

The Centrality of Prayer

by Stephen Kaung

Stephen Kaung emphasizes the importance of prayer centered on God's kingdom and the sanctification of His name in the believer's life and the church.

Duration: 1:11:09

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1-3, Malachi 4:6, Matthew 4:10, Matthew 6:9-10, Matthew 22:37, Romans 8:15, Revelation 4:8

Topics: "Prayer"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of sanctifying God and accepting what He has done. The commandments in both the Old and New Testaments are related to the holiness of God. Jesus summarizes the commandments by stating that the most important one is to love God with all our heart, mind, strength, and soul. The preacher explains that sin entered the world and caused disintegration and void, but God did not give up and restored the earth to make it habitable again.

Transcript

Will you please turn to the Gospel according to Matthew. Matthew chapter 6, we will just read verses 9 and 10. Thus therefore pray ye, our Father who art in the heavens, let thy name be sanctified, let thy kingdom come, let thy will be done, as in heaven, so upon the earth.

Last night when we were together we mentioned that the burden for our time together is the Lord's Prayer. And as we mentioned last night that the Lord's Prayer is not only a prayer that our Lord Jesus certainly himself prayed, but it is a prayer that he taught his disciples to pray. He wants us to join with him in his prayer.

Now this Lord's Prayer is taught to the disciples. In other words, unless we are disciples of Christ, we do not know how to take up this prayer. As God's children, of course, we can pray.

And as babes in Christ, we cry to our Heavenly Father. We ask for his help, we ask for his supplies, and we find out how he cares for us and how he hears us. But as we grow up in the Lord, as we put ourselves under his discipline, as we allow him to train us that we grow up spiritually, then we find our prayer will enter into a deeper realm.

In other words, as babes in Christ, we do pray. And these prayers are prayers indeed. But when we grow up more, then you'll find in our prayer there will be a shifting of center.

Now when we are babes in Christ, when we pray, our prayer is self-centered. In other words, our prayer is governed by our needs. But as we grow up in Christ, then you'll find gradually in our prayer life, we find our prayer begin to shift its center.

Instead of self-centered, it should become God-centered. In other words, our prayer is not initiated by our needs. Our prayer originates from God's purpose.

And when our prayer is God-centered, then we find we are lifted out of our narrow, petty self, and we enter into a horizon that is limitless. And this is actually what the Lord's prayer is trying to bring us into. So this evening we would like to share together on this matter of the centrality of prayer.

In other words, in prayer, the first thing is not our need. The first thing is God's need. We remember our Lord Jesus said, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

So here you'll find in our seeking, in our praying, the first subject of our prayer and our seeking ought to be the kingdom of God and His righteousness. And then all these things will be added unto you. So all these things, of course, if we read the context in Matthew chapter six, we find all these things refers to our need.

What we should eat, what we should drink, what we should be close with, all these things. And all these things shall be added unto us. So these should not be our primary seeking and prayer.

Our primary seeking of prayer should be the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Then we find all these things shall be added unto us. Now as based in Christ, of course, our prayer will be all these things.

But when we grow up in the Lord, now we need to see that we need to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first. Then all these things shall be added unto us. So this is the centrality of prayer.

Our prayer must be centered upon the kingdom of God and His righteousness. And we know, as we so pray, all these things shall be added unto us. Now in the so-called Lord's Prayer, you'll find our Lord teaches us to begin our prayer with three things.

Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Hallowed be thy name. Now we know a name represents a person. It identifies you.

And sometimes, especially in the old days, it describes you. Now in modern days you find that you may have a name that does not describe you. But in the old days, you know, a name not only identifies, it really describes you.

Now it is especially true in the scripture. In the scripture you'll find all the names really describe that person. For instance, like Jacob, a twister.

And after the Lord's dealing with him, you'll find his name is Israel, a prince with God. It just describes that person. And this is the way in China, you know, all our names describe a person.

And that's the old usage. So a name really stands for that person. It includes his character, his value, what he is.

All includes in that name. And of course the name of God represents him. It stands for him.

It identifies him and it also describes him. Now, hallowed be thy name. Hallowed, or sanctified, in original means to be set apart.

To be sanctified. To be different. To be the opposite of another word, common.

That which is not common is holy. You know, the opposite of righteousness is sin. And the opposite of holiness is commonness.

Our God is holy. His name is holy. It means that our God is unique.

He is special. He is one of its kind. Incomparable.

