

"The Will" - posted by beenblake (), on: 2006/10/29 23:14

In another thread, I heard a bit of a discussion concerning the "will" and one wondered if it even existed. The question arises "what is the will?" and "how should we understand it?"

Obviously, the word "will" is used countless times throughout the new testament and specifically by Christ several times. Although, I have yet to discover this idea in the old testament, and have understood the concept first arose in greek philosophy. Thinking of this, it seems odd that Christ should then speak of such things though it was never before addressed in scripture previously. I do believe this is because God is greater than all things, and to explain Him to a human being bound by language and other limitations requires explaining things in the context of their life and experiences. When Christ came to earth, He spoke the language of the day, and likewise, He comes to each person on the terms of their own understanding and level.

As such, when speaking of the "will" of God, we must understand that it encompasses something greater and more than human language can contain. This means "knowing" and "doing" God's will is not as simple as understanding mentally by way of reason and understanding. I can explain what a will is to you, but having this bit of information will in no way make it applicable to you. The above also means that a "will" is not simply a "will," meaning that if we must be careful of the word "will" itself which can be misleading. A "will" is not a thing but rather a concept to explain something abstract. Even still, it does bear characteristics that can help us understand other abstract things like love.

So what is a will? I have heard it said that a will is a verb and not a noun. I think that it is both and I will explain this further as we go on. I have also heard that a will is a choice, and this is a half-truth that often confounds people. Let us start here, though, with a will being a choice.

It is said that humans have "free will." This is true, but don't think people fully understand what this means in truth. They interpret this statement as humans having "free choice." As I sit here and think of all things I have to do tomorrow that I don't want to do, or even desire to do, I think, "How is it I have free choice?" When I think of a rape victim, I also think, "How is it they have free choice?"

We as humans do not have "free choice". There are so many things in my life that I have yearned to do, and have not been able. To this day, I have yet to be able to jump off the roof of my house and fly away like a bird. My choice is to fly and every time I fall.

I also think of all the rules and regulations, things you might call "controls" that govern my life. If a "law" tells me not to speed and I do not speed because I fear receiving a ticket, then have I honestly made a free choice? My choice is to speed, but fear restrains me.

I also think of animals who don't have "free will" and yet they can choose all sorts of things. How is that?

From the above then, we can see that choices, desires, and wants all play into the "will" but there must be something more. A "will" cannot be simply defined as being a "choice." Likewise, it cannot simply be defined by the word "desire."

Desires come in droves. In me, I many desires and many of them conflict. Desires do not last. They change over time. Does this describe God? Is God's will governed by something so shallow? Additionally, don't animals have desires? Do they have a "will"? There is something deeper and greater to a "will" than mere choices and desires.

A "will" is the core or essence of a being. A will is not merely a choice, it is the thing behind all choices. A will is the purpose for which a thing does all things. You might call it an "intention" but it is much more.

In humans, the will is the choice or reason being all our choices and behaviours. In humans, we have the ability to give our will to whom we will. Our will may be directed toward a person or a thing. In a sense, you could say that our will is that which we choose to be our God.

Humans were created as empty vessels that have needs. Some say it like this, "We have an empty hole that needs to be

filled." We were not created as complete creatures. God looked at Adam and said, "It is not good for man to be alone." Adam was not alone, as God was there. Was not God enough? Why did God say Adam was alone?

Adam's will was not for God. And so, God created Eve so that Adam could join to her in a marital union. However, God knew this union would only be temporary because humanity was created to have a union with God. However, God wanted humanity to make this choice through faith in love.

When Adam was created, God could not force Adam to love God. In the beginning, Adam loved God much like a child loves a parent. But God wanted more. God wanted a bride which is a marital union of love. Adam was alone because He was not united as one with God. This is why Adam fell. He lived in God's glory and in His presence. But inside, Adam was yet empty. However, because God satisfied Adam's every need, how should Adam ever know of this? And so, God created Eve, not as a substitute, but as a companion until all things were complete. Adam and Eve exemplified the relationship we are to have with God. In marriage, two become one. This is the ultimate purpose of God for all humanity, that we become one with God.

