

John 7:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

Analysis

Christ establishes a principle: willingness to obey leads to doctrinal certainty. 'If any man will do his will' describes volitional submission to God's will. 'He shall know' promises that obedience brings understanding—not intellectual pride but humble submission opens spiritual eyes. This reverses the world's method (understand, then obey); God's way is trust and obey, then understand. The phrase 'whether it be of God' indicates authentication of Christ's teaching comes through obedient practice, not mere academic study.

Historical Context

The Jews questioned Jesus' credentials (v. 15): 'How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?' Christ responds that spiritual truth is authenticated by moral obedience, not academic pedigree. True theology is practical, not merely theoretical.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. Are you obeying what you already know of God's will, or waiting for more revelation?
2. How has obedience to God's word brought deeper understanding of spiritual truth in your life?

Interlinear Text

ἐάν	τις	θέλη	τὸ	θέλημα	αὐτοῦ	ποιεῖν	γνώσεται
If	any man	will	G3588	will	his	do	he shall know
G1437	G5100	G2309		G2307	G846	G4160	G1097

περὶ	τῆς	διδαχῆς	πότερον	ἐκ	τοῦ	θεοῦ	ἐστὶν	ἢ
of	G3588	the doctrine	whether	of	G3588	God	it be	or
G4012		G1322	G4220	G1537		G2316	G2076	G2228

ἐγὼ	ἀπ'	ἐμαυτοῦ	λαλῶ
whether I	of	myself	speak
G1473	G575	G1683	G2980

Additional Cross-References

John 8:43 (Parallel theme): Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

John 8:47 (References God): He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

Daniel 12:10 (Parallel theme): Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

Acts 17:11 (Parallel theme): These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Psalms 25:12 (Parallel theme): What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.

Luke 8:15 (Parallel theme): But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Micah 4:2 (References God): And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Isaiah 35:8 (Parallel theme): And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

Psalms 25:14 (Parallel theme): The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Malachi 4:2 (Parallel theme): But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.