You cannot try to put him on a level with anything else. With any other name. Because his name is above every name.

Now that is the meaning of holy. Holy be thy name. Your name, that is your person, is so unique, is so special, that there is nothing, no one can be compared with you.

Now that is what it means by hallowed be thy name. We find in the scripture, in the vision of Isaiah. You know, in Isaiah chapter six, Isaiah as he entered into the temple to pray, and he was given a vision.

And in that vision he saw God seated on his throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. And then you find the seraphim, they are crying out, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty. The whole earth is full of His glory.

And then again when you come to the New Testament, you find the apostle John on the island of Patmos. He was raptured in the spirit to the third heaven. And there he saw the throne of God.

And one sitting upon the throne. And then you find that around the throne there were the four living creatures. And they cried day and night without ceasing, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.

So in other words you find God is holy. And the holiness of God you can see throughout the whole scripture. God is holy.

He is different. He is uncommon. He is special.

He is one of His kind. You can never put anything on the level with Him. Now that is what God is.

And that is what is meant by His name is holy. And again you find in the scripture sometimes there is another word that stands opposite to holy, and that is profane. Profane.

Now profane in the original simply means cross the threshold. In other words it becomes accessible to be trodden upon. That is what is meant by profane.

Now God is holy. You cannot tread upon His name as if He is accessible to everybody. He is nothing.

Now profane is the opposite of sacred or holy. So we must sanctify God's name. And we must not profane it.

Now that is very essential in the prayer of our Lord Jesus. You know when you take the Ten Commandments, you find the Ten Commandments are divided into two tables. And one table of stone inscribes four commandments.

And the second table you find it is inscribed with six commandments. Now the first table deals with our relationship with God. And the second table deals with our relationship one with another.

And when you read these commandments, especially the first four, you find all these commandments are related to hallowed be thy name. The first commandment says, thou shalt not have any other god beside God Himself. He is the only one.

Now you cannot put Him among other gods that you consider as God put Him on the same level and make it common. Now you cannot do that because He is holy. And of course the second commandment says, you shall not make any image according to the things created and you shall not worship or serve because God is a jealous God.

Now what is idolatry? Idolatry is an abomination to God. Now why is it an abomination? Because idolatry is violating the holiness of God. God is unique, alone.

But then you try to make God common, become one of the creatures. And God is alone to be worshipped and alone to be served. But you try to worship and serve other things than God Himself.

It is a violation of His uniqueness. And then the third commandment, of course, we shall not mention the name of the Lord in vain. Now when you use the name of the Lord in vain, it means that you do not consider His name as sacred.

You do not think much of Him. You despise Him in a sense. It does not matter.

And that again violates the holiness of God. And the fourth commandment is, we need to keep the Sabbath. Now spiritually we know that keeping the Sabbath simply means that we accept and enter into rest because God has already finished the work.

If God did the work in six days, the work is finished. And man enters into rest on the seventh day and to man it is the first day. In other words, we begin with rest.

We do not try to work as if the work hasn't been done yet. God has already done everything and we just enter into rest in the finished work of God or in the finished work of Christ. And that is honoring God.

That is sanctifying God because we accept what He has done. So you find that even in the law, in the commandments, they are related with this matter of the holiness of God. And when you come to the New Testament, you find our Lord Jesus sum up these four commandments.

Because one day, you remember, a lawyer came to the Lord and said, now what are the most important commandments? And the Lord said, Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, all thy soul. This is the first commandment. And of course, when the Lord was doing that, He just summed up the first four commandments.

The spirit of the first four commandments is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength, with all your soul. And brothers and sisters, what is sanctifying God's name? Sanctifying God's name simply means you love God with your whole heart. And if you love God with your

whole heart, with your whole mind, with your whole soul, with your whole strength, you sanctify His name.

It is simple as that. Sanctify be your name. Now, in order to understand this matter of hallowed be thy name, I think we should go back and try to see in history how God's name must be sanctified.

You know, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. When God created the heavens and the earth, His name was sanctified. You remember in Job it is said, when God laid the foundation of the earth, the morning stars, they sang together, and they shouted with joy.

And of course, the morning stars, there, refers to the angels. Because God created first the angels, the spirit beings, and when God laid the foundation of the earth, you find all these angels, they were praising God, and they were shouting with joy. In other words, God was honored.

