

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Date: 30 October 2022
Services: *Across the diocese*
Series: Hallowed be your name
Passage: Matthew 26:36-46
Title: Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven
Outline:

- 1. The implication**
- 2. The request**
- 3. The cost?**
- 4. The joy!**

- What **IS** God's will?//
- How **will** I know?
- **Where** I can I find out?
- And specifically – what might it mean for me to **pray** // “**YOUR will be done**”? //
- we are spending 7 weeks **grappling** with the Lord's Prayer - **line by line** - so that we may learn about **prayer** and learn to pray in the **way** Jesus **taught us**.
- We've seen God's **position** – Our **Father**
- We've asked about His **name** – that it will be **honoured**
- We've asked about His **kingdom** – that it will **come** – **both in the future final sense, and in the sense of seeing more people enter his kingdom right now... ///**
- Now we come to his **WILL** – may **his will** be our **preoccupation**. //
- let me ask you - what do most of **your** prayers consist of?
- Isn't it true that we spend a lot of time praying for what **WE want**? Praying for what will **benefit us**?
- May **OUR** will be **done!** //
- the great thing about Jesus' pattern of prayer in this Lord's Prayer, is that **half** of the 6 things for which he asks are about **God**.
- this can't be just an **accident** can it?
- The disciples ask to be taught **how** to pray and as Jesus answers, he shows them that prayer is not a matter of bringing a **list** of **needs** to God like sitting on **Santa's** knee as a kid at **Christmas** – no – it is an **intimate** and **adult relationship** between **father** and **child** where the child is interested in the **Father's** good, not just their **own** good. //
- So **here's** where we are heading as we look at this line '**your will be done**' today:

- 1. The implication**
- 2. The request**
- 3. The cost?**
- 4. The joy!**

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

1. THE IMPLICATION

- “Your will be done on **earth**, as it is in **heaven**.”
- and we realise at once the implication is that God's will is **NOT** currently **done** / on **earth**.
- it is done in **heaven** - the **heavenly beings** - his **angels, Christians** already **there**, all do his will **perfectly**.
- **what he commands / happens; what he says, / goes.**
- but not on **earth!** //
- in fact, only in the **human** realm is his will **NOT done**.
- everything else in the **cosmos** does God's will **perfectly** and without **question** // but **humans / go it alone.** //
- We see this in Jesus' life - **demons** obeyed Jesus, **sickness** and **inability** obeyed him, the **winds** and **waves** obeyed, // but people **didn't!**
- and as we pray this prayer, we are confronted at once with the profound nature of mankind's **rebellion**.
- here is a perfect and good God - not **fickle**, not **arbitrary**, not **irrational**, not just a **force** but a **personal** God, **committed** to the Creation he brought into being, **intimately interested** in humankind whom he made to enjoy fellowship with - he's "**slow to anger, merciful, compassionate** and **abounding in steadfast love**" says the Psalmist, and what happens? // **we go against him - we do our own thing!**
- we cannot pray this line, without admitting **our part** in that **failure** to do God's will; without acknowledging with some **sadness** - that we **too** have failed to do his **will**.
- We've been **disobedient**, or **slack**, or **neglectful**...
- it is **sobering** to realise that earth is a place where God's will is **rejected - ignored.** ///
- So there's the **clear implication**... God's will is **NOT done**... //
- let's look now then at what we're asking...

2. THE REQUEST

- **“your will be done”** we pray
- what is a person's **will**? - but what they **want**?
- so what we are saying to our Father is – “Father may what **you** want to happen on **earth, happen!**”
- “So **great** are you, so much do we **believe** in you, so great is our **trust** in you - so much do we think you **know** what you are **doing** - that we want to say - may **your** will be done. Please **cause** it to be **done!**”
- **it is a prayer for change on earth**
- we long that **earth** may be more like **heaven** - where there is no longer any **opposition** to God, where evil is put **down**, where people **worship God wholeheartedly** and **unreservedly.** //
- we long to see the **change** in **our** world that would come from people coming into the **kingdom** - coming under the **rule of God**.
- It is an extension of the line we looked at last week '**your kingdom come**' as **it** was an extension of the line '**hallowed be your name**'.
- its **logical** isn't it? //
- For the only way to **honour God** as **God** is to **submit** him as **God** - that is – to **come into** his **kingdom** - place yourself **under** his **rule**.

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

- and the only way that God's will, **will** be done on earth, is when **people** come under **God's rule**.
- as we saw last week, God's will, will not be done by **legislating** for it in our **parliaments** or by **preaching** morality in our **streets**; but when people first understand that God's **will** for **them** is that they **abandon** living a life for **self** and **start living** a life for **him**. ///
- yet it is more - **it is a prayer for personal change**.
- it is an acknowledgment that our own **personal obedience** is not all that it could be.
- May your will be done - **IN MY LIFE!**
- **may I** do your **will!**
- Lord, please **help** me to **live** for **you**.
- Please help me to rid my life of my anger, or my lousy **priorities**, or my weak **excuses** for not being the person I **should** be.
- please help me to stop being so **selfish** at **home** and with my **family**.
- please help me to love my **children** more than my **work**.
- please help me to keep my **mind clean**.
- please help me to spend more **time** with you.
- please help me to clean up my **language**.
- please help me to..... **whatever** you know in your life that needs **changing** to be **conformed** to God's **will**.
- Lord make me the person you want me to be.
- Work in me, so that I might **love** to do **YOUR** will before my **OWN**. **////**
- yet it is on another level, a **prayer of personal surrender**.
- may what **you** want to happen in my life, **happen**.
- it is a **surrender to God's sovereignty** - surrender to his **wisdom**, to his working out his **purposes** in whatever way he deems necessary.
- we say in a spirit of **humility** - Lord **do** what you **have to do**, no matter how it **involves** me or **impacts** on me.
- **Use** me as you **will** for your **purposes** to be **achieved**.
- what are we saying?
- Lord you are in charge.
- We **love** and **trust you**.
- **We want** what **you** want.
- Please make what **you** want, **happen** - in the **WORLD** - and in my **LIFE!**

3. THE COST?

- now it occurs to me, if it hasn't already to you, that you cannot pray this prayer without some sort of **struggle**.
- it will take some **praying** won't it, if we are to pray it with **integrity!**
- it is usually **my** will I want to do!
- And for us to give up what **we** want, in favour of what **God** wants will sometimes be **difficult** and **costly**.

