

The Seven "I Will's" of Christ

by Dwight L. Moody

When a man says, "I will," it may not mean much. We very often say "I will" when we don't mean to fulfill what we say. But when we come to the "I will" of Christ, He means to fulfill it. Everything He promised to do, He is able and willing to accomplish. I cannot find any Scripture where He says "I will" do this or "I will" do that but that it will be done.

1. The "I Will" of Salvation

The first "I will" is to be found in John's Gospel, chapter 6 and verse 37: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

I imagine someone will say, "If I were what I ought to be, I would come. But when my mind goes over my past record, it is too dark. I am not fit to come."

You must bear in mind that Jesus Christ came to save not good people, not the upright and just, but sinners like you and me who have gone astray and sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Listen to this "I will"—it goes right into the heart: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Surely that is broad enough—is it not? I don't care who the man or woman is nor what his or her trials, troubles, sorrows or sins are, if that one will only come straight to the Master, He will not cast him out.

Come then, poor sinner; come just as you are and take Him at His word.

So anxious is He to save sinners that He will take everyone who comes. He will take those who are so full of sin that they are despised by all who know them; who have been rejected by their fathers and mothers; who have been cast off by the wives of their bosoms. He will take those who have sunk so low that upon them no eye of pity is cast. His occupation is to hear and save. That is why He left Heaven and came into the world; that is why He left the throne of God—to save sinners. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He did not come to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

A wild and prodigal young man running a career headlong to ruin came into one of our meetings in Chicago. The Spirit of God got hold of him. Whilst I was conversing with him and endeavoring to bring him to Christ, I quoted Luke 19:10. Then I asked him, "Do you believe Christ said that?"

"I suppose He did."

"Suppose He did? Do you believe it?"

"I hope so."

"Hope so? Do you believe it? You do your work, and the Lord will do His. Just come as you are. Throw yourself upon His bosom, and He will not cast you out."

This man thought it was too simple and easy.

At last, light seemed to break in upon him, and he seemed to find comfort from it. It was past midnight before he got down on his knees, but down he went and was converted.

I said, "Now, don't think you are going to get out of the Devil's territory without trouble. The Devil will come to you tomorrow morning and say it was all feeling, that you only imagined you were accepted by God. When he does, don't fight him with your own opinions, but fight him with John 6:37: 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' Let that be the 'sword of the Spirit.'"

I don't believe any man ever starts to go to Christ but that the Devil strives somehow to trip him up. Even after he has come to Christ, the Devil tries to assail him with doubts and make him believe there is something wrong in it.

The struggle came sooner than I thought in this man's case. While he was on his way home, the Devil assailed him. He used John 6:37, but the Devil put this thought into his mind: "How do you know Christ ever said that after all? Perhaps the translators made a mistake."

Into darkness he went again till about two in the morning. At last he came to this conclusion: "I will believe it anyway; and when I get to Heaven, if it isn't true, I will just tell the Lord I did not make the mistake—the translators did."

When kings and princes of this world issue invitations, they call round them the rich, the mighty, the powerful, the honorable and the wise; but the Lord, when He was on earth, called round Him the vilest of the vile.

That was the principal fault the people found with Him. Those self-righteous Pharisees were not going to associate with harlots and publicans. The principal charge against Christ was: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

Who would have such a man around him as John Bunyan in his time? He, a Bedford tinker, couldn't get inside one of the princely castles.

I was very much amused when I was over in England. They had erected a monument to John Bunyan, and it was unveiled by lords and dukes and great men. While he was on earth, they would not have allowed him inside the walls of their castles, yet he was made one of the mightiest instruments in the spread of the Gospel.

No book that has ever been written comes so near the Bible as John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress; and yet the author was a poor Bedford tinker.

Thus it is with God. He picks up some poor lost tramp and makes him an instrument to turn hundreds and thousands to Christ.

George Whitefield, standing in his tabernacle in London and with a multitude gathered about him, cried out, "The Lord Jesus will save the Devil's castaways!"

Two poor, abandoned wretches standing outside in the street heard his silvery voice ring out on the air. Looking into each other's faces, they said, "That must mean you and me." They wept and rejoiced. They drew near and looked in at the door at the face of the earnest messenger, the tears streaming from his eyes as he pled with the people to give their hearts to God. One of them wrote him a little note and sent it to him.

Later that day, as he sat at the table of Lady Huntington, his special friend, someone present said, "Mr. Whitefield, did you not go a little too far today when you said that the Lord would save the Devil's castaways?"

Taking the note from his pocket, he gave it to Lady Huntington. "Will you read that note aloud?"

