

"Thy Will Be Done"

At the hardest moment of His life, the Lord Jesus said, "Thy Will Be Done." Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study, "In Search of the Lord's Way." We want to say "Thy Will Be Done" in our lives too, so stay with us for an important study of God's Word.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way; we're here to search God's Word for the Lord's Way to salvation and to live the Christian life. God's Word always gives us the light that we need to know the truth and to draw close to God. Thanks for spending time with us. We want to be a part of your life each week.

One lesson we must learn is that God is God, and we are human. God rules our lives, and we should live according to His will. When the Lord Jesus came into this world He understood He was here to do the will of His Father in heaven. We too must do His will. Every facet of our lives belongs to God our Father. Troubles and evils arise when people ignore His will. We must learn to pray and to live a life that proclaims, "Thy will be done."

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray in the Sermon on the Mount, He said, "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven'" (Matthew 6, verses 9 and 10). What if the will of God were done on earth like it is in heaven? What if people were willing to set their sins aside and give their lives to the will of God? What if we all stopped setting our hearts on evil and started setting our hearts on righteousness?

Struggles and problems come at the expense of people doing their own will and ignoring the will of the Father. The selfishness, the greed, the lust, and the arrogant pride of our time causes our lives, our homes, and our society untold pain and ruin. We desperately need God's will in our lives. "Thy will be done" is not only a prayer; it's a way of life.

We offer this lesson on doing the will of God free. And if you're looking for a church home, or if you'd like a printed copy of our study, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or e-mail us, searchtv@searchtv.org. Or you can call our toll-free telephone number, that number is 1-800-321-8633. We also stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org.

The Edmond church will worship in song, we'll read from Mark 14:32 to 36, and explore the will of God.

Our reading today comes from the gospel according to Mark, chapter 14, verses 32 to 36, and Jesus is on His way to the cross, but first He goes to the Garden of Gethsemane, to spend hours in prayer. "They came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, 'Sit here until I have prayed.' And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. And He said to them, 'My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch.' And He went a little beyond them, and fell to the ground and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. And He was saying, 'Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will.'" And that needs to be our prayer as well.

Let's pray together. "Heavenly Father, we pray that we may do Your will always, that whatever the cost we may be willing to give up ourselves and to follow You, to take up our cross. In Jesus name we pray, Amen."

"Thy will be done." Jesus must have found it both difficult and yet fulfilling to pray that the Father's will be done. You see, while Jesus hated the thought of a scourging and an agonizing death, He knew

that it was necessary to fulfill His purpose in life. While He hated the thought of bearing the punishment for the sins of the world, He loved the world and wanted it to be saved from sin.

The Bible presents a number of paradoxes about the Lord on the cross. Now a paradox is a situation that seems to be absurd or contradictory, in yet it is in fact true. For instance, the Bible says in 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For our sake he made him [that is Jesus] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." Or 1 Peter 2:24, which says "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree [the cross], that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. For by his wounds you have been healed." The holy Lord Jesus bore our sins at the cross so that we could become holy.

Hebrews 12 and verse 2 says that the Lord Jesus "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." Yes, He despised the pain and the shame but He loved the outcome of what He did on the cross. He looked to the joy set before Him, the joy of people finding forgiveness in His sacrifice. He didn't want to die, but His desire for our eternal salvation was greater than His desire to live in the flesh. He rejoiced in the eternal not the temporary, and He was glad to do the Father's will.

Doing the Father's will was not a new concept or behavior to Jesus. From the time He was born, He realized that He had come into this world to do the Father's will. At age 12, Jesus was in the Temple doing His Father's business. Later on, when the devil tempted Him at age 30, Jesus said in Matthew 4 and verse 10, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'"

In John, chapter 4, Jesus passed through Samaria. Stopping at a well near the town of Sychar, Jesus sent his disciples into town for some food while He rested. At the well Jesus had a remarkable conversation with a woman who had been married five times and was living with a man. When she learned Jesus was the Messiah, she ran into town and told all the men of the town and the disciples returned with the food.

Then John 4, verses 31 to 34 says: Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, 'Rabbi, eat.' But He said to them, 'I have food to eat that you don't know about.' So the disciples were saying to one another, 'No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?' And Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.'" You see, the Lord Jesus lived to do the will of His Father in heaven.

In John 5 verse 30, Jesus explained, "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." Jesus regarded the will of the Father as the perfect standard of right and wrong. He didn't want to vary from the His Father's will in any way, so He listened to the Father. He made judgments of right and wrong only as the will of the Father instructed. He didn't act on His own initiative.

In Jesus' heart and mind, keeping the will of the Father was how He remained in a right relationship with His Father. The Lord said to His disciples in John 15:9 to 1, on the night before He died, "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." Now abiding in the Father's will was an act of love and devotion. Keeping the Lord's commandments is how we demonstrate our love to the Lord and remain in His love.

1 John 2, verses 3 to 5 says, "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I've come to know Him,' and doesn't keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected." Our love for God moves us to be obedient to His will and to keep His commandments.

When Jesus was told that family was outside and had come to speak to Him, the Lord Jesus asked in Matthew 12:48 to 50, "Well who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother." Jesus claimed a close kinship to anyone who does the will of His Father in heaven. And He wants to be close to us.

