

Monday Morning Rewind – April 26, 2010

Will the real Christian please stand up . . . and *do* the will of God? This is the question we pondered last Sabbath as we continued our series on the Lord's Prayer and focused on the phrase "Thy will be done." What exactly does it mean when we pray these words?

By definition, the "will" of God is the "*determination, choice, purpose, decree; desire and pleasure*" of the sovereign Lord of the universe whom we've already invited to rule and reign in our lives. Put simply, it means He's the boss. His plan comes before my plan. His desire trumps my desires. His choice takes precedence over my choice. What pleases God takes priority over what pleases me.

Jesus is our best example of what a person who prays and lives "Thy will be done" looks like. "My food," said Jesus, "is to **do the will** of him who sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34) **To be like Jesus, doing God's will must become more important to us than our "necessary food."** Which may be the reason "Thy will be done" comes before "Give us our daily bread." We do not live on bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of God.

But don't confuse tasting the Word with eating it. Andrew Murray writes: "We may ponder that Word, consent to it, hold to it, and delight ourselves in the knowledge of it; but that is of little avail. It does not feed the soul, *until we do it*. My food is *to do* the will of Him that sent me. I may accept the Word, but as long as I fail to do it, it remains outside of me; I have taken it into my mind, but not into my will and my life...I take it into my innermost self *by doing it*."

The Father's will is salvation for everyone who believes in the Son. (See John 6:39, 40.) If we pray, "Your will be done" we are praying for the salvation of others. And because we are the body of Christ, we will work to answer this prayer.

Again, we see Jesus' attitude to the will of God in John 5:30: "By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for **I seek not to please myself** but him who sent me." (John 5:30) **Doing the will of God means not living to please myself.** It's not all about me. Christianity is not just about *my* pain, my past, my wounds, my scars, my hurt, my depression, my loneliness, or my cross. It might be about those things in the beginning, but when we come to Jesus and see His pain, His wounds, His scars, His hurt, His separation from the Father, and stand in the light of His cross, it can't be about us anymore, because "He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed." (Isa. 53:5) It's about Him!

Jesus said, "For I have come down from heaven **not to do my will** but to do the will of him who sent me." (John 6:38) This stands in sharp contrast to Satan who only wanted to do his own will. **When we put God's will ahead of our own, we are most like Christ. When we put our own will ahead of God's we are most like Satan.**

The ultimate demonstration of Christ's complete devotion to doing the Father's will is seen in Gethsemane. Rewind to Luke 22:39-46 and as you do so, take off your shoes. These verses take us onto holy ground.

The hour that Jesus and the Father planned from before the world was created had now arrived. The *determination, choice, purpose, decree; desire and pleasure* of the sovereign Lord of the universe led Jesus to precisely that garden at that time. All of Jesus' prior obedience and conformity to the will of God would be lost if He failed to obey it now. Though we will never know the agony of that hour, the civil war that rages in Jesus is the same conflict we face—the fight between the flesh and the Spirit.

"He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet **not my will**, but yours be done." (Luke 22:41, 42) Though the struggle is so terrible it causes the Savior to sweat blood, our salvation is won as Jesus utters those three words: "*not my will*."

Jesus refused to compromise the Father's will even to the point of death. We however, are far too willing to set aside the Father's will in order to accommodate our way of life—in order to keep from dying to self. We want Jesus to bear the cross alone while we are allowed to run free. That's not Christianity. It's unregenerate, old-age selfishness—the Bible calls it SIN. The only thing that can conquer sin's "not *thy* will but mine," is Christ's "not my will but *thine*."

This is the key to the Father's house, and the heart of true Christianity. But we, like Jesus, are always free to choose. Christianity is not merely a thing of the emotions, it is a choice of the will.

Where is this will of God to be done? "...on earth as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10).

"Thy will be done on earth . . .

What is earth but where I live? What is earth but what I am? Therefore, it is appropriate to say, "Thy will be done *in me, where I live*, as it is in heaven." If it [God's will] is to be, God desires it to be achieved through me."

But He only accomplishes His will through those with whom He has a covenant.

Covenant

By Margaret Halaska

God knocks at my door seeking a home for his son.

Rent is cheap, I say.

I don't want to rent. I want to buy, says God.

I'm not sure I want to sell, but you might come in to look around.

I think I will, says God.

I might let you have a room or two.

*I like it, says God. I'll take the two. You might decide to give me more some day,
I can wait, says God.*

I'd like to give you more, but it's a bit difficult. I need some space for me.

I know, says God, but I'll wait. I like what I see.

Hmm, maybe I can let you have another room. I really don't need that much.

Thanks, says God, I'll take it. I like what I see.

I'd like to give you the whole house but I'm not sure . . .

Think on it, says God. I wouldn't put you out. Your house would be mine and my son would live in it. You'd have more space than you'd ever had before.

I don't understand at all.

I know, says God, but I can't tell you about that. You'll have to discover it for yourself.

That can only happen if you let me have the whole house.

A bit risky, I say.

Yes, says God, but try me.

I'm not sure—I'll let you know.

I can wait, says God. I like what I see.

Those who pray, "Thy will be done" have given the "whole house" to God. A bit risky, you say? Yes it is. But God says, "try me." If you do, Jesus won't be a mere renter in your life, He will be given ownership. That's the transaction real Christians make—the covenant. And when that covenant is made, what was once offensive is now a delight. God's plan becomes my plan. His desire is my desire. His choice is my choice. What pleases God pleases me. And the prayer real Christians pray is "Thy will be done." Then, when they get off their knees, they do it.

This, then is the defining attribute that reveals the real Christian. "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." (Matt. 7:21) "*Will the real Christian, please stand up . . . and do the will of God?*"

I want to be the real deal, how about you? Let His will be done in your life and mine today. –Pastor Randy

p.s. This Sabbath we will pause from our series to focus on our children, and the challenges we face today in helping them gain entrance into the Kingdom.

p.s.s. Cards of condolence for the Fuller family may be mailed to Iwallani and Alfred Fuller, 9487 Atmore Dr., Boise, ID 86704. The memorial service for Sharmelle is tentatively scheduled for May 7 at 1:00 p.m. at the church. More information will be shared when available.

Randy Maxwell
Pastor, Kuna Seventh-day Adventist Church
www.kunasdachurch.org
2 Chron. 7:14

"The need is great. The key is prayer. The time is now."