

Psalm 91

Soul- mind, emotions, and WILL

Series recap.

What is the soul? How is it different from the flesh and the spirit?

Our will is the point from which we decide on and initiate action. It is the center of our decision-making. I will do this and I won't do that. Sometimes this is made up in advance and sometimes it is spur of the moment.

Some people believe they are in control of their own will. The scriptures demonstrate that will is corrupted before knowing God and in the process of being conformed after knowing God. I've heard it said that we have a broken chooser apart from God and once we are saved God fixes our chooser.

***<sup>1</sup>He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High  
Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.***

**Dwells-** remain, sit, abide. Long term.

**Shelter-** covering, shelter, hiding place.

**Most High-** El Elyon. Name of God. "The God Most High" Ruler of monarchs and angels. Ruler of all.

**Abide-** lodge, stop over, pass the night, abide. Short term.

**Shadow-** "No greater protection can be imagined than in the shadow of God."

**Almighty-** El Shaddai. Name of God. "The Almighty God" Almighty, powerful.

**:1 With God you are completely cared for and safe.**

***<sup>2</sup>I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress,  
My God, in whom I trust!"***

**I will say-** to say, speak or utter. To say or answer in one's heart. To think upon and make a promise one fully intends to keep.

**LORD-** Yehovah or Yahweh depending on which vowel you would like to buy. Name of God. "The existing One" / "I am who I am" / "The proper name of the One True God."

**Refuge-** refuge or shelter from rain, storm, or danger. By extension refuge or shelter from falsehood.

**Fortress-** literally a net. Used of strongholds and fortresses. God is seen as a castle of defense.

**My God-** Elohim. Name of God. The strong and faithful one. The word is plural hinting at the Trinity. Hebrew scholars understood this to be the manifold majesty of God.

**In whom I trust-** a certain, bold, and secure confidence. There not a hint of a shadow of doubt that God can be trusted.

:2 This is an overwhelming statement of devotion and confidence in God to care for and lead our lives. It is based on who God is. Four names of God are used in these first two verses.

El Elyon- The Most High God

El Shaddai- The Almighty God

Yahweh- The Self-Existing One

Elohim- The Strong and Faithful One

The Jewish people knew God through His actions in forming, caring for, guiding, disciplining, and loving them as a nation. To them God was not a maybe or could be, God was as sure to them as the world they could see around them. In fact, He was probably more sure to them than that. They could look at the history of their people and see God's movement. The psalmist will look at the history of own life and speak to God's obvious presence in his life.

For the Christian this should no be less true, what's more is because of the life of Jesus it should be even more apparent. The life of Jesus Christ is the greatest proof of God's existence. We can look all over the place for God, but the life of Jesus in the Gospel's make God as fully known as our minds could possibly ever hope for. Yet, sometimes we find our mind and will conformed to pattern of this world. Sometimes we fall prey to needing more than God has given as proof of His character and love.

Tim Keller writes, **“We are looking for an airtight argument to believe in God. God didn't send an airtight argument into the world; he sent an airtight person.”**

That person is quite obviously Jesus and when His life, death, and resurrection are examined it very easy to understand why one would take a cross and follow Him. He is totally worthy and trustworthy of such submission and devotion.

The strength of the Christian's will is the person of Jesus Christ. Life is full of pressures. Men and women who proclaim to love Jesus and even devote their lives to His Kingdom have made some appalling decisions. Often leading to this is an un-renewed mind and emotions that get the better of them. Then their will is weakened and poor decisions follow. Fundamental to an upright life is belief in Jesus Christ, the fullness of His Gospel, and the gracious provision of His personal presence in our lives.

The will of the believer should say I will follow Jesus, I will be conformed to His image, I will be empowered by the Holy Spirit, I will live in accordance with His Word, I will love those in my life as myself, I will avoid evil, I will live righteousness, I will remain dependent on Jesus Christ.

I will do this because I know the person and character of God and He is trustworthy. Which, is what the psalmist says in :3-8.

