Women of Warfare

Book of Ephesians - Class 3

“The Will of God”

**Ephesians 1:1b …the will of God.**

***English***: “Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus by the **will of God**....”

***Greek:*** ***“***[***Paulos***](https://biblehub.com/greek/paulos_3972.htm) ***Apostolos Christou*** [***Iēsou***](https://biblehub.com/greek/ie_sou_2424.htm) ***dia thelēmatos*** ***Theou,***…”

We are going to be talking about the **“*dia thelēmatos”*** tonight but more specifically the word “***will***” or in Greek it is pronounced: ***“Theléma.”***

**You can see that this is a shortened version of “*dia thelēmatos”*** and where we get the name, Thelma.

I have studied the ***dia thelēmatos*** off and on for years and because I believe the ***“dia thelēmatos”*** has everything to do with His Word, our Bible…we need to briefly take a look at two important Greek words for the word ***“Word.”*** Both of these Greek words play an important part in our understanding of the Word as it pertains to the ***Thelema of Theos*** in our lives.

***THE WORD:***

***LOGOS: G3056:*** λόγος lógos, log'-os; from [G3004](https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/G3004/kjv/tr/0-1/); something said (including the thought); by implication, a topic (subject of discourse), also reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive; by extension, a computation; specially, (with the article in John) the Divine Expression (i.e. Christ):—account, cause, communication, × concerning, doctrine, fame, × have to do, intent, matter, mouth, preaching, question, reason, + reckon, remove, say(-ing), shew, × speaker, speech, talk, thing, + none of these things move me, tidings, treatise, utterance, word, work.

***RHEMA: G4487***: ῥῆμα rhēma, hray'-mah; from [G4483](https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/G4483/kjv/tr/0-1/); an utterance (individually, collectively or specially),; by implication, a matter or topic (especially of narration, command or dispute); with a negative naught whatever:—evil, nothing, saying, word.a thing spoken, (a) a word or saying of any kind, as command, report, promise, (b) a thing, matter, business.

In the New Testament, the word ***Logos*** was used by the authors in 316 verses while ***Rhema***was used in 67. So when reading scripture, we need to understand which word is used in which way. I know some Biblical teachers don’t deem this important but I believe the more we understand, the clearer things will be for us. It is always good to have a deeper understanding.

***2 Peter 1:19-21 “*1**And we have more firm the prophetic ***word*** (***logos***), to which ***we do well giving heed, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, till day may dawn, and a morning star may arise*** -- in your hearts;this first knowing, that no prophecy of the Writing doth come of private exposition, for not by will of man did ever prophecy come, but by the Holy Spirit borne on holy men of God spake.”

**NIV**: “We also have the prophetic ***message*** (***logos***) as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things.”

***The Logos*** ***Word*** is the general Word of ***Theos*** that communicates His ability to do something or as I would say is how He communicates His general ***will*** ***“dia thelēmatos”*** on a matter. While ***The*** ***Rhema Word*** could be interpreted as ***The Logos*** ***Word*** the Holy Spirit ***(Paraklétos***) quickens to a specific person for a specific situation.

Dr. Bill Hammon used various analogies to describe this relationship between ***logos*** and ***rhema***. One in particular that I really like is that you picture the ***logos*** as a deep well of refreshing pure water.

The ***rhema*** on the other hand would a picture of you reaching down deep into that well and pulling upa bowl of water from that refreshing well and taking a drink. The water in the bowl would be the ***rhema*** water but is taken from the ***logos*** water.

The ***logos*** & ***rhema***are ***ALWAYS*** in alignment with one another. There is never an inconstancy or a stark contrast. The ***rhema*** could be a scripture (***logos***) or a word spoken to you that lines up with scripture. Or the ***(logos)*** that the ***Paraklétos*** (Holy Spirit) has quickened directly into your heart which causes it to become the ***rhema.***

So with that said, what would be a practical way to use your new founded understanding of ***rhema***and ***logos***?