Back to the "will." Our will is the reason behind our choices. It is that which we give our life and our selves to. We have the freedom to give ourselves to anything.

Here are where faith, belief, and love come in. They are all tied to the will. We have the freedom to put our faith into whatever we wish. We have the freedom to believe in whatever we wish. We have the freedom to love whatever we wish. At the core, we have free will. We can choose the reason for which we exist and the reason why we do the things we do.

Think of your "will" as the real you. It is that thing inside. It is a part of self in that it dictates what self is. However, it is not your entire self because you are more than your will. You also have a word, which I'll explain in a minute. A will is something you can give. I think it is best expressed in parents. A parent will often give their will to their children. They choose their children for their reason behind their choices. They rise in the morning, attending a drudging day of work, all because they "will" for that child.

Here is another example. I say, "I will go to the store." The word will here does not imply the ability. It does not consider the ability or limitations. Someone might respond, "You can't, because you can't walk." However, it is my will.

But it doesn't stop there. "Why are you going to the store?" There is a reason behind this choice or will. It might be a response to the flesh. "Because I am hungry." This might seem like the will is simply to serve the flesh, however, if we keep digging and digging, we can see that at the core is a heart. The person has a core reason for going to the store. What is that core reason? What motivates them? What have they given themselves to?

Scripturally, this was expressed by Christ in this verse: Matthew 12:35 (NAS) "The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil."

This also brings me to another explanation. The "will" can be either good or evil. A will can be directed toward a person for the good of that person or for the evil of that person. I could direct my will toward you hoping the best for you, or the worst for you.

In this case, the "will" takes on an active pursuit. It coincides with the word "seeking." What are you seeking? When our will is directed toward someone or something, we then seek a result for that person or thing. In the case of good, I seek to give you life and to help you grow and flourish. In the case of evil, I will to see you destroyed.

A will can be good or evil. This brings us closer to a definition of love and hate. For love is a good will, and hate is an evil will. If I love you, I seek to see you have life. If I hate you, I seek to see you die.

As a quick aside, I wish to explain a few things. All living creatures have a will. Animals and angels do not have free will. Before you get all your tail feather in a ruffle, hear me out. It is true angels can fall and sin. However, theirs is not like ours. We have complete free will. In fact, the Lord has blessed us with the ability to believe in lies. We can believe in a false God. The angels cannot. They know God and cannot deny the truth of Him. This is quite obvious when Jesus encountered demons. They knew who He was. There was no question for them. Angels do not have this freedom. They do, however, have more freedom than animals. They can choose good or evil. The will of the angels is directed toward God. They cannot help this or change it. However, they can choose whether or not their will is good or evil. A good will toward God means they love God. An evil will means they hate God.

When an angel falls, it is because they have turned their love to hatred. And because of this, they feel hatred deeply. When the Devil fell, his hatred burned as deep as God's love. He seeks to destroy God. However, God has no weaknesses, so what can He possibly do to attack God? Hurt the ones He loves. The Devil hates God with such a passion and fury unknown to any human being that he will seek after God's destruction even fully knowing he cannot.

If you remember, a will does not consider its limitations. The Devil's will is solely and firmly planted in bringing an end to God. There is nothing that will stop him. This is true hatred.

Humans, however, have free will. And because of this, hatred is not the top problem on our list. We are capable of hatred, but not like the Devil. Rather, selfishness is one of our top problems. We give our will to ourselves. We live to serve and please ourselves. Because of this, we create false gods to please ourselves. Some atheists even believe this is no God. They solely and truly worship themselves. They give their will to themselves.

At this moment, I would like to recap on what a will is. A will is the core reason behind everything we say or do. A will is directional, and is purposeful. It is given toward something. For humans, we have free will. We have the freedom to place our faith into whatever we want. We can choose to trust in anything or believe in anything. We can choose our own God.

What about God and His will? How does this all fit with God? We have been given free will because such is the image of God. But how is this so? To what does God direct His will?

Here lies the significance of the Father and Son relationship.

God is greater than all things. All things are possible for God. He has no limitations. God can do all things and can will all things. However, if this is true, then how can we say God is good? For good implies a definition. Good is limiting.

