

Session 8: Transforming the Will (Heart or Spirit) and Character

“If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching...” – John 7:17

Aim: Transformation of the will is central. The will (heart/spirit) is the **decision-making center** of our lives. When our will is aligned with God’s will, our character is reshaped into Christlikeness.

Opening Question: What thoughts, or feelings went through your mind as you listened to Steve speak about transforming the will (heart or spirit) and character?

1. Understanding the Will and Character

The will is not isolated. It interacts with thoughts, feelings, habits, body, and social context. Your **character** is the cumulative result of what you repeatedly choose.

Merely saying “I won’t do that again” rarely changes us. Lasting change requires new thinking, renewed feelings, aligned intentions, and repeated obedient action

Reflection Question

- Think of a recent regret. What thoughts and feelings fed that choice?

2. Kingdom Priorities: Single-Minded Devotion

Entanglement often comes from unchecked desire. In Matthew 6:33, Jesus calls us to seek first the Kingdom. In 2 Timothy 2:4, Paul reminds us that a soldier does not get entangled in civilian affairs.

Reflection Questions

- What regularly distracts your devotion to God?
- What desire most competes with your allegiance to Christ?

3. Intention: The Power of a Decided Heart

Transformation requires a firm intention: “I will not rebel against God’s will.”

Jesus said loving Him means keeping His commands. We can choose obedience. The battle is real—but choice is real.

Group Exercise

Complete this statement privately:

“If I were fully surrendered to God in this area, I would _____.”

What stops you? Pray silently and tell God: “I am willing to be made willing.”

4. Spiritual Disciplines/Practices: Training the Will

Spiritual disciplines expose what is hidden in the heart.

Practices such as worship, solitude, scripture, fasting, and service create space for God to reveal:

- Pride disguised as righteousness
- Busyness rooted in control
- Opinions fueled by insecurity
- Judgments masking contempt

These practices do not earn grace—they position us to receive it.

Discussion

- Which discipline feels most uncomfortable to you? Why?
- What might that discomfort reveal about your will?

5. The Joy of Surrender

Surrender is not loss—it is liberation.

Jesus invites me:

“Come to me... my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28–30)

When we lose our life for His sake, we find it. Heaven begins breaking into our present experience—love replaces anxiety, trust replaces comparison, rest replaces striving.

Reflection Questions

- Where has obedience already brought unexpected peace?
- What fear keeps you from fuller surrender?
- What would it look like to trust that God’s will is truly for your good?

Closing Group Prayer Exercise

1. Sit quietly for two minutes.
2. Ask the Spirit: *“Where is my will resisting Yours?”*
3. Confess honestly.
4. Leader prays: “Father, align our will with Yours. Make us single-minded in devotion. Expose duplicity in our hearts. Form in us the character of Christ. We choose Your kingdom over our own. Amen.”

Take-Home Challenge

For the next seven evenings review your day by asking:

1. Where did I choose my will over God’s?
2. Where did I submit to God’s will?
3. What is God forming in my character?

Transformation is not instant—but with clear intention, honest reflection, spiritual practice, and grace, it is inevitable.

Let us become people who can say with joy: “I always do what pleases Him.”