

# **“THY WILL BE DONE”**

**Pastor Mike Corwin**

**LORD’S PRAYER PART 4**

**TEXT: MATTHEW 26:36-36**

**GOD’S WORD: GENESIS 45:1-8**

## **I – THE ATHEIST BARBER:**

A man went to a barbershop to have his hair cut and his beard trimmed. As the barber began to work, they began to have a good conversation. They talked about so many things and various subjects. When they eventually touched on the subject of God, the barber said: “I don’t believe that God exists.” “Why do you say that?” asked the customer. “Well, you just have to go out in the street to realize that God doesn’t exist. Tell me, if God exists, would there be so many sick people? Would there be abandoned children? If God existed, there would be neither suffering nor pain. I can’t imagine a loving God who would allow all of these things.”

The customer thought for a moment, but didn’t respond because he didn’t want to start an argument. The barber finished his job and the customer left the shop. Just after he left the barbershop he saw a man in the street with long, stringy, dirty hair and an untrimmed beard. He looked dirty and unkept. The customer turned back and entered the barbershop again and he said to the barber, “You know what, Barbers don’t exist.” “How can you say that?” asked the surprised barber? “I am here, and I am a barber, and I just worked on you!” “No!” the customer exclaimed. “Barbers don’t exist because if they did there would be no people with dirty long hair and untrimmed beards, like that man outside.”

“Ah, but barbers do exist. What happens is people don’t come to me.” “Exactly” affirmed the customer. “That’s the point! God too does exist! What happens is people don’t go to him and look for him. That’s why there’s so much pain and suffering in the world.”

## **II – THE QUESTION:**

How many of you have ever been that barber? Have witnessed things happen or had them happen in their lives, or seen horrendous events in the paper or on the TV news, and asked the question, “If God is in charge how can little children be kidnapped, raped, and murdered? If God cares why are there such things as domestic violence, child abuse, AIDS, cancer, multiple sclerosis, and all the other devastating diseases? If God answers prayers why am I struggling to pay the bills or make my children behave? Why do people suffer from addiction?” And the list goes on and on

doesn't it? If we were honest and put our hands in the air we'd see that it was probably unanimous that we've all had those thoughts.

There are long theological explanations to all of these questions, but I'm not smart enough and don't have the time to give them all to you today. Let me sum it up by telling you that God is the God of love. 1 John 4:8 says, "God is Love." If that's true then it is not God's will that all these things happen in and to his creation. These things happen because his people don't pray "THY WILL BE DONE on earth as it is in heaven" and mean it or live it. Because God loves us we have this thing called freedom of choice. God didn't create robots because robots can't love you, children can, and we all know that children don't always make the choices we want them to make or follow our will in their behavior. We are those kinds of children to our Heavenly Father. Sometimes we make poor choices and they adversely affect not only us but sometimes innocent others.

You heard the end of the story of Joseph read this morning from the O.T. Joseph was sold into slavery by his jealous brothers and ended up in prison, and then because a ruler in Egypt with Pharaoh being his only superior. This gave him the opportunity to save his family and the Israelites when a famine struck the land. By the reading you'd think God did all of this to him, but if you flip to Genesis 50:20 you see that Joseph realized his brothers had been evil for what they had done but God turned it into good and saved the nation because no matter what happened to him Joseph always prayed that God's will would prevail amidst his turmoil.

### III – TEXT:

The story of Jesus in the garden before his passion drives home this point of God's will being done, even in the midst of evil. God sent his own Son to get our attention, to preach and teach, and to ultimately die as a sacrifice for our sins, to show how much God loves us and provide a way that we could choose that love and live in it for all of eternity.

Jesus is only hours away from his fate on the cross. After eating the last meal with his disciples he takes them to the garden of Gethsemane to pray. Listen to Matthews record of the events...

#### **Matthew 26:36-46 (NLT)**

<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." <sup>37</sup>He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. <sup>38</sup>He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." <sup>39</sup>He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

<sup>40</sup>Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you watch with me even one hour? <sup>41</sup>Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the

spirit is willing, but the body is weak!" <sup>42</sup>Then Jesus left them a second time and prayed, "My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done." <sup>43</sup>When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn't keep their eyes open. <sup>44</sup>So he went to pray a third time, saying the same things again. <sup>45</sup>Then he came to the disciples and said, "Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But look—the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>46</sup>Up, let's be going. Look, my betrayer is here!"