Obviously, God is not some mystical force. He is a person with a shape and identity. How can that be? If God is greater than all things, how can He be limited to an identity?

God who is greater than all things chose His own identity. God chose His own image. He had complete freedom to be whatever He wanted, whoever He wanted. God chose to be the person He is.

By doing so, He gave birth to a son. This son bears His perfect image. This son is the perfect expression of His person. This son bears His identity entirely. This son is God's Word.

God's Son embodies all that is pleasing to God. God's will is good and this is expressed perfectly in His Son. God's will is toward His Son.

Humanity was created in the image of God. Some people make a big mistake concerning this statement. Some people say that we were created to BE the image of God. This is not so. We were created IN the image of God. The Son is the image of God. We were created to be a reflection of God's Son. There is an immense difference here that is significant in understanding our place and purpose in God's Will. We were not created to be God's Son, we were created to be a reflection of God's Son. And so, being united as one with God's Son is utterly important to fulfilling our purpose. Any derivation from this causes us to fall.

God's Will is good. Only God is good. And so, anything that is aligned with God's Will is good. When we read through Genesis 1, we find that God is pleased with all that He creates. He looks upon such and such and says, "It is good." The works of God's hands are very pleasing because they are in accord with God's Will. God's Will has been met and satisfied. His love and work have been completed.

However, God never says this about humanity. Instead, He says that it is not good for man to be alone. He does not say humanity is evil, however, they are not good. This means that we had not fully reached the purpose or will God had for us.

God's Will is that we would be united as one with Him. God's Will and our will would be united as one, and as such, our works would be the works of God. When our will and God's will are one, all our works are pleasing to Him.

There is so much more to say and write, and probably a million questions to answer. It is late and I can hardly hold my eyes open. I surrender this entire thing to the Lord, and offer to everyone else.

May the Lord's Will be done,

In Christ,
Blake

Re: "The Will" - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/10/30 4:36

Quote:
-----A "will" is the core or essence of a being. A will is not merely a choice, it is the thing behind all choices. A will is the purpose for which a thing does all things. You might call it an "intention" but it is much more.

In humans, the will is the choice or reason being all our choices and behaviors. In humans, we have the ability to give our will to whom we will. Our will may be directed toward a person or a thing. In a sense, you could say that our will is that which we choose to be our God.

A will can be good or evil.

Who says so? This is my problem with theologies relating to the will. People of very different views seem to start off with definitions which have no biblical basis.

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/30 10:12

Wow, there is a lot of information in that post! I have not read it all yet but I did notice the following:

Quote:
-----I also think of all the rules and regulations, things you might call "controls" that govern my life. If a "law" tells me not to speed and I do not speed because I fear receiving a ticket, then have I honestly made a free choice? My choice is to speed, but fear restrains me.

Your desire to obey the law and not receive a speeding ticket is greater than your desire to break the law and possibly receive a speeding ticket. Therefore you made a freewill choice based on your desires and understanding. (Please know that I don't speak flippantly about the following, but use this to show a point.) This is similar to a person robbed at gunpoint. Two options are presented: Death or losing their wallet. Even though the person may lose both their life and their wallet, their freewill comes into play when they choose one option over the other.

This is a great topic and I hope to learn much through this.

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/30 12:13

Phil 2:13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Quote:
-----A "will" is the core or essence of a being. A will is not merely a choice, it is the thing behind all choices. A will is the purpose for which a thing does all things. You might call it an "intention" but it is much more.
In humans, the will is the choice or reason being all our choices and behaviors. In humans, we have the ability to give our will to whom we will. Our will may be directed toward a person or a thing. In a sense, you could say that our will is that which we choose to be our God. (emphasis added.)

Here is where Philologos disagrees with John MacArthur. John says that our will is free to pick its poison. Philologos disagrees and feels that man's will is neutral. It is not totally depraved but it does need God's work for it to choose Christ. (Philologos, please correct me if I am wrong.)
My position--as I see it in Scripture--is that a man's Will is free from external forces but is in bondage to the desires (hear

t) and understanding (mind) of the man.

Let me clarify what I mean because this has been misunderstood.