He was honored as the creator of all things. Now, we do not know from the day that God created the heavens and the earth, how long that blessed state continued. We do not know.

But we do know that during that period, the name of God was honored. But unfortunately, we find something, and if we look into Isaiah 14 or Ezekiel chapter 28, we find a hint there. In other words, you'll find among God's created beings, probably the first created angel, Lucifer, the morning star, and God evidently created him with such beauty, and endued him with such talents, and God gave him such dominion to rule for God.

He was a cherub, anointed cherub, that covered the seat of God. That was how close he was to God. And in the beginning, when he was created, he was perfect.

And he was among those angels that shouted for joy and praised God for his creation. But unfortunately, you'll find gradually, a self-consciousness entered into that archangel. He began to be self-centered.

Pride entered into his heart. And when pride entered into his heart, he wanted to be equal with God. He was not contented with being under God, above all the other angels probably, but under God.

He wanted to be equal with God. And from pride, you'll find unrighteousness, violence, began to appear. And finally, God had to cast him out of the third heaven from the mountain of God.

And he turned himself into what we know today as Satan. So God never created Satan. God created a beautiful angel, archangel.

But that angel turned himself into an adversary of God, into Satan. And when he was cast out, we know that the domain that was under his rule entered into void and waste. Now, if you understand what happened, you know that what really happened was there, this archangel, instead of sanctifying God's name, he violated the very holiness of God.

He profaned the heavenly sanctuaries. And that is exactly what happened. God's holiness was violated.

Because God would not allow anything to be equal with Him. He is unique. He is God.

And God alone. But thank God, God began to work. And again, we do not know how long a gap between the destruction of this planet, or our solar system, evidently at that time, under the dominion of that archangel.

So it entered into void and waste. But God will not give up. So the Spirit of God brooded over the vast emptiness, the darkness, the water of the deep.

And then in six days God restored it. God restored the earth to make it habitable. And on the sixth day He created man.

He created man according to His own image. And then He gave man dominion over the fowls of the air, over the beasts of the field, and over the fishes of the sea. In other words, He gave this earth to man to rule for him.

Now, what is the purpose of God in creating man? One of His purposes is that through the man whom He has created according to His own image, the holiness of His name might be recovered. His name was violated, profaned by the archangel. And now God created a man, a little lower than the angels, and yet created in His own image.

And God wanted to use man to be that vessel and instrument to restore the holiness of His name. God put man in the garden of Eden. He is given the privilege of enjoying everything in the garden.

And yet, He is put under one command. And that is not to eat the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In other words, by obeying God, God's holiness is preserved.

But unfortunately, we find that again man began to think of himself instead of God. He was tempted to be God Himself. He violated again the holiness of God.

And sin entered into this world. So, from the very beginning of human history, now even to our time, we know so far as the history of mankind is concerned, we find that God's name is not honored. God's name is violated.

It's not honored by man. Even though throughout human history you find here and there some individuals God had apprehended, and in their lives you find God's name was honored. For instance, like Abel, like Enoch, like Noah, like Abraham, Jacob, Isaac, and these people.

You find in these few God's name was respected, honored, sanctified. But so far as mankind is concerned, you find the name of God was profaned, was violated. Now God chose a nation, the nation of Israel.

And certainly God put His name in that nation, hoping that that nation will hallow His name. But unfortunately again, you find the whole history of Israel is a history of God's mercy and man's unfaithfulness. When you come to the end of the Old Testament, Malachi, you find that God has a controversy with His people.

And the controversy is over this matter of if I'm a father, where is my honor? If I'm a master, where is my fear? God's name was not honored, sanctified. So the Old Testament ends with this word, curse. The last word in the Old Testament is curse.

It ends with curse. Men were under curse because they had violated the holiness of God's name. But dear brothers and sisters, we do thank God.

Because when you come to the New Testament, now you find there is a new beginning. You find in the Gospels, there is one man. And that man is our Lord Jesus.

The Son of God came into this world to be a man just like we are. And yet in that name you find God's name is sanctified all the time. Never in His life you find God's name is being profaned.

When that man was tempted in the wilderness, you find that man said, we have to worship God and serve Him alone. In order to sanctify God's name, He was willing to lay down His own life. Throughout His life you find God is glorified.

And even when you come to John chapter 17, when He pray His prayer, you find that He said, Father, I have glorified Thee. I have done all the works that Thou have sent Me for. Now glorify Thou Me.

