

HOLY HELPS

MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY!**Titus 1:7**

*"For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, **not self-willed.....**"*

Early in my ministry I attended a united service where several churches were represented. I heard one of the speakers say, pointing to the deacons from the church of which he was pastor, "These deacons know that it is my way or the highway!" I thought: "If he is right, why did God bring the office of deacon into existence?" Time will prove us all true or false -- before long, that man left the pastorate.

The best leaders are consensus builders, not congregational bullies! A bull-dogmatic, overbearing leader can cajole people into following out of fear. This is the "stuff" out of which cults are formed. Self-styled empire builders are, by their very nature, self-willed. They are bent on doing what they will to do whether it is God's will or not. The Apostle Paul, writing to young pastor Titus said that he was not to be "*self-willed.*"

Every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is capable of being led by the Holy Spirit and, when mature, can discern the will of the Lord. For unity and harmony of purpose to prevail in a body of believers and for them to work together for a common goal, the will of God must be revealed to each one by the Holy Spirit. Everyone must be persuaded in his own mind. The first deacons were selected by congregational consensus. (Acts 6:3) An overbearing leader can usurp the ministry of the Holy Spirit and impose his personal will upon the plurality.

The self-willed person, whether in pulpit or pew, is a hindrance to the work of God. There are some men so clever and so talented that God can never make proper use of them. They cannot fully do God's work and God's will because they are so lost in admiration of their own will and work.

Illustration: George Mueller dealt with this matter in his own life. He wrote, "There was a day when I died, utterly died: died to George Mueller, his opinions, preferences, tastes, and will -- died to the world, its approval or censure, died to the approval or blame even of my brethren and friends, and since then I have studied only to show myself approved unto God." Mueller teaches us that self-will, self-seeking, self-glory must die if Christ is to really live out his life through us.

It was Andrew Murray who said, "Many deceive themselves because they seek to be alive to God before they are dead to their own nature. That is a thing as impossible as it is for a grain of wheat to be alive before it dies." When we receive Christ we possess Him, but it is only when He possesses us that we will be emptied of self. Only then will we "*have the mind of Christ.*" (I Cor.2:16) Then, and only then will we say, "Not my will but yours be done."

No one is so empty as he who is full of himself!

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