My Will is in bondage to my desires. This means that I will choose to do what I desire to do. This does not always mean that I will do the most desirable thing, but it does mean that I will do what is desirable. beenblake gave an example of parents drudgingly going to work in order to provide for their children. Yes, this is not the most desirable thing for the parents to do, but it is desirable for them to do out of the love and care for their children. This is not done against their Will. This can also manifest itself in things that I do not like to do. (FYI, There is a key difference between what I like and what I desire.) When I was younger, my Dad would tell me to clean my room or I would be punished. I did not like to clean my room, I did not like to be punished, however my desire to clean my room outweighed my desire to be punished. My Dad did not force my hands to clean my room...My Will was never violated.

My Will is in bondage to my understanding. Most importantly, my Will is in bondage to my understanding of who God is and what he does. If I do not know God, then it is impossible for me to please him. If I have never seen God then how can I honor him and glorify him. This is best summarized in Romans 8:6-8, "The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God." An unbeliever's Will is in bondage because--as scripture pointed out--it does not and cannot submit to God's law and it cannot please God. This is the bondage the Will is under. This is the basis for John MacArthur's free to pick your poison comment.

My Will is free from external forces. This is the one aspect that has been the most difficult to explain. The normal reaction to this is either 'You cannot will yourself to fly' or 'What about a victim of assault?' or 'God can override your Will by killing you. But, we must understand what the Will is exactly. beenblake said,

Quote:

-----A will is the core reason behind everything we say or do

. To this I agree, notice the phrase, 'we say or do'. Man's Will corresponds to what man does or does not do based on the desires and understanding a person has. This is why I stated earlier that the police cannot force me to obey the speed limit against my Will. Yes, they can tell me of punishment and punish me when I disobey, but they are not able to force me to obey the law against my Will. They can place me in prison so that I never have an opportunity to speed again, but they have not affected my Will.

I need to spend more time on this issue of 'An outside force can overrule my actions but cannot overrule my Will'. I do not have the time now. But I will revisit this later.

Re: - posted by beenblake (), on: 2006/10/30 13:09

Quote:

-----Who says so? This is my problem with theologies relating to the will. People of very different views seem to start off with definitions which have no biblical basis.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

Blake

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/30 13:53

The Will of man is free in regards to external forces, including God. I will limit my discussion to Salvation. We all agree that God does not force anyone to believe in him. This is a choice that all Christians make. It is absurd to think that someone would be forced to become a Christian against their Will. I can't imagine someone coming down the aisle at a revival, meeting the preacher and saying, 'Pastor, I did not want to come but the Holy Spirit made me. I do not desire salvation, but I am coming to receive it because I am being forced to do so.' Have you ever seen that kind of testimony? Maybe someone who made a false profession, but never a true Christian.

Let me reiterate this truth: All who come to Christ in true faith, come because they desire to do so. Why do they desire to do so? Because God has drawn them to Christ. How did God draw them to Christ? My revealing himself to them so that

hat they can spiritually see their present condition and their desperate need for Christ. When God does this he changes their desires and understanding. None of this is done against someone's Will because the person never does anything they do not desire.

This is why Ephesians 2 speaks of 'Being made alive' and that it is grace that you have been saved through faith.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/10/30 14:01

Quote:
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Yes, you are wrong in your perception of my position. This is going to be a bit difficult to keep track of now that it has split into two separate threads. Please read my comments on (https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id13000&forum36&129) Open Questions for John MacArthur where I have been trying to show that I do not work on the model of 'the will' at all.

I see that you agree with beenblake's

Quote:
-----A will is the core reason behind everything we say or do

but this is a personal opinion and has no biblical backing.

Re:, on: 2006/10/30 14:31

Where there is a will... there are distant cousins you never heard of before showing up.

Krispy

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/10/30 14:33

Krispy...
:-P nice one!

Re: - posted by beenblake (), on: 2006/10/30 16:05

Quote:
----- but this is a personal opinion and has no biblical backing.

I can assure you, the source of is from Christ Himself. Pray and ask Him, and you will see.

Blake

Re: - posted by JaySaved, on: 2006/10/30 16:17

Quote:
-----Where there is a will... there are distant cousins you never heard of before showing up.