Have you ever been reading scripture and the ***Logos*** jumps out at you and is highlighted? I believe this is when the ***Logos*** becomes the ***Rhema***.

The test of the authenticity of a ***rhema***word from ***Theos*** is how it compares to the whole of Scripture. Our Christian faith and this church believe that ***Theos*** will not speak a ***rhema*** Word that contradicts His written Word ***(logos***).

So with that said, if you as a believer will but stand on this principle as a plumb line for your life, there will be a built-in safeguard to prevent misinterpretation. You will have a built in GPS to help you to navigate the ***dia thelēmatos***.

GPS: Needs 3 sats: Father, Son and Spirit.

Ladies, this is why it is so important that we study the written Word of ***Theos*** and that we know it well. Our enemy is very real and he knows all about the power of the ***logos*** and the ***rhema***.

He knows the scriptures way better than us and is a master manipulator of scriptures. There is much false teaching in the American church today and way to many false prophets and prophecies out there floating around. Everyone is “looking for a word from Theos!”

With that comes the obvious danger that one who is not familiar with the ***logos***can misinterpret or misunderstand what he or she perceives to be a ***rhema word or what we call a prophetic word over their life***.

***2 Corinthians 11:14-16 “And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.”***

Why not go to the source yourself and dig for it as hidden treasure? Let me give you a word of advice…most true prophetic words come when we are not looking for them. ***Theos*** will be faithful to reveal the mystery of His ***theléma*** (will) for your life as we will see at the end of this teaching.

Ladies, we need to know the ***Logos***! – You need to be honest and ask yourself, how familiar am I really with the ***Logos***? Remember, if the ***logos*** is the well, and if you don’t know where to find the well…how are you going to be able to take a bowl of water out of that well and drink it? Your going to die of spiritual thirst!

It all goes back to this verse in scripture which should be one of the foundations pillars of your life. All we need is found in it.

[***John 1:1***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1%3A1&version=ESV)

***“In the beginning was the (Logos) Word, and the (Logos) Word was with God, and the (Logos) Word was God.”***

***GREEK:*** En archê ên ho ***Logos*** kai ho ***Logos*** ên proston TheonkiaTheos ên ho ***Logos.***

We must understand that every word ***(logos or rhema)*** of ***Theos*** is inspired except for that which is twisted by the enemy and/or by man who is a pawn of the enemy.

The real ***Logos*** and ***Rhema*** will accomplish this …

“all scripture is given by inspiration of ***Theos***, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (II Timothy 3:16).

It is the ***Paraklétos*** (Holy Spirit) who will illuminate particular scriptures for application regarding His ***Theléma*** (will) and our daily walk with ***Christou*** [***Iēsou***](https://biblehub.com/greek/ie_sou_2424.htm).

First off…I want to start by saying that in His ***Logos,*** ***Theos*** has a vision to go along with His ***Theléma*** for your life***.***  And we have the opportunity to see into this Biblical vision of His if we will be but willing to open the spiritual eyes of your heart. (Ephesians 1:18) For we can see this vision in and throughout the mysteries intertwined all the way through His ***Logos.***

**So now let’s talk about God’s will:**

**The Greek G2307**

**for the word “will” is *theléma*:**

Original Word: θέλημα, ατος, τό
Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter
Transliteration: ***theléma***
Phonetic Spelling: (thel'-ay-mah)
Usage: an act of will, will; wishes, desires.

***Will***([2307](http://studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=2307)) ***theléma:*** (from ***thelo***= to will with the "-ma" suffix indicating the result of the will = "a thing willed") generally speaks of the result of what one has decided. In its most basic form, ***theléma*** refers to a wish, a strong desire, and the willing of some event.