On the other hand, Jesus finished the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7 verses 21 to 23 with these words, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

The Lord knew people would claim to have a relationship with Him, while they lived lawlessly. They wanted the blessing of Christianity but they didn't surrender to the will of the Father in heaven. And the Lord Jesus never knew them. He never had a relationship with them. They never belonged to Him, because they lived life on their own lawless terms and would not obey the will of the Father. You can't live by your own will and expect to please the Lord.

You can't draw close to God while you turn your back on what the Father teaches. You obey God by obeying what He teaches, not by saying you love Him while living the way that you desire. A person who lives in lawlessness says to the Lord, "Not Your will be done but mine." He lives by his own rules and ignores God's law. He hasn't set his mind on the Father's will but on pleasing himself.

Now a person who plays by his own will thinks he is the exception. He thinks his sins aren't as bad as other people's sins. He does as he pleases and presumes the Lord will still consider that as obedience. He counts on his own works, not God's will, to assure him a place in heaven. You know, the Lord's rejection is going to surprise him.

We should strive to follow the will of the Lord. It will not only bless us, it will also bless everyone around us. The Bible says in Romans 12 and verse 2, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." Doing God's will shows everyone the value of the Lord's way! It is good and acceptable and perfect.

Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy will be done." Have you thought about how radically different and better our world would be if people truly did the will of God? God's will for our lives is no small matter. If people did God's will, crime would disappear, the moral climate of this country would drastically change, and people would be more loving and less selfish. We'd keep the golden rule. You remember the Lord Jesus taught that in Matthew 7, verse 12, that "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets."

If we did God's will on earth, as it is in heaven, God's Word would have a place of priority in our lives and decisions. We'd be asking the question, "What does God's Word have to say about this matter or that?" We'd realize that the God who created us knows us better than we know ourselves and teaches us what is best. We'd make our life choices and think of right and wrong on the basis of God's teaching not our opinions or our culture.

If we did God's will on earth, we'd begin to pray as a people again. We'd realize that nothing good can happen without God's blessing and favor. We'd seek His face. What does that mean, "seek His face"? It means we'd look to God for help and for the answers of life. When Solomon became king, he asked God for wisdom to know how to lead the people of Israel. He worried about what might happen

if Israel forsook the Lord and faced famine and were defeated in battle. Well Solomon asked God to be willing to forgive His people.

The Lord God answered Solomon's prayer with this promise found in 2 Chronicles 7:13 to 14, "If ... My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land." God wants to draw close to His people, when they pray to Him with humble hearts, turning from wickedness, and then God will hear and heal them.

If God's will were truly done on earth, we'd stop hearing God's name being taken in vain and in filthy talk. Ephesians 4 verse 29 says, "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear." Words are important; and our speech would be gracious, seasoned with salt, as we ought to speak.

If God's will were done on earth, we'd set our hearts on things that bless rather than concentrate on things that corrupt. The Bible says in Philippians 4 and verse 8, "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there's anything worthy of praise, think about these things." What we think about shapes our attitudes. And when our minds concentrate on the good, we see good all around us; and we become better people. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 15:33, "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals.'" When what is bad fills our minds, evil fills our lives.

If God's will were done on earth, we'd think more about the Lord and about heaven. The Bible says in Colossians 3:1 to 4, "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."

Where are you going with your life? Does your life show that the will of God is good and acceptable and perfect? Are you doing the will of the Father? Are you living in such a way that by your words, by your deeds, by your attitudes, you are a blessing. Or are you a hurt to those who are around you? Doing the will of God is not simply something that we do to please God, it also makes this world so much better. Oh, we ought to all say, "Thy will be done."

Let us pray. "Father, we're thankful for the example of Jesus who did Your will, by dying upon the cross for our sines. Help us Father to deny ourselves, to take up our crosses and to follow You. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen."

The Lord Jesus told Nicodemus unless he was born of water and the Spirit, he could not enter the kingdom of God (John 3 and verse 5). Now Jesus was emphatic and said in verse seven, "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'that you must be born again.'" Some think the will of God is flexible and doesn't matter, but nothing could be farther from the truth.

John wrote in John 1:11 to 13, that "Jesus came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." You can't be saved by substituting some human plan for God's will. God is God, and we are human. We can't edit or overrule the will of God. If we are saved by God's grace, it will only be by His will. To know His will we must read and study the New Testament.

What does God will for us to do to be saved? Well upon hearing the gospel of Jesus, we must believe Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God. We must repent of our sins and turn to

righteousness. We must be willing to confess our faith in Christ Jesus and to be baptized. Now baptism is that new birth in water and the Spirit. The Bible teaches that we must be born again. Baptism is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ so that our sins will be forgiven. When we're baptized, God washes away our sins (Acts 22:16). And I pray that you, today, will do the will of God.

We hope you've been blessed by today's study of God's word. If you want a free printed copy of this message, "Thy Will Be Done," mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org.

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We do ask that you focus your heart on God by worshiping at church. Now everyone needs a church family. There's probably a church of Christ that's near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.