I doubt I will ever have to worry about that problem!!! :-?

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2006/10/30 22:27

Quote:

beenblake wrote:

Quote:

----- but this is a personal opinion and has no biblical backing.

I can assure you, the source of is from Christ Himself. Pray and ask Him, and you will see.

No offence beenblake, but is this a new age website or a Christian one? "Pray and ask Him, and you will see" is not a biblical answer, because to be biblical means that it is contained in the Bible. That statement reminds me more of Darth Vader's, "Search your feelings and know that it is true", when Luke didn't believe that Vader was his father. If it is contained in the Bible, then where is it (note, that the books of the Bible has been broken up into chapters and verses for ease of sharing its contents with others)?

Of course I'm being a little silly here, exaggerating Ron's objection somewhat, and perhaps even crossing some social taboos with my sarcasm, but I'm sure if someone were to present a **biblical reference** in its context, that Ron would be open to change his view, considering he is someone who actually reads his Bible more than men's opinions of it. For far in this thread, the only verses that I have seen quoted, refer to God's will and not ours (and yes that includes Phil 2:13).

Ron is not saying that we cannot **choose**, but simply saying that, in his observation, the Bible never refers to the **will** as a human faculty. So here's your chance guys, **give him something else to observe**, if its there or else respect the fact that someone is coming to you who is a seasoned man of God and is quoting something, other than from the book of John.....MacArthur (no I'm not "anti-MacArthur" and have been blessed by much of his sermons), and be open to consider that your theological stance may be merely superstition based on the teachings of some dead theologian (nothing wrong with dead theologians mind you, we'll all be one some day;-)) and not contained in the Word of God.

I have to admit, when I first heard Ron state that there is no will, in his Having Begun in the Spirit series (I think it was either the sermon on (<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid2164>) Justification or on (<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid2165>) Regeneration), I was thrown into a tail spin. However, since then, I have been looking hard for a reference to "the will" as a human faculty, but I haven't found one. Anyway, the issue at hand is a matter of pedantry, and the decline of the English language, where the redundancy is to use the wrong word to express ideas (take **repentance** and **condemnation** for example).

As with anything, give the world an inch, and it will take a mile. And if you allow that inch into the church, aches of tares are sown as a result. Consider this, if the will is not a human faculty but a Divine, then taking the will as a human faculty could be construed as ascending to the throne of God. Isn't that what Lucifer attempted to do? Going a bit far, am I? Well I then ask yourself this, what is so bad about defining repentance as merely "feeling sorry, out of regret, of one's actions"? Is this what is worked by godly sorrow? And is it an adequate prerequisite to faith in Christ for salvation? Don't forget that it is the "little foxes that spoileth the vine".

Re: - posted by beenblake (), on: 2006/11/7 11:38

Quote:

-----No offence beenblake, but is this a new age website or a Christian one? "Pray and ask Him, and you will see" is not a biblical answer, because to be biblical means that it is contained in the Bible.

See, this is where I differ. I believe Jesus Christ is the Word of God and to know God's Will means being united as one with Christ. So many people in the Church believe the bible is the Word of God, and they say "If you want to know God's Will read the bible." This doctrine is not only false, it has lead the Church far away from her husband. She relies heavily on the bible as her source of authority, rather than her husband who is Christ.

When a person makes the bible the ultimate authority of their life, authority becomes objective. It becomes something external that they in turn they can use to control other people. "You must obey, it says so in the bible." This is the work of the Pharisees. When Jesus sits on the throne, and is the authority, then authority becomes subjective. We surrender to Christ. He is our PERSONAL Lord and Savior. Not merely an outward law controlling us. He lives inside of us.

The bible is not the Word of God and is not the authority on all things. Christ is the authority of all things, and He delegates authority through the vessels He has chosen to lead.

Quote:

-----but I'm sure if someone were to present a biblical reference in its context, that Ron would be open to change his view

I would hope not! I would hope Christ would change His view. If indeed what I said has come from Christ, and Ron is indeed surrendered unto Him, then I need not quote the bible. Christ will speak to Him.

However, Ron has clearly stated that He needs a biblical basis. This shows that he does not intend to seek an answer from the Spirit Himself, but instead, from the work of the Spirit through men who wrote scripture.