In other words, glorifying God simply means He sanctifies God. He does the will of God in His whole life. He is the only man on earth that has sanctified God's name throughout His life.

And this is the life of our Lord Jesus. And do you know, brothers and sisters, because of the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus, this life has been given to us. And today we who are His, we are as 1 Peter 2, 9 says, we are a chosen race, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a possession.

And we are to declare the excellencies of Him who has delivered us out of darkness into light. So in other words, today you'll find the church is supposed to be the corporate vessel in which the name of God is sanctified. If in the world His name is not sanctified, then in the church His name ought to be sanctified.

But is it true? Is it true that the name of the Lord is really sanctified in the church? And because of that, you see the need of this prayer. Hallowed be thy name. Now why does the church need to pray this prayer? First of all, it is because we sense in ourselves, we sense in our lives, both as individuals and as a corporate body, that oftentimes we do not sanctify.

Oftentimes we look upon His name as common. We do not honor Him as we should. We do not glorify Him in all things.

We do not treat Him as God, the only God, whom we worship and we serve. Now in our individual life you'll find that in many many areas, in many times, we do not honor Him, we do not sanctify Him, we do not set apart for Him as we should. And because of this, we need to pray this prayer.

Hallowed be thy name. Brothers and sisters, as we pray this prayer, you'll find that it on the one hand expresses our desire. Now do we really desire that the name of the Lord will be sanctified in our lives? And if we really desire it and we pray for it, then you'll find the Holy Spirit will take up our prayer and He will sanctify us.

In other words, He will work in our lives in the areas where we are not sanctifying God. We are not separated. We are not set apart from God.

We are still seeking something for ourselves. And we do not put God first. And in these areas, you'll find the Holy Spirit as we pray.

He will begin to work in our lives and sanctify us that we may sanctify the name of the Lord Jesus. So it is not a prayer that we just repeat. It is a prayer.

If we pray from our heart, you will find there will be the working of the cross, the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. And we pray this prayer, not only for ourselves, but we realize that the name of the Lord is not sanctified on this earth. And we take a stand and say His name ought to be sanctified.

And as we pray, we find that God will work through us that is through His church that His name will be sanctified upon this earth in different areas of life. So brothers and sisters, this is the reason why we must pray such a prayer. Thy name be sanctified.

Now, do we realize this need? We know one day, the name of the Lord will be sanctified upon this earth. Because God has given Christ a name that is above every name. And to that name, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord.

We know this day is coming. And it is the prayer of the church that will bring in that day. If we do not pray such prayer, you know it is a strange thing in a sense because in God's work of creation, He did all by Himself.

He never asked anybody to help Him. But in this matter of redemption, in the area of redemption, of new creation, you find He always look for us to cooperate with Him. And if He couldn't find cooperation from us, He will wait.

And that's the reason why you find even though it has been two thousand years after Christ came, His name is still not sanctified on earth as it is in heaven yet. It is because the church is not praying. It is because we do not mean business with Him.

And if we really take up such prayer and really mean business with the Lord, and you will find effect will first come upon us, ourselves. And then through us it will come upon this world. It will pave the way for the day when His name shall be honored above everything.

Thy kingdom. Now kingdom in the Greek original, the better translation is sovereign rule or sovereign reign. That is what the kingdom means.

It means the reign of God. The kingdom of God is where God reigns. Now in the broad sense, God reigns from eternity to eternity.

In the broad sense, you will find that His kingdom is throughout the ages. And His dominion is from generation to generation. That you will find in Psalm 145.

His throne is set upon the heavens and His kingdom rules over all. Psalm 103. So there you will find that in the broad sense God's kingdom is from eternity to eternity.

Because He is the creator. So everything is under His rule. There is nothing that is outside His rule.

Now that is true. But in the strict sense, what is the kingdom of God? The kingdom of God is where God rules in such a way that those who are under His rule begin to be characterized by His own character. Now that is strictly the kingdom of God.

So in other words, you will find a physical sense of the kingdom of God which is broad. From eternity to eternity. That covers everything.

But then, there is a spiritual sense. And the spiritual sense, the real sense of God's kingdom is wherever God rules, He puts His character into us. So those who are under His rule begin to take up His character and expresses His character.

Now, upon these people the kingdom of God has come. Thy kingdom come. So when we are praying Thy kingdom come it doesn't mean that God does not rule over the whole universe.