**Ephesians 5:15-17**

“See, then, how exactly ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise,

redeeming the time, because the days are evil; because of this become not fools, but -- understanding what is the (***will)*** ***“Theléma”*** of the Lord,**”**

**WE MUST PAY ATTENTION:**

Ephesians 1:1: … by *the will* of God

Ephesians 1:5: … of the *will* of him

Ephesians 1:9: …the *will* of him

Ephesians 1:11: …of the will of Him

Ephesians 2:3: …***doing the things willed (desired) of the flesh***

Ephesians 5:17: …what the will of the Lord is

Ephesians 6:6: …doing the will of God

***Romans 12:2-3***

“And be not conformed to this age,but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, to prove by you what is the will of God, good and well pleasing and perfect.”

***“Theléma”*** has both an objective meaning such as, “what one wishes to happen” or “what is willed” and a subjective connotation such as “the act of willing or desiring.”

The word conveys the idea of desire, even a heart’s desire. The word ***Theléma*** primarily expresses emotion instead of the power of choosing or determining or an act of making a choice or decision. So the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos*** is not so much the intention, as it is His heart’s desire.

There are two clear and very different meanings for the term **Theléma** in the Bible. We need to know them both. In fact, knowing the difference between these two meanings of **Theléma** is crucial to our understanding one of the biggest and most perplexing things in all the Bible, namely, that ***Theos in His perfect Theléma,*** is sovereign over all things and yet disapproves of many things.

Now for the real confusion: ***Theos*** actually disapproves of some of what He ordains to happen. That is, He forbids some of the things He brings about. And He commands some of the things He hinders. Or to put it most paradoxically: ***Theos*** will have willed or allow some events in one sense that He has not willed in another sense.

The reason we are tackling this subject tonight is because if we don’t understand how the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos*** operates then we can’t give correct answers to ourselves or those who ask us the hard questions such as:

Where was ***Theos*** when this and such happened?

Why did ***Theos*** allow it to happen, my child died?

How can I serve a ***Theos*** who created evil?

If you have walked with ***Theos*** for any amount of time you will be hit with some hard questions.

Or what about what Martin Luther said? “Even the devil is God’s devil.” How do you explain or reconcile that?

The devil is God’s devil? Most certainly! So what is he saying? He goes on to explain that ***Theos*** is responsible for evil in the broad sense that He willed it to exist without causing it in itself? That’s a fine line of distinction. The ***Logos*** is very clear on the matter as it states that ***Theos*** distances Himself from evil and ***Theos*** cannot lie and even more that ***Theos*** is Holy.

Or as the prophet Habakkuk put it, “***Theos*** can not look upon iniquity, ***Theos*** can not look upon evil.” As if to say, He can’t even come near to it. So how do you reconcile this statement which is true when we know that Satan entered the presence of Theos in the Book of Job.

The Answer:

**No** evil is directly caused by ***Theos*** and **No** evil is indirectly caused by **Theos**. Evil is allowed by ***Theos***, but He most certainly distances Himself from it. And while that may be a concept that is a little too profound for us to understand it is the fine line of distinction of His ***Theléma.***

The Bible makes that clear distinction in two ways:

1. **Theos’ *Theléma of Decree”,* or His Sovereign Will**

Let’s take a look at some passages of Scripture that make us think this way.

First, lets consider passages that describe the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos*** as His sovereign control of all that comes to pass. One of the clearest pictures in scripture is the way [***Iēsou***](https://biblehub.com/greek/ie_sou_2424.htm)spoke to ***Theos*** regarding His ***Theléma.*** In Gethsemane when [***Iēsou***](https://biblehub.com/greek/ie_sou_2424.htm)was praying, He said, in [Matthew 26:39](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2026.39), “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as *you will*.”

What does the ***Theléma of Theos*** refer to in this verse? It refers to the sovereign plan of ***Theos*** that will happen in the coming hours.

We must call to our recollection how in [Acts 4:27–28](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%204.27%E2%80%9328) it stated this:

***“Truly in this city there were gathered together against your Holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your plan had predestined to take place.”***

So the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos*** was that [***Iēsou***](https://biblehub.com/greek/ie_sou_2424.htm) die. This was His plan, His decree. There was no changing it, and [***Iēsou***](https://biblehub.com/greek/ie_sou_2424.htm) bowed and said, “Here’s my request, but you do what is best to do.” That’s the sovereignty ***Theléma*** of ***Theos***.

