

The Marks of a True Believer
Message Four
Praying: “Thy Will be Done, in Earth as it is in Heaven”
Matt 6:5-15

- 5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.
- 6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.
- 7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
- 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.
- 9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
- 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
- 11 Give us this day our daily bread.
- 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
- 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.
- 14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:
- 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Introduction:

The fourth mark of a True Believer is the *Manner* in which he goes about his efforts to obey God, to do His Will as revealed in scripture. In framing this issue, Jesus references an idea that is to a great degree beyond the reach of His greatest servants and a stretch for even the most faithful of them. ***Do the Will of God in the same manner that heavenly beings do it.*** If one considers this to be a real principle being laid before the minds of serious saints enormous questions arise.

- How do heavenly beings do the will of God?
- Is Jesus referencing merely the *fact* that they do it or is He also calling attention to the *manner* in which they do it?
- If it is both, how does one come by a *pattern* to use in teaching himself to imitate them?
- Then, once having acquired the *pattern*, how does he put into practice what he has learned?

Maybe one of the least understood issues of scripture and God’s revelation of Himself and His Will to man is that of how God calls upon His people to use the imagination that He has placed within them.

For example, scripture opens calling upon us to imagine a scene that is almost impossible for us, a time when there was no earth, no sun, no moon, and no stars, only God Himself ‘brooding’ or ‘hovering’ as it were over a vast, empty, shapeless darkness. Then, He would have us imagine Him speaking all things into existence, things that did not formerly exist in any way, calling nothingness to shape itself into something. I say that He would have us imagine it because all He gave us for a record are words written on a page, no pictures, no videos, nothing at all to give us a sense of what was happening except for concepts translated into human language and written down in the form of words.

And this was only the beginning. He had an ark and a flood described to us, the burning bush, the plagues of Egypt, the Red Sea standing apart so that Israel could walk on dry ground through the bottom of it, Sinai, water from a rock, and so much more. We only have words and yet each of us has mental pictures of what those words described, pictures that we have imagined under the governance of the written revelation. The words were written down and transmitted to us so that we would imagine what those things and so many more were like.

So, here, with very little information revealed to us directly, Jesus called upon us to imagine how the Will of God is carried out in heaven and then pledge ourselves to that same style and manner of obedience.

I. While our information about the angels is somewhat slim, there are some things that we can know and seek to emulate about them.

They are called ‘holy angels,’ which, we know means that they not only *do* that which is holy but that they have a *disposition* to be holy, they desire and purpose only to do that which is holy. And, we know this is to be the disposition of the people of God.

Lev 20:7

7 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.

1 Peter 1:15-16

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

One cannot even *begin* the doing of the will of God unless there is an internal disposition that is consistent with the process, a willingness of heart and mind, a conformity to the nature of His Person, which is motivating and stimulating the creature to move in that direction.

This is part of what Jesus meant which He told Nicodemus, “Except a man be born again (from above) he cannot (even begin to) see the kingdom of God.” It would be easier for the unregenerate man to sprout wings and fly to the top of Mt. Everest than for him to do the will of God, “as it is (done) in heaven.”

We also know that they have a holy disposition to be *submitted* to the Will of God and do *nothing* that is outside of that will.

Jude 9

- 9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

They usurp nothing to themselves, take to themselves no sense of authority or independence. They move and live totally within the confines of willing submission to God Himself.

And, we know that there is a complete willingness to do whatever God would have them do, an excitedness, if you will, at the possibility of volunteering for service.

You will recall that in the days of the Divided Kingdom after Solomon, Ahab and Jehoshaphat were preparing to go to battle against Syria and they called Micaiah to prophesy concerning the outcome of the battle. Of course, he did not tell them what they wanted to hear but he told us something about how the will of God is done in heaven.

1 Kings 22:19-21

- 19 And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.
- 20 And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.
- 21 And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.