He always does. But it simply means that the spiritual reality of His kingdom which is characterized by His own character has not been a reality on Earth yet. And that is the reason why we have to pray that Thy kingdom come.

We pray this prayer because we know there is another kingdom. The kingdom of God is the kingdom of love. Because God is love.

And that's why you find in Colossians we find that He has translated us out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of His love. In other words, God's kingdom is love. But then you'll find Satan, he set up an opposite kingdom.

It is the kingdom of hate. Now, God's kingdom is the kingdom of righteousness. The kingdom of God is not in eating and drinking.

It is in righteousness and peace and joy of the Holy Spirit. So here you'll find God's kingdom is the kingdom of righteousness because God is righteous. So everything that is in the kingdom exhibits their righteousness.

But the enemy sets up another kingdom. It is the kingdom of sin. The opposite of God's kingdom.

Now, God's kingdom is the kingdom of light. God is light. And there is no darkness.

There is no shadow. There is no shade. Everything is transparent.

Now, that is God's kingdom. But then you'll find the enemy's kingdom is darkness. Everything is in dark.

So nothing is really revealed. You'll find that in the universe there are two different kingdoms. One kingdom is called the kingdom of God.

And the other kingdom is the satanic kingdom. And these two kingdoms are the very opposite of each other. Do you discover that these two kingdoms are not only outside of you.

These two kingdoms are actually within you. You'll find that within you there are two kingdoms. There is the kingdom of God, love, righteousness, spiritual, heavenly, full of light, truth.

And yet you'll find within you there seems to be another power, another kingdom that is hate, sin, dark. And these two kingdoms are within us, striving against each other. And because of this, brothers and sisters, how necessary it is for us to pray, Thy kingdom come.

You know, when we pray Thy kingdom come, we are taking a stand. With these two kingdoms there is no neutral ground. You cannot be neutral, not aligned.

You must be one in one kingdom or the other kingdom, and you have to declare your stand. So when the church prays, and when we pray Thy kingdom come, it is a declaration of our stand. In other words, we stand for the kingdom of God.

We want His kingdom to rule over our lives. We do not want to have anything to do with the kingdom of darkness. Now that is the stand that we take when we so pray.

And when we pray, we are not praying only for ourselves, but we are praying that the kingdom of God will reign over the whole earth, as it is in heaven. In heaven you'll find His kingdom is unchallenged. But on earth, it is always challenged.

And that's the reason why we need to pray, Thy kingdom come. Now thank God, when our Lord Jesus was on this earth, you'll find that the kingdom of God is in Him. Is in Him.

He said, when people ask Him, when will the kingdom of God come? They shall. Here or there. The kingdom of God is in the midst of you.

And of course, our Lord Jesus is in their midst. So you'll find that when the Lord was on earth, literally, spiritually, and really, you'll find He is the kingdom of God. Because God's sovereign role over that life is absolute.

There is no darkness in Him. His conflict with the kingdom of darkness is only external. There is no internal conflict there.

Because He is absolutely obedient to the Father. He is willing to suffer in order to obey the Father. And because of His obedience on the cross of Calvary, you'll find that He recaptured the kingdom from the hands of the enemy.

You know the cross of our Lord Jesus has accomplished so much more than we ever imagined. Often times we take the cross, the finished work of Christ on the cross as a personal thing. Now, it is personal.

But you must remember that the effect of the finished work of Christ on the cross is universal. Universal. Why? Because you'll find that on the cross He recaptured the kingdom of God.

He took away from Satan that usurpation that Satan had over this world. He has completely defeated the enemy. Give him a fatal blow.

He has overcome. And that is the reason why positionally we are already translated out of the power of darkness and into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. You know, if the Lord Jesus has not overcome the enemy completely, if He has not recaptured the kingdom out of the enemy's hand, then we will still be under the power of darkness.

But thank God He has translated us out of the kingdom of darkness and He has put us into the kingdom of His love. That is where we are. Positionally.

And now the Holy Spirit is to work this into us experientially. Because we already have that position, therefore we can have that experience. Because of the finished work of Christ on the cross in this aspect, therefore we are able to enter into the kingdom of God in reality.

Today, we find all the power of darkness in us can be cast out. And all that characterizes the kingdom of God can become a reality in us. But, we need to pray.

Because as we pray, then the Holy Spirit begins to work. In connection with that, we also know whenever the Holy Spirit works, there will be the marks of the cross. You cannot expect the Holy Spirit to work without the mark.