She read: "Mr. Whitefield: Two poor lost women stood outside your tabernacle today and heard you say that the Lord would save the Devil's castaways. We seized upon that as our last hope. Now we write to tell you that we rejoice now in believing in Him, and from this good hour we shall endeavor to serve Him who has done so much for us."

2. The "I Will" of Cleansing

The next "I will" is found in Luke, chapter 5. We read of a leper who came to Christ and said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The Lord touched him, saying, "I will: be thou clean," and immediately the leprosy left him.

Any man or woman full of the leprosy of sin who reads this, if you will but go to the Master and tell all your case to Him, He will speak to you as He did to that poor leper: "I will: be thou clean," and the leprosy of your sins will flee from you.

The Lord and the Lord alone can forgive sins. If you say to Him, "Lord, I am full of sin; Thou canst make me clean"; "Lord, I have a terrible temper; Thou canst make me clean"; "Lord, I have a deceitful heart. Cleanse me, O Lord; give me a new heart. O Lord, give me the power to overcome the flesh and the snares of the Devil!"; "Lord, I am full of unclean habits"—if you come to Him with a sincere spirit, you will hear the voice, "I will: be thou clean." It will be done.

The God who created the world out of nothing, who by a breath put life into the world—do you think if He says, "Thou shalt be clean," you will not be clean?

Now, you can make a wonderful exchange today. You can have spiritual health in the place of sinsickness; you can get rid of everything that is vile and hateful in the sight of God. The Son of God comes down and says, "I will take away your leprosy and give you health in its stead. I will take away that terrible sin disease that is ruining your body and soul and give you My righteousness in its stead. I will clothe you with the garments of salvation."

Is it not wonderful! That's what He means when He says, "I will." Oh, lay hold on this "I will"!

3. The "I Will" of Confession

Now turn to Matthew 10:32: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven": the "I will" of confession.

That's the next thing that takes place after a man is saved. When we have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, we get our mouths opened. We have to confess Christ here in this dark world and tell His love to others. We are not to be ashamed of the Son of God.

A man thinks it a great honor when he has achieved a victory that causes his name to be mentioned in the English Parliament or in the presence of the queen and her court.

How excited we used to be during the war when some general did something extraordinary and someone got up in Congress to confess his exploits! How the papers used to talk about it!

In China the highest ambition of the successful soldier is to have his name written in the palace or temple of Confucius.

But just think of having your name mentioned in the kingdom of Heaven by the Prince of Glory, by the Son of God, because you confessed Him here on earth! Confess Him here; He will confess you yonder.

If you wish to be brought into the clear light of liberty, you must take your stand on Christ's side. Many Christians go groping about in darkness and never get into the clear light of the kingdom because they are ashamed to confess the Son of God. We are living in a day when men want a religion without the cross, the crown but not the cross. But if we are to be disciples of Jesus Christ, we have to take up our crosses daily—not once a year or on the Lord's Day, but daily. And if we take up our crosses and follow Him, we shall be blessed in the very act.

A newly converted man in New York came to pray with me. His burden was that he was afraid to confess Christ. It seemed that down at the bottom of his trunk he had a Bible. He wanted to get it out and read it to the companion with whom he lived, but he was ashamed to do it.

After he had carried the burden for a whole week and after a terrible struggle, he made up his mind, "I will take my Bible out tonight and read it." He did. Soon he heard the footsteps of his roommate coming upstairs. His first impulse was to put the Bible away, but then he decided he would face his companion with it in hand.

His roommate came in. Seeing John at his Bible, he said, "Are you interested in these things?"

"Yes," John replied.

"How long has this been?" asked his companion.

"Exactly a week," he answered. "For a whole week I have tried to get out my Bible to read to you, but I have not done so till now."

"Well," said his friend, "it is a strange thing. I was converted on the same night, and I too was ashamed to take my Bible out."

You are ashamed to show your Bible and say, "I have lived a godless life for all these years, but I will commence now to live a life of righteousness." You are ashamed to open your Bible and read that blessed psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." You are ashamed to be seen on your knees.

No man can be a disciple of Jesus Christ without bearing his cross. A great many want to know how it is Christ has so few disciples whilst Muhammad has so many. The reason is, Muhammad gives no cross to bear.

There are so few who will come out to take their stand.

I was struck during the Civil War with the fact that there were so many who could go to the cannon's mouth without trembling but who had no courage to take up their Bibles to read them at night. They were ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 10:32,33.

4. The "I Will" of Service

The next is the "I will" of service.

There are a good many Christians who have been quickened and aroused to say, "I want to do some service for Christ."

Well, Christ says, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

There is no Christian who cannot help to bring someone to the Saviour. Christ says, "And I, if I be lifted up..., will draw all men unto me"; and our business is just to lift up Christ.