I disagree with this way of study. Such relies heavily on an objective interpretation of the bible. A person searches for truth objectively by trying to understand and observe the text in context of his or her own mental understanding.

Truth, itself, is objective (in relation to human beings). This means that no matter what you think or I think, truth will be the same. However, the search for truth is subjective. This means that in order to know truth, we must subject ourselves unto Christ. Many people want to find truth objectively. They do not want to submit unto Christ, rather they want to know truth by words and reason, so that they can use the truth for their own advantage. Such is the way of the world. A scientist seeks after truth in the universe, so that they can manipulate that truth to make an invention of their own creation.

The difference is between seeking after Christ and seeking after His rewards. If a person is seeking after Christ, they will first pray, then read the bible. However, too many people read the bible first, seeking truth objectively. Such is not the way of God.

The Lord wants us first to submit unto Jesus, to take up our cross and sacrifice everything including our own reasoning. And then, once we have done this, the Spirit of truth enters into us. We then know truth because it lives in us, not because we discovered it by an objective view of the bible. We know it, not by words or mental understanding, but intimately by spirit.

Why do you think Christ said, "You search the scriptures because you think in them you will find eternal life, but it is these that testify of me."

We submit unto Christ, not the scriptures. We obey Christ, not the scriptures. The Pharisees thought they only obeyed the scripture, and as such, they made many accusations against Christ, such as working on the Sabbath. Christ, however, made it clear that He was greater than the scripture by saying, "I am master of the Sabbath."

In addition to this, people want to make the bible into an objective authority so that they can rely on it as their source of authority. In other words, they have authority because they have a bible. Such is destructive for the Church. Christ said that if we have even a small faith we could move mountains. He did not say if we have a bible we could move mountains. This means that Christ lives in us. The authority and Word of God lives in us. It does not exist externally in a bible. And so, by giving the bible all the authority that Christ is supposed to have, we have missed the purpose of our own calling. We have replaced Christ with the bible. We are not doing God's will. We are not following Christ. We are obeying a book. We are living in sin.

Quote:

-----However, since then, I have been looking hard for a reference to "the will" as a human faculty, but I haven't found one.

General Topics :: "The Will"

This is a perfect example. Did not Christ pray, "Not my will but yours?" This would mean that Christ has a will. Was not Christ a human? If Jesus, who was completely and entirely a man had a will, then we do as well.

Quote:
-----As with anything, give the world an inch, and it will take a mile. And if you allow that inch into the church, aches of tares are sown as a result.

It is not our job to maintain control and authority over the Church. We submit unto Christ who is our Head and authority. We follow Him. We surrender to Him. We take up our cross and give all to Him. He is the King. He is the Leader. He is the authority. When we surrender unto Christ, he rules over us, protecting us, feeding us, caring for us, loving us. However, the minute we take control into our own hands, that is when Satan has victory. God wants complete and total dominion over His people. He wants to rule in every area.

The world enters the Church when we do not submit. When we try to obey God objectively, by following laws and reasoning, then we have allowed Satan a stronghold over us.

We must give all to Christ.

Quote:
-----Consider this, if the will is not a human faculty but a Divine, then taking the will as a human faculty could be construed as ascending to the throne of God.

When we submit our will unto God, and we become one with Him, then our will becomes God's Will. This means all our works and actions will be done in God's Will. We will naturally do God's Will without even knowing it.

However, the problem from the beginning is that we sought our own will. We sought after our flesh, after our self, after our own. We did not submit our will unto God, we sought to have our own way.

From the beginning, God's ultimate goal was that we would be united as one with Him. By being united as one with God, we will share in all that He is. We will be glorified, and all our works will be glorious. However, the minute we disconnect or break that unity, we have not only fallen from God, we have become His enemy.

Unity with God comes by complete submission.

Pray and ask Christ. Any person who has submitted unto Jesus and asks, they will receive. However, Christ cannot lead a person unless they submit unto Him directly. Obeying the commands of an external bible and law is not submitting unto Christ. Praying and seeking the Lord is the first step in submission.

In Christ,
Blake