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

- remember what this prayer cost the **Lord Jesus**?
- what Jesus preached in Matthew **6**, he practised in Matthew **26**.
- he went through a **momentous struggle** in the Garden of Gethsemane. He knew what lay ahead of him and it wasn't the **physical agony** of death on a cross that caused his agony, but knowing that bearing **your** sin and **my** sin would **separate** him from his **Father**.
- he asked his Father – “Lord if there is any **other** way - of dealing with the sin of the world and bringing about people's forgiveness – can we do it **that** way?”
- yet he prayed - nevertheless – “not my will - but yours be done!”
- There **was** no other **way** - it was God's **will** that he go to the **cross** and bear our **sins**; and Jesus went in the same **obedience** and **surrender** that had marked his prayer.
- and for **us** to pray for something and to add at the end – “nevertheless - not **my** will - but **yours** be done” - may be **difficult** - may be **agonising** - but if we have put our lives under his **Lordship** – that will be the **natural** and **expected consequence**.
- there was in the Methodist Church what they called a covenant making service - I guess like our confirmation, where a person publicly committed themselves to following Christ. The words perhaps spell out the implications of praying this line - your will be done:
 - *"We take upon ourselves with joy, the yoke of obedience and engage ourselves, for the love of Thee, to seek and do Thy perfect will."*
 - Then they would each say: *"I am no longer my own Lord, but Yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will, put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be **employed** for you or **laid aside** for you, **exalted** for you, or **brought low** for you; let me be **full**, let me be **empty**; let me have **all** things, let me have **nothing**; I freely and heartily yield all things to Your pleasure and disposal. And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Thou art mine and I am Thine. So be it.*
- we could well add - 'your will be done'. **////**

-
- we've looked then at the **implication**, the **request**, the cost and finally:

4. THE JOY!

- to say with your lips and mean with your heart 'your will be done' will be the only way to **true joy!**
- after my previous section, you might wonder if that could possibly be true - but there is no more joyful place to be, than **doing** God's will and **surrendering** to God's will.
- we have **brainwashed** you see by a **terrific lie** - the lie that **obedience to God = oppression in life**.
- the lie that God's **best** is always **hard** and **never joyful**.
- The attitude that says – “this can't be acceptable with God - I'm having a good **time!**”
- it is a lie which is **prevalent** among **unbelievers** and unfortunately it has found its way into the **church**.
- but nothing could be **further** from the **truth!**
- To **know** God, to **trust** God; to surrender to his **sovereignty** will actually bring the greatest **joy**.
- Scripture is full of people who submit to the will of God and know great **joy** in doing so.
- The prophet **Habakkuk**, faced with the coming **judgement** of **God** on the **sins** of the **people** he was ministering to **said**: (3:17) *“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though*

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Saviour."

- there is a **wonderful** picture of **joy** because of his **surrender** to the **sovereign will** of **God**.
- and the **opposite** is also true - that the Scriptures are full of examples of people absolutely **miserable** in their **disobedience**.
- Remember King David who saw a lovely girl bathing on her roof top and determined to woo her? She became pregnant and so, not to be found out, arranged for her husband to come home from war that he might sleep with her. The plan didn't work, because so loyal was her husband, Uriah the soldier, that he said it wasn't right for him to sleep with his wife while his fellow soldiers did battle. So David arranged for him to be defenceless and without support at the front lines so that he would be killed, leaving him free to take his wife as his.
- was David happy? The rest of life really was **tainted** with **misery** as a result of that **disobedience**.
- no - the most **unhappy person** in the world is a **disobedient Christian**.
- If you are **ignoring** what you know to be God's right and proper will right **now**, you will not feel **comfortable**, until you put it **right** with **God**.
- Dare I mention that ancient chorus – trust and obey... for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.
- obedience and joy go hand in hand you see - and I hope you will know **both** in ever increasing degrees as you pray and live 'your will be done'.

-
- well let's bring our thoughts to a close.
 - when you next pray this line - if you pray this prayer and mean it, you will acknowledge that only on **earth** - among **humankind**, is God's will **not done**.
 - in this prayer we are expressing our desire for
 - **THIS WORLD** to change,
 - for our **LIVES** to change and;
 - **WE ARE SURRENDERING** to God's sovereign will to be at work in our lives - in whatever way he chooses.
 - and we must count the **cost** of **praying** this **prayer**.
 - We must not pray this prayer **lightly** or **flippantly**.
 - If you do not want to **seriously** hand **over** to God and say – “whatever Lord you **want** - whatever will bring you **honour** - you **do**” - don't pray it!
 - but know too - that this is the **only** place where true **joy** is to be found as a **Christian... doing** God's **will**, living an **obedient, godly life; surrendering** to his **sovereign will**.
 - so pray this prayer **expectantly** - expect God's **blessing** as you **do** // and **look** for and **work** for his will to be done on **earth** as it is in **heaven**.