:3-8 God can be trusted because under His care we are secure in Him at all times, in all dangers, and in all circumstances.

*<sup>3</sup> For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper  
And from the deadly pestilence.*

This language is symbolic of the evil that can come upon on this life. Whatever the case, God protects us. That protection can be either through deliverance here on earth or in the eternal state that is to come.

*<sup>4</sup> He will cover you with His pinions,  
And under His wings you may seek refuge;  
His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark.*

The imagery of wings depicts the tender care of the Lord while the shield and bulwark, or fortress, depict the sufficiency of His power.

*<sup>5</sup> You will not be afraid of the terror by night,  
Or of the arrow that flies by day;  
<sup>6</sup> Of the pestilence that stalks in darkness,  
Or of the destruction that lays waste at noon.*

There nothing to fear in darkness of night or in the daylight. There nothing to fear whether from man or demon. God gives protection from both the natural and supernatural realms. The schemes of the devil are no match for God's power. Our fellow could hold us down and even kill us, but even in that there is nothing to fear.

*<sup>7</sup> A thousand may fall at your side  
And ten thousand at your right hand,  
But it shall not approach you.*

God's ability to protect is not limited by the number of fallen angels or human beings that reject Him. He is who is no matter what anyone or anything says, does, or thinks.

*<sup>8</sup> You will only look on with your eyes  
And see the recompense of the wicked.*

With God's breath He can bring life, with hands He can form mankind, with mind there is no limit to His creativity, and with His eyes what each person deserves for their response to Him He can bring about. He will judge the world and reward for those who love will be surely given and retribution for those who reject Him is just as sure.

:9-13 The believer enjoys the security of God's protection. In Christ there is nothing to fear.

*<sup>9</sup> For you have made the Lord, my refuge,*

*Even the Most High, your dwelling place.  
10 No evil will befall you,  
Nor will any plague come near your tent.*

The psalmists personal experience encourages people to embrace a way of wisdom by making **The Most High** one's **dwelling**. In Him they find **refuge** and they can be confident that whatever happens on earth is with His knowledge. Nothing happens outside his will, whether harm or disaster. There is safety and security with the Lord no matter what turn our lives take.

*11 For He will give His angels charge concerning you,  
To guard you in all your ways.*

Those angels who are loyal to God are charged with caring His people. What a fantastic truth! Heavenly beings with great power are placed in our lives to look after us.

*12 They will bear you up in their hands,  
That you do not strike your foot against a stone.*

Those angels are to lift up and carry God's people and protect them from harm. This is hard to imagine but here

*13 You will tread upon the lion and cobra,  
The young lion and the serpent you will trample down.*

What must be clear to the all is that allowing God, Jesus, to lead our lives is the greatest blessing we could possibly want. While it may be difficult to give up control, or the false sense of it we have, there is no difficulty in seeing the goodness of following Jesus.

**:14-16 The love of God is like no other, and once it has been experienced the only  
is devotion and trust.**

*14 "Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him;  
I will set him securely on high, because he has known My name.*

*15 "He will call upon Me, and I will answer him;*

*I will be with him in trouble;*

*I will rescue him and honor him.*

*16 "With a long life I will satisfy him  
And let him see My salvation."*

The Psalmist wrote as if God Himself spoke to confirm the psalmist's faith. In return for the psalmist's love, the Lord promised to rescue him from danger, protect him from harm, be with him in trouble, to honor him, and to satisfy him. The psalmists has experienced great and satisfying relationship with God and in turn acknowledges the goodness of following Him.

When we consider to whom our devotion truly lies it seems we have only three options.

1. We can be deceived into believing we are in control of our own desires and decision-making.
2. We can recognize that before Christ our will is corrupt and controlled by a sinful nature.
3. We can pray for God deliverance, believe that it is granted in death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and recognize the place God rightfully holds in our lives.

If you don't know the goodness of the third option, and the reality of it, then I pray the eyes of your heart are opened by a most gracious God and you are moved to die to yourself and live for Jesus.