It is by the cross of our Lord Jesus that the Holy Spirit is fulfilled. And whenever the Holy Spirit works in our lives, you will find He brings the cross upon us. Why the cross? It's the place where self is crucified.

And self is the very nature. You know, if you really want to see what sin is, the very nature of sin itself. I. That is the very nature of sin.

In the beginning, that's how sin began. When that archangel said I, I, I. And this sin, this nature becomes ours in the fallen man. Therefore, you will find when the Holy Spirit begins to work, He will apply the cross upon our self-life, our soul-life.

He will apply that on us. That our self will be reduced. Will be reduced to zero.

And when self is reduced, then Christ is increased. And when the kingdom of darkness is casting out, then the kingdom of light begins to be enlarged in us. So, that's the way that we find, we find the kingdom of God becomes a reality to us.

Now, often times we say that one day the kingdom of God will come. Now, we know that. Thy kingdom come.

Now, when we pray Thy kingdom come, it does have the sense that because His kingdom hasn't come yet, therefore we pray that one day His kingdom shall come. And all the kingdoms of this earth shall become the kingdom of our God and of His man. We are praying His kingdom shall come, that God will rule over the whole earth.

And when God shall rule over the whole earth, that is millennium. You'll find righteousness, righteousness reigns over the whole earth. That is millennium.

And you'll find that the lion and the cow can feed together, and a little child can play at a poison serpent's hole, and things like that. Nothing hurts, nothing hurts anymore because the kingdom of God has come upon this earth. Now, this is our prayer.

When we look at the world today, brothers and sisters, we ought to pray Thy kingdom come. We find that the kingdom of this world is not some place that we want to stay for long. We long for the time when the kingdom of God shall come, and His character shall characterize the whole earth.

Now, what a blessed time it will be. But brothers and sisters, remember, before we enter into that kingdom, that kingdom has to become a reality in us. If today we let that kingdom enter into us, let the supreme rule of God be a reality in our lives, then you don't need to worry when the kingdom comes, whether you will be there reigning or not.

You don't need to worry about it. So, the thing is, today, Thy kingdom come. We are not just praying for something in the future.

We are praying for something now. Unless the kingdom of God becomes a reality now in our lives, and in the church, that the rule of God is absolute in His church, then when the kingdom of God finally shall come, probably we will be ashamed. So, may the Lord help us.

Thy kingdom come, and how much we need to pray that prayer. And then, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. You know this.

Here is a Thy will be done. And the will here is singular number. You know, we often think of the will of God in the plural sense.

What is the will of God? Is this the will of God for me to go here or to go there? Is it the will of God for me to do this or to do that? You know, we think of the will of God as countless, as many wills of God. But, of all the many wills of God, you find there is one will. God has only one will.

And that one will includes all the other wills. And Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Now, what is that will? We cannot pray that prayer if we do not know what that will is.

When we search the Scripture, we find that God does have one will. And He will that will according to His good pleasure. And after that will is made, then He begins to work the counsel of His will.

And He will work until that will is realized. God never gives up. It is by that will He created all things.

You know, in Revelation chapter 4, when the angels sing of the glory of the Creator, they said, Thou art worthy, Thou art worthy. Thou are worthy to receive honor, power, and glory. Why? Because Thou has created all things, and all things are created according to Thy will.

Now, in some translations it says according to Thy pleasure. In other translations, according to Thy will, it is the same thing. Because God wills according to His pleasure.

In other words, nobody tells Him how to will. He will what pleases Him. You know, because He is God.

And He created all things according to His will. Now, what is His will? And when you even come to the matter of the new creation. Now, what is that will behind the new creation? Is it the will that He wants us to go to Heaven? Is it the will that He wants us to be saved? Now, thank God it is included.

But certainly that is not the will. That is not the will. Now, what is the will behind the whole counsel of God? What is the will that is behind all God's working? What is it that God is working towards? Brothers and sisters, I think it is evident when you read, especially you read Paul's writings, say Ephesians or Colossians, you find it is very clear.

In Colossians chapter 1 it says, Why is it God created all things in Him, through Him, and for Him? You know, all creation created in Him, in Christ, in the Son. It is created by the Son and it is created for the Son. And not only that, He was the firstborn of not only the creation, but He was the firstborn of resurrection.

That He may be the first, have the first place in all things. Now, that is the will. The will of God is concerning with His Son.