So, we see that concerning God's Will the angels do it

- Readily, with no resistance
- Gladly, with no grumbling
- Thoroughly, faithfully, diligently,

And we volunteer to emulate them every time we verbalize what Jesus taught us to pray.

Imagine, if you will, a conversation between two angels that would never happen.

1st angel to 2nd angel - Hey, I just came from the meeting. You weren't there.

2nd angel - Yeh, I was having my wings groomed. An angel has to look good, right?

1st - I don't know about that but Michael has a job for us.

2nd - He's always telling us to do something!

1st - Well, there is a little church that is getting serious about prayer and serving God...

2nd - so?

1st - ...and Michael said that the Father wants us to watch over them really seriously because the enemy is planning some moves against them.

2nd - Michael is always acting like he knows what the Father wants and like he is the boss.

1st - Well.... he does..... and.... he is...

2nd - So, just the two of us, we have the responsibility for that whole group of people.

1st - I thought we could rotate, twelve hours on and twelve off.

2nd - Seven days a week? Every day?

1st - Well, we could stand watch together, round the clock every day.

2nd - Why don't any of the others have to watch with us?

1st - I suppose the Father has other things for them to do.

2nd - Well... I don't think I can do it *every* day. I think I can be a good angel and skip some days.

1st - If you skip I will have to take your watch!

2nd - No you don't, we can both skip sometimes.

1st - The church will be unguarded.

2nd - Nothing will probably happen.

1st - Probably? Do you know how unhappy the Father will be if we fail?

2nd - Well, I just think He is asking too much.

No one can imagine such a conversation, right? We assume that the angels are always thrilled to do whatever the Father Wills and are diligent and faithful, correct?

Then, what are we intending when we say, "Thy Will be done in earth as it is in heaven..." What are we saying?

We would be shocked to think of the angels as grumbling to do what God wills like those who are being forced... refusing because they object to being *required* to do things... objecting because they have things they would rather do... or obeying only in a minimalist way, trying to do only the bare essentials.

II. Thankfully, we also have some guidance from human examples of people doing the Father's Will as those in heaven do it.

- A. Remember the Publican whose *manner* of seeking God was commended by Jesus Christ.

Luke 18:9-14

- 9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:
10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.
11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.
12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.
13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.
14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

The contrast is between a fastidiously religious person who obeyed in many ways the Revealed Will of God and a man who had been at best questionable in his lifestyle, certainly nothing like the Pharisee as to his religiosity. The difference between them was the repentant heart of the publican.

One of the great areas of ignorance in the religious world is and always has been the issue of repentance. It is one of the manifestations of a true and genuine desire for holiness that we have already mentioned. In true repentance God gives the sinner a view of himself that nothing else can ever give, a sense of his profound sinfulness that rips every shred of pride, self-sufficiency, arrogance, and false hope from him. He is left shattered, broken and torn into so many pieces that only the grace of God can assemble a life from the fragments. I am convinced that if God ever were to grant real repentance to a person without granting spiritual life and grace that person would not be able to live and function. This was the heart of the publican and he was justified, forgiven, reborn, saved, and sanctified before God whereas the religious man, the Pharisee, was not.

You see, the term, “in heaven,” does not mean only angels. There are repentant souls there as well who have served God from that place of repentance and I do not know if they are called upon to do anything in their present state other than offer up praise and worship to the Father, but I am convinced that all they do is rooted in that repentance that the Holy Spirit visited upon their soul once upon a time.

We will talk about the apostle Paul in a bit and his manner of service but it is clear that he never got over facing the Lord and himself concerning his wickedness and sin. He was rarely more than a breath or a sentence away from some reference to it.

If ever God visits Revival upon us you can be sure that one of the largest issues involved in it will be the profound impact of repentance upon the souls of people who thought they were converted.

- B. You may also remember the story of the poor widow who came to the temple with an offering.

Mark 12:41-44

- 41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.
- 42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.
- 43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:
- 44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

The *manner* of service that is being spoken of when Jesus said “as it is in heaven,” is a self-sacrificial service, a manner of serving in which one looks to gain nothing while being a help to others.

