

GOD'S WILL REVEALED

God has revealed His will for all mankind, giving specific instructions how to live acceptably in His sight. Has God given specific commands to the young? Yes, God expects certain things of young people. God expects *SACRIFICE*.

The greatest decision one can make is to become a Christian. The new Christian has committed their life to God; promising Him that their worldly lusts will be sacrificed to God's righteousness (Rom. 6:12; 13:14; Gal. 5:24; 1 Peter 2:11). Solomon wrote, "*Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man*" (Eccl. 12:13). The real purpose of one's life is to be devoted *fully* to God. Jesus said His followers would have to deny themselves and follow Him (Matt. 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). Paul wrote in Romans 12:1, "*present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy...*" Paul said, "*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection*" (1 Cor. 9:27).

The Christian's sacrifice should be both outward and inward – keeping the body and its actions in check, as well as the thoughts (the heart). Paul wrote to young Timothy, "*Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*" (1 Tim. 4:12). All aspects of one's life should be an example of the faithful Christian. God expects *STUDY*. The perfect example of Jesus (1 Peter 2:21) encourages young people to study and grow in knowledge. The Bible says that Jesus "*increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man*" (Luke 2:52). Paul exhorted his "*son in the faith,*" Timothy (1 Tim. 1:2), to "*give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine*" (1 Tim. 4:13).

Paul further addressed a need to study, to be prepared to preach the word (2 Tim. 4:2). Paul warned, some had turned their ears from the truth, God's Word (John 17:17), and departed to their own lusts. Thus the imperative to study, in order to "*be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you*" (1 Peter 3:15). Peter exhorted, "*grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*" (2 Peter 3:18).

God expects *SERVICE*. As young people build faith through study and self-sacrifice, faith will motivate them to godly action. James said that faith is dead without works (James 2:18-20, 26). Service to God includes worshipping Him, on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7), as He commanded (John 4:24); teaching the gospel to the lost (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).

There is truly much work to be done in the Lord's vineyard (1 Cor. 15:58)! Modeling one's life by Biblical example will not be easy; in fact, God has warned that such a dedicated lifestyle will be difficult. Jesus' use of the word "*strait*" (Matt. 7:13-14) denotes a narrow, difficult way. The faithful will inevitably suffer persecution and trials in life (1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Tim. 3:12); but trials can draw one nearer to God. Will you dedicate your life to Him? A crown of righteousness awaits the faithful.