This is one of my least favorite passages. I don't like it because I realize what's happening to Jesus is due to my own disobedience, my own failure to do God's will. At the same time it's one of my favorites because in it I see the depth of God's love for us through the obedience of Jesus. I see here that Jesus was the Son of God, yet 100% human with fears, anxieties, and emotions just like me. Jesus wasn't a robot either. At this very moment he has the freedom to choose. He can decide not to follow the will of God and go to the cross to save us all, or he can decide to take the easy way out for his own safety and comfort and flee. The knowledge of what lies ahead has him so overwhelmed that he tells the disciples that his very soul, his innermost being is so distressed it's almost killing him. He didn't kneel down to pray he fell down face first.

His prayer is the same prayer three times. "Father, if it's possible I'd really like to have an option here. I'm hurting inside at the very thought of what I'm about to go through and it'd be OK with me if you'd change your mind, come up with another plan of action." Yet each time he concludes his request with, "your will be done, not Mine." His prayers weren't answered, God did not give him an alternative way to save humanity, yet he still prayed "THY WILL BE DONE."

At the end of the passage we see that Jesus did follow through with the will of His Father and allowed himself to be arrested. Evil took over and led Jesus to his gruesome death on a Roman cross, but even as he was being murdered the will of God was done as he defeated sin and death.

This passage would almost lead you to the conclusion that Jesus' greatest sacrifice wasn't his blood, but his will. It was his obedience to do the will of God.

It was when Jesus said "THINE" not "MINE" that you and I obtained a path for Salvation through the grace of God and the Sacrifice of his Son.

#### **IV – ON EARTH AS IN HEAVEN:**

Last week we got a glimpse of heaven as we read Revelation 21. If you read it closely you'll find that the Apostle John said heaven was great not only because of what was there, but also what wasn't there. He told us there will be no death, sorrow, or crying. But when you see heaven you'll also realize there is no sin, no death, no drugs, or divorce. There are no wheelchairs or crutches, no chemotherapy, no hospitals because there is no disease. There are no broken hearts, no broken bodies, no unemployment, no car crashes, no drowning victims, or anything else that

causes us sorrow, pain, or tears. None of these are there or will be there because there is no evil there. The will of God will be done there always and forever.

How dare we say that someone died because it was the “will of God” or how are we call a landslide or devastation from a hurricane an “Act of God.” God did not tell us to destroy the atmosphere and create things like global warming. He didn’t tell us to cut the tops off mountains for coal or cut down forests for land so the wind could rush through in tornados that cause damage. He didn’t tell us to cut those trees off the side of mountains so the mud could crash down on homes, or to build homes in such locations or even below sea level so they could be flooded. God didn’t tell us to eat or smoke ourselves to ill health, God’s will is not that HIV and AIDS wipes out whole nations of people, or that wars over political agendas or greed would kill innocent people. God’s will was not that people would amass great wealth for their personal use instead of to do well and help others. None of this exists in heaven and it wouldn’t here either if everyone did God’s will.

It wasn’t God’s will that we would be sinful and disobedient in any way. He set up a beautiful garden where all our needs were met and we rebelled. He delivered us out of slavery and took us to the Promised Land and we rebelled. He gave us rules and guidelines to live by and we rebelled. Each time he told us his will we responded MINE-NOT-THINE! Thank God Jesus said THINE-NOT-MINE.

#### **V – WHAT ARE WE PRAYING?:**

To pray the line “THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN” is to admit that God knows more than we’ll ever know and loves us more than we’ll ever be able to love him. It means we realize we live in a messed up world because we messed it up and God is the only one who can fix it. It’s recognizing that tragedies occur because humanity has abused and misused the freedom of choice God gave us, but even in the worst cases God can cause his will to be carried out.

To pray this means that we know the answers to our initial questions and now we will open ourselves to be instruments of God, discerning and doing his will to usher in his Kingdom into the hearts of others, so his will is done.

Let me leave you with another barbershop conversation. As the barber was cutting his patron’s hair the man in the chair stated, “I’d like to know why God allows poverty and injustice in the world when he could do something about it?” The barber said, “Perhaps God has the same question for you.”

You have the power to make sure that God’s will is truly being done on earth, as it is in heaven...go and live accordingly.

AMEN