We can’t discount, dismiss or miss the very crucial point here that it includes the sins of man. Herod, Pilate, the soldiers, the Jewish leaders — they all sinned in fulfilling the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos*** that His Son be crucified. This was also prophesied hundreds of years before in [Isaiah 53:10](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Isa%2053.10). So be very clear on this: ***Theos*** wills to come to pass some things that He hates. But I ask you was there good that came from His ***Theléma?***

Let me give you another example:

In [1 Peter 3:17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet%203.17), Peter writes,

“It is better to suffer for doing good, ***if that should be God’s will***, than for doing evil.”

In other words, it may be the***Theléma”***of ***Theos***that Christians suffer for doing good. He may have in mind persecution. But persecution of Christians who do not deserve it is sin. So again, He sometimes wills that events come about that include sin.

Paul gives a sweeping summary statement of this truth in [Ephesians 1:11](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph%201.11):

“In Him [Christ] we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works ***all things according to the counsel of His will.”***

The ***Theléma*** of ***Theos*** is His sovereign governance of all that comes to pass. There are many other passages in the Bible that teach that His providence over the universe extends to the smallest details of nature and human decisions.

For example:

* Not one sparrow falls to the ground apart from our Father in heaven; ([Matthew 10:29](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2010.29)).
* The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord; ([Proverbs 16:33](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Prov%2016.33)).
* The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord; ([Proverbs 16:1](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Prov%2016.1)).
* The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will; ([Proverbs 21:1](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Prov%2021.1)).

This is the first meaning of ***Theléma*** of ***Theos***. It is His sovereign control of all things. We will call this ***“Theléma of Decree.”*** It cannot be broken. It always comes to pass. “He does according to His***Theléma*** among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand or say to Him, ‘What have you done?’” ([Daniel 4:35](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Dan%204.35)).

 **2. God’s *“Theléma of Command.”***

Now the other meaning for ***Theléma*** in the Bible is what we can call His ***“Theléma of Command.”*** His ***Theléma*** is what He commands us to do. This is the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos*** we can disobey and fail to do. This is ***NOT*** a good position or place for us to be.

The ***“Theléma of Decree.”*** we do whether we believe in it or not. The ***“Theléma of Command.”*** we can fail to do.

For example, Jesus said,

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” [Matthew 7:21](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%207.21).

Not all do the will of His Father. He makes this very clear when He states, “Not everyone will enter the kingdom of heaven.” Why? Because not all do the ***“Theléma of Command.”***

***Paulos*** says plainly in [1 Thessalonians 4:3](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess%204.3), “This is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality.”

Here we have a very specific instance of what ***Theos*** commands us: holiness, sanctification, sexual purity. This is His ***“Theléma of Command.”*** Unfortunately, the truth is that so many do not obey.

Then ***Paulos*** says in [1 Thessalonians 5:18](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess%205.18), “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

There again is a specific aspect of His will of ***“Theléma of Command.”*** We are to give thanks in all circumstances. But do we?

One more example in Scripture, “And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” [1 John 2:17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%202.17)

Do all abide forever? Some do. Some don’t. The difference? Some do the ***Theléma of Theos***. Some don’t. The ***Theléma*** of ***Theos***, in this sense, does not always happen.

So I conclude from these and many other passages of the Bible that there are two ways of talking about the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos***.

Both are true, and both are important to understand and believe in. One we can call His ***“Theléma of Decree.”*** (or His sovereign will) and the other we can call His ***“Theléma of Command.”***

His ***“Theléma of Decree.”***  always comes to pass whether we believe in it or not. His ***“Theléma of Command.”*** can be broken, and is every day.

I want to bring the preciousness of these two truths of His ***Theléma*** to a level that is now applicable to you and me.

