**God’s Will (Matthew 18:10-14)**

 God’s will is always good; He is always love; and He is always after mankind’s salvation. Greetings to you all on this penultimate Sunday of Great Lent, in which we are getting ready to remember Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Having noted that we are approaching the Christian Church’s season of celebration and joy in the Resurrection and Eastertide, I am going to change our course of Scriptural study for a time and we are going to focus on the person of Jesus, both on His teachings and His miracles.

 In the Gospel of Matthew, we find that Jesus was teaching the crowd around Him as He headed to Jerusalem. Today we are looking at one of those teachings, the parable of the Lost Sheep, which both describes for us God’s character and also answers the question of what God’s will is for humankind. Therefore, today we are going to speak about God’s will which paints such an encouraging picture for us that we may not even feel worthy of such goodness. Once again, I want to stress that God’s will is always good; He is always love; and He is always after mankind’s salvation. Let us speak, then, about this Divine will…

 God wants to reveal to us, even the weakest person, the same love and salvation. When we think about the verses in question, we see Jesus’ and especially God’s heart on display. God truly loves us. What is it that brings us to this truth? It is seeing His will as The Father… God as a True Shepherd is revealed through Jesus. Jesus met with the weakest, the most ignorant, and sometimes the most undesirable people. Listen to his words restated in today’s language: “Don’t you dare ignore or consider unimportant these little ones, be they little in age or in social stature.” Why did he say this? I paraphrase again: “Because these are so valuable that they have angelic representatives in heaven who work for their cause and safety.” In other words, Jesus was saying to His disciples, “Do not think that you need to reach a certain status or age in order for God to show love to you or to pay attention to you.” After this, Jesus gives the picture of the lost sheep. What an effort God makes to bring that one lost sheep back to its rightful flock. For God, there is no limit that He does not break in order for a human being to turn to Him – whether the person has strayed from the faith, or whether he was born into an unbelieving family or one that followed another religion.

 For example, I invite you to read one day about a certain permanently-handicapped Persian woman whose situation had become so unbearable that, despite her belonging to a wealthy family and having a highly esteemed family in religious circles, wanted to die. However, there was once where she heard a response to cries to the heavens; the voice said to read the New Testament of the Christians, which was something prohibited in their religion. This woman secretly bought a New Testament and began to read it and fell in love with Jesus. Eventually there was a day when she gave her heart to the Lord, and was baptized secretly. God did not only save her, however, from her spiritually hopeless, depressed situation. Jesus did not just leave her to live with the knowledge of the New Testament (as mere book). Rather, this woman had a supernatural experience: Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, entered her room and called her to stand up from her bed. The woman was confused but believed out of her joy and stood up and walked for the first time in her life. But Jesus didn’t just heal her – He also taught her the Lord’s Prayer, His prayer to her, and she became a preacher, despite the fact that she was thrown out of her affluent family and the fact that her brothers persecuted her to the point of coming at her to kill her with guns. But this example is not only about bringing the unbeliever to repentance:

 God has done the same thing in your life! He has taken you from your lost state and healed you spiritually so that you become His companion and collector of the lost with Him. How great is God’s love for us that He has brought us back from our lostness and has placed us in a safe place, under His watchful eye, under His supervision and teaching… How Good the Lord is that He has not left us to our own devices, but rather has bought our entire lives by His Blood!

 Therefore, let us come together and glorify and rejoice in the Lord’s salvation, the Lord’s love which He has revealed to each of us. Come and let us rejoice together that God has not stopped seeking the lost and finding them. Be that through dreams, spiritual experiences, preachers, or the testimonies of believers… God wants to reveal to us, even the weakest person, the same amazing love and salvation. God’s will is always good; He is always love; and He is always after mankind’s salvation.

 Therefore, let us rejoice that God’s work always goes forth… May we also join up with this Loving God who loves human beings so much that He paid the ultimate price by sacrificing Jesus and spreading news of Him even today, so that no one will perish. Amen.