Our Lord said, "Follow me, Peter, and I will make you a fisher of men"; and Peter simply obeyed. On that day of Pentecost we see the result. I doubt if Peter ever caught so many fish in one day as he did men on that day. It would have broken every net they had on board if they had had to drag up three thousand fish.

I read some time ago of a man who took passage in a stagecoach. There were first-, second- and third-class passengers. But when he looked into the coach, he saw all the passengers sitting together without distinction. He could not understand it.

By and by they came to a hill. The coach stopped. The driver called out, "First-class passengers keep their seats. Second-class passengers get out and walk. Third-class passengers get behind and push."

In the church we have no room for first-class passengers—people who think salvation means an easy ride all the way to Heaven. We have no room for second-class passengers—people who are carried most of the time, and who, when they should be showing their faith by their works, go trudging on giving never a thought to helping their fellows along. All church members ought to be third-class passengers—ready to dismount and push with a will.

John Wesley's definition of a church: "All at it and always at it." Every Christian is to be a worker. He need not be a preacher or an evangelist to be useful. He may be useful in business. See what power an employer has with his employees! Often a man can be as useful in a business sphere as in another.

There is one reason—and a great reason—why so many do not succeed at Christian service. I have been asked by a great many good men, "Why is it we don't have any results? We work hard, pray hard, preach hard, yet the success does not come."

I tell them, "Because you spend all your time mending nets. No wonder you never catch anything."

The great matter is to give invitations and compel sinners to come and thus pull the net in and see if you have caught anything. If you are always mending and setting the net, you won't catch many fish. Who ever heard of a man's going out to fish and setting his net, then letting it stop there and never pulling it in? Everybody would laugh at such a man's folly.

A minister in England came to me one day and said, "I wish you would tell me why we ministers don't succeed better than we do."

I brought before him this idea of pulling in the net: "You have to pull in your nets. There are many ministers in Manchester who can preach much better than I can, but I pull in the net."

Many people have objections to giving invitations, but I urge upon them the importance of offering people the chance to make a decision.

The minister said, "I never did pull in my net; but I will try next Sunday."

He did so, and eight anxious inquirers went into his study.

The next Sunday he came down to tell me he had never had such a Sunday in his life. He had met with marvelous blessing.

The next time he drew the net, there were forty. And when he came to see me later, he said to me joyfully, "Moody, I have had eight hundred conversions this last year! It is a great mistake I did not begin earlier to pull in the net."

My friends, if you want to catch men, just present the Gospel and pull in the net. If you only catch one, it will be something. It may be a little child, but I have known a little child to convert a whole family. You don't know what is in that little dull-headed boy in the inquiry room. He may become a Martin Luther, a reformer who shall make the world tremble.

God uses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. God's promise is as good as a bank note. And here is one of Christ's promissory notes: 'If you follow Me, I will make you fishers of men.'

Will you not lay hold of the promise and trust it and follow Him now?

If a man preaches the Gospel faithfully, he ought to expect results then and there. It is the privilege of God's children to reap the fruit of their labor three hundred sixty-five days in the year.

"Well, but is there not a sowing time as well as a harvest?" you ask.

Yes, there is; but then, you can sow with one hand and reap with the other.

What would you think of a farmer who went on sowing all the year round and never thought of reaping? I repeat: we want to sow with one hand and reap with the other. And if we look for the fruit of our labors, we shall see it.

"I, if I be lifted up..., will draw all men unto me." We must lift Christ up, then seek men out and bring them to Him.

You must use the right kind of bait. A good many don't do this, then they wonder why they are not successful. You see them getting up all kinds of entertainment with which to try to catch men. They go the wrong way to work.

This perishing world wants Christ and Him crucified. There's a void in every man's bosom that wants filling up, and if we only approach him with the right kind of bait, we shall catch him.

This poor world needs a Saviour; and if we are going to be successful in catching men, we must preach Christ crucified—not His life only, but His death. And if we are only faithful in doing this, we shall succeed. Why? Because there is His promise: 'If you follow Me, I will make you fishers of men.'

That promise holds just as good to you and me as it did to His disciples and is as true now as it was in their time.

5. The "I Will" of Comfort

The next "I will" is in John 14:18: "I will not leave you comfortless."

It is a sweet thought that Christ has not left us alone in this dark wilderness here below. Although He has gone up on high and taken His seat by the Father's throne, He has not left us comfortless.

In other words, He said, "I will not leave you orphans." He did not leave Joseph. When they cast him into prison, "God was with him." When Daniel was cast into the den of lions, they had to put the Almighty in with him. They were so bound together that they could not be separated.