Both correspond to a deep need that we all have when we have been deeply hurt or are still deeply hurting. Even is situations that we have experienced great loss, tragedy, etc.

On the one hand, we need the assurance that ***Theos*** is in control and therefore He is able to work all of my pain and loss together for my good and the good of all who love him.

On the other hand, we need to know that ***Theos*** empathizes with us and does not delight in sin or pain in and of themselves. These two needs correspond to His ***“Theléma of Decree.”*** and His ***“Theléma of Command.”***

For example, if you were badly abused as a child, and someone asks you, “Do you think that was the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos***?” you now have a way to make some Biblical sense out of this, and give an answer that doesn’t contradict the Bible.

You may say, “No it was not the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos*** that I was abused; because He commands that humans not be abusive, but we are commanded to love each other. The abuse I suffered broke not only His heart but His commandments and therefore moved His heart of love with anger and grief towards my pain and possibly my offender.” ***Theos*** can be angered by the stubborn hearts of man. ***Just read the Logos, Amen!***

But, in another sense, yes, it was His ***“Theléma of Decree.”*** (or His sovereign will) because there are a hundred ways He could have stopped it. But for reasons I don’t yet fully understand, He didn’t.” But I trust Him.

And corresponding to these two wills are the two things you need in this situation: one is a ***Theos*** who is strong and sovereign enough to turn it for good; and the other is a ***Theos*** who is able to empathize with you and He will be not only your judge but the prosecutor. You will be vindicated.

On the one hand, ***Christou*** [***Iēsou***](https://biblehub.com/greek/ie_sou_2424.htm) is a sovereign High King, and nothing happens apart from His ***Theléma.*** Matthew 28:18

On the other hand, ***Christou*** [***Iēsou***](https://biblehub.com/greek/ie_sou_2424.htm) is a merciful High Priest and sympathizes with our weaknesses and pain. Hebrews 4:15

**This is Important:** Not only for our offenders but for ourselves. If we are defiant of His ***Theléma of Command,*** the ***Logos*** of ***Theos*** is clear. The ***Paraklétos*** (Holy Spirit) conquers us and our sins when He wills. See Romans 9:15-16. He also allows Himself to be quenched, grieved and angered when He wills. See: [Ephesians 4:30](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph%204.30)-32; [1 Thessalonians 5:19](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess%205.19).

His ***“Theléma of Decree”*** (or His sovereign will) is invincible, and His “***Thelema of Command***” can be grievously broken.

I also want to mention one more thing. There is no call in scripture to try to divine or have interpreted through man the ***Theléma*** of ***Theos*** for your life. There are too many Christians that seek the advice of a false prophets or even a fortunetellers to find out their future. Only fools have their fortune read to seek things they need not know. If you as a believer have had your fortune read, you need to repent for that is an abomination to ***Theos.***

Please hear what this closing scripture has to say:

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.” Jeremiah 29:29

Ladies, the main thing about the hidden ***Theléma of Theos*** is that it is hidden. These “secret things” belong to ***Theos***, and there are just some things that ***Theos*** does not intend for us to know, no matter how hard we might pray that He would reveal them to us.

John Calvin said that when God “closes his holy mouth, let us also stop the way, that we may not go farther.”

And concerning the things that are revealed” this is what theologians mean when they talk about “the revealed ***Theléma of Theos***. ***Theos*** has clearly revealed His ***Theléma*** for our lives by giving us His law and His commandments.

So what is His ***Theléma*** for your life? That you should obey His commands. As long as you are obeying His commands as you make your decisions, you have great freedom in the specific options you can choose. Such as picking a husband!

Theos’ ***Theléma*** is that we put aside both passivity and perfectionism where it comes to decision-making and seek guidance in His Word. Might I add, also let us be supplemented by the wisdom of wise Christians women around us, and then, when all is said and done, trust Him. You don’t need handwriting in the sky to be able to “remain in the ***“Theléma of Theos.”***