeskins, the bones of owls, the Ouija board, the daily horoscope, and the predictions of sports handicappers—all to gain a small margin of insurance against an unknown future.

The Christian feels the same curiosity, but frames the question differently. He asks: “What is the will of God for my life?” To search for the will of God can be an exercise in piety or impiety, an act of humble submission or outrageous arrogance—depending on what will of God we seek. To try to look behind the veil at what God has not been pleased to reveal is to tamper with holy things that are out of bounds. John Calvin said that when God “closes his holy mouth,” we should desist from inquiry (*Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, trans. and ed. John Owen [reprint, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House. 2003], 354).

On the other hand, God delights to hear the prayers of His people when they individually ask, “Lord, what do you want me to do?” The Christian pursues God, looking for His marching orders, seeking to know what course of

We want to see men and women  
around the world connect the deep truths  
of the Christian faith to everyday life.



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