If we have Christ with us, we can do all things. Let us not be thinking how weak we are. Let us lift up our eyes to Him and think of Him as our Elder Brother who has all power given to Him in Heaven and on earth. He says, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Some of our children and friends leave us, and it is a very sad hour. But the believer and Christ shall never be separated! He is with us here, and we shall be with Him in person by and by. We shall see Him in His beauty. But not only is He with us, but He has sent us the Holy Ghost. Let us honor the Holy Spirit by acknowledging that He is here in our midst. He has power to give sight

to the blind, liberty to the captive, and to open the ears of the deaf that they may hear the glorious words of the Gospel.

6. The "I Will" of Resurrection

Then there is another "I will" in John 6:40; it occurs four times in the chapter: "I will raise him up at the last day."

I rejoice to think that I have a Saviour who has power over death. My blessed Master holds the keys of death and Hell. I pity the poor unbeliever and infidel who has no hope in the resurrection. But every child of God can open that chapter and read the promise, and his heart leaps within him for joy.

The tradesman generally puts the best specimens of his wares in the window to show us the quality of his stock. When Christ was down here, He gave us a specimen of what He could do. He raised three from the dead, that we might know what power He had—(1) Jairus' daughter, (2) the widow's son, and (3) Lazarus of Bethany. He raised all three so every doubt might be swept away from our hearts.

How dark and gloomy this world would be if we had no hope in the resurrection. But when we Christians lay our little children down in the grave, it is not without hope. We have seen them in the terrible struggle with death; but there has been one star to illumine the darkness and gloom—the thought that though the happy circle has been broken on earth, it shall be completed again in yon world of heavenly light.

You who have lost a loved one, rejoice as you read this "I will"! Those who have died in Christ shall come forth again by and by. The darkness shall flee away, and the morning light of the resurrection shall dawn upon us. It is only a little while, and the voice of Him who has said it shall come, shall be heard in the grave—"I will raise him up at the last day."

Precious promise! Precious "I will"!

I had an unsaved brother for whom I was very anxious. For fourteen long years I tried to lead that brother to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

He was the Benjamin of the family, born a few weeks after my father's death. When he was seventeen, he had a long run of typhoid fever, and he never fully recovered from it.

I did everything I could to bring him to Christ. He was a young man of considerable promise. I know no one who could sit down and discuss against the divinity of Christ like that man. I was not any match for him in argument. But day by day I preached to him as best I knew how.

I think I never loved a man on earth as I loved that brother. (I never knew what it was to love a father, because he died before I remember.) Because he was sickly, that drew my love and sympathy toward him; and oh, how my heart yearned for his salvation!

After preaching one night, I said, "Now if any of this audience would like to take up his cross and follow Christ, I would like him to rise." I cannot tell you what a thrill of joy filled my soul when

that brother of mine arose! It seemed the happiest night of my life. I was full of joy and thankfulness.

Afterwards my brother and I worked together for a time. We talked of the Gospel. And in the summer we sat upon the hillside and talked of the old home.

After a year had passed, I went to Chicago. He was to go with me. He bid me good-bye, and I said, "Samuel, I will see you in a few days, so I will only say good-bye till then."

A few days after, a telegram came, saying, "Samuel is dead." I traveled a thousand miles to bury him. I got more comfort out of that promise, "I will raise him up at the last day," than anything else in the Bible. How it cheered me! How it lighted up my path! As I went into the room and looked upon the lovely face of that brother, how that passage ran through my soul: "Thy brother shall rise again." Thank God for that promise! It is worth more than the world to me.

When we laid him in the grave, it seemed as if I could hear the voice of Jesus Christ saying, "Thy brother shall rise again."

Blessed promise of the resurrection! Blessed "I will"! "I will raise him up at the last day."

7. The "I Will" of Glory

Now the next "I will" is in John 17:24: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."

This was in His last prayer in the guest chamber on the last night before He was crucified on Calvary. Many a believer's countenance begins to light up at the thought that he shall see the King in His beauty by and by.

Yes, there is a glorious day before us in the future. Some think that on the first day we are converted we have everything. To be sure, we get salvation for the past and peace for the present; but there is the glory for the future in store. That's what kept Paul rejoicing. He said, 'These light afflictions, these few stripes, these few brickbats and stones that they throw at me—why, the glory that is beyond excels them so much that I count them as nothing, nothing at all, so that I may win Christ.'

And so, when things go against us, cheer up! Remember that the night will soon pass away, and the morning will dawn upon us. Death never comes there. It is banished from that heavenly land. Sickness, pain and sorrow come not there to mar that grand and glorious Home where we shall be by and by with the Master. God's family will be all together there.

Glorious future, my friends! Yes, glorious day! And it may be a great deal nearer than many of us think. During these few days we are here, let us stand steadfast and firm, and by and by we shall be in the unbroken circle in yon world of light and have the King in our midst.

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