It was heaven which sent the Only Begotten Son of the Father, was it not? It was the Father Who made the Son to become sin for us so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, right?

One of the things that wears me about modern so-called Christianity is the self-seeking *manner* of so much of it. It seems like everyone has something to sell or something they want from others and it is presented in such a way that unless you are willing to buy their merchandise or give them whatever other thing they are looking for, you are worthless, godless, and a miserable servant of God. I will tell you who the miserable servant is, that one that goes looking to profit from others using our supposed common faith as their ‘pry bar’ to separate some genuine saint from his money, his time, or his labor.

Service to God, the doing of the Will of the Father, “in earth as it is in heaven,” is a self-sacrificial work in which the person doing it has no thought of gaining something for himself as he is serving God.

C. Then, there is the book of 2 Corinthians.

I am so thankful for this book of scripture. It has taught me as much about the *manner* of serving God as everything else I have read on the topic combined. It is a magnificent resource because the apostle Paul who was embarrassed to talk about himself was forced to do so because of the accusations that were being made against him at Corinth.

Even that very idea of being embarrassed to talk about himself tells us something about the *way* that the Will of God is to be done.

Look carefully at a few of the passages.

2 Cor 1:3-5

- 3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;
- 4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.
- 5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

He saw even his sufferings as a means to learn to be able to help others. This is selflessness on a level that is rarely seen but it is the *way* that heavenly souls do the Will of the Father.

2 Cor 1:12

- 12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

Simplicity and godly sincerity, (devout and pure motives, AMP) and dependence upon the enabling of God. Here again is a testimony of how we are to do God’s Will.

2 Cor 1:23-2:4

23 Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

Chapter 2

1 But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.

2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

3 And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is the joy of you all.

4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. KJV

Concern for others took precedence over his own personal ambition and even his sense of authority. He truly wanted what was best for Corinth even if that meant delaying his visit to them.

2 Cor 2:17

17 For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

He had a full devotion to the Word of God itself and was totally unwilling to corrupt it in any way.

2 Cor 4:1-4

1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

There can be absolutely no pretense or deceit in the service of God.

2 Cor 4:5-7

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may

be of God, and not of us.

And profound humility.

The ultimate goal is to serve the Lord in a way that is acceptable to Him.

2 Cor 5:9-11

- 9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.
10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.
11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

He had one eye on the Great Judgment and the other eye on the real needs of those before him.

- D. I know that there are those who will say, “Oh, but I am not an apostle, that is too difficult.”

OK, then you take the Word of God and develop for me a plan whereby you are going to serve God and do His Will, “On earth as it is in heaven.” Make sure it is biblical and I will discuss it with you.

III. The bottom line is the words mean things and we ought always to understand and intend the things that we say to God.

Think about what you mean and what you say.

“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”

What would need to change about us to bring us to that place of doing the Father’s Will with the same willingness and energy as the angels?

- To wake up in the morning thrilled to go to prayer...
- ...diligent to remember each one on our list?
- ...looking forward to some opportunity to minister Christ that day?
- ...happy to take time to read the Word and meditate on it?
- ...hoping someone would call needing our help?
- ...diligently making use of our time in a profitable way?

Is this prayer not a petition to God for Him to work that change in us?

Are we not committing fraud by praying it if we do not truly desire it?

This issue is at the very heart of all that Paul wrote and prayed for the church in his day.

This prayer is, and must be, preceded by the prayer, “please grant me the desire to desire Your

Will,” for none of us has that naturally.

Our desires concern, for the most part, Our Will, not His, and nothing can truly turn us from that course, even as a believer, but His Power operating in us.

Somewhere, at the very core of the soul, in every True Child of God, is the earnest desire both to will and to do what God wills.

Phil 2:13

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.
KJV

But apart from His *direct working* in us and our seeking for that work... the desire becomes suppressed and ineffective.