He loves His Son so much that He has only one pleasure, one will, and that is to give everything to His Son. That His Son may have the first place in all things. He may have the preeminence in all things.

And we know the first place there doesn't mean that He has the first place and we have the second place, or the third place. The first place simply means that He is all. He is all.

All in all in Christ Jesus. Now, that is the will of God. And you know when God first created all things, that will was realized.

Because when all things came out from the hand of the beloved Son, there was harmony there. There was harmony there. All things are integrated in Him.

But unfortunately, sin enters into this world. And when sin enters into this world, then you will find everything disintegrated. You know, it is the Son who holds all things into unity.

And when sin enters into this world, it breaks the unity. And everything disintegrates. And when things begin to disintegrate, we know it has lost its purpose.

And that is the reason why you find in Colossians chapter 1 that through the cross of our Lord Jesus, through His blood, He has reconciled all things. You know, once upon a time, all things were created for Him. And all things were united in Him.

But sin entered and all things disintegrated. So here you'll find the Son of God has to come to this world to die on the cross in order that through the working on the cross He might reconcile. That is to restore everything into harmony with Himself.

That is reconciliation. He has reconciled us to God. And not only us, but He has reconciled all things.

So far as the work of Christ is concerned is already done. Already done. Why? Because with God there is no time factor.

So what Christ did on the cross is eternal. So on the cross He has reconciled all things to Himself. But with us there is always a time factor.

And that's the reason why you'll find in Ephesians chapter 1, in the fullness of time, God is to sum up all things in Christ. Things in the heavens and things upon this earth. So today we find that so far as God is concerned it is already done.

That will is already accomplished by the cross of Calvary. But so far as we are concerned, and so far as all things are concerned, there needs to be a time. And during this time you'll find the Holy Spirit will apply the finished work of Christ in reconciling all things to Himself.

That Christ may characterize all things. Now, that is. You know, the will is much, much greater than you or me or or even the whole universe.

The will is the Son. That is the will. That He may have all things.

And this will begin first with the Church. And that is why you'll find it is said in Ephesians chapter one, Christ being head over all things to the Church which is His body. The fullness of Him who fills all and in all.

This will must be done in the Church first. And then through the Church to all things. Now, how serious this is.

Do we know where we are? Do we allow this will to become a reality in our lives individually? Is He all? Does He have the first place in our lives? Does He... Is our character being characterized by Him? In other words, it is Christ. Not I, but Christ. Now, is this a reality in us? Is this will being done in us on earth as it is in heaven? This will be our first question.

And the second question is in our lives together, is this will be done among us on earth as it is in heaven? That Christ is supreme. He is the first and the last. And He is all and in all in the Church.

We see no one but Jesus only in the Church. Now, is this a reality? And then through the Church we are to bring that will upon the whole earth. So, that is the reason why you find Paul in Romans chapter 8 said, the whole created things are groaning because they are under corruption.

Under vanity. They do not like it, but they are under that kind of state. Why? Because of man.

When man fell, the whole creation, under man fell into emptiness and corruption. And they are not willing for it. You know, if we have spiritual ears, we can hear the groaning of the universe.

They are groaning out for liberty, for purpose, for meaning. But when the sons of God are manifested, then you find the whole creation will be liberated and they will enter into the liberty. So, you find it depends on the manifestations of the sons of God.

Now, what does that mean? It means that we who are God's children, we have to grow up. As we grow up to be sons and daughters, that would be able to take up responsibility together with Christ, co-heirs with Christ. Then, when the sons of God are manifested, the whole creation will be liberated and they will be rejoined into that unity.

Christ is the center of that unity. He is the cohesion, the cohesive force of that oneness. And this is the will of God.

One day, everything will speak of Christ. Nothing will speak of anything else. And that is the will of God.

The Son is glorified. So, brothers and sisters, how we need to pray that prayer? For ourselves and for the whole universe. Because that is what the universe is waiting for.

Now, if we realize these things, I hope we can see the importance of the Lord's Prayer. You know, that is why our Lord Jesus teaches us to pray in this manner. But, is the Church praying this prayer? Are we praying this prayer? I think this is something that we really need to consider before the Lord.

And if we really take up this prayer, brother, God will hear us. And His name will be hallowed. His kingdom will come.

And His will will be done on earth as it is in heaven. If I remember right, I think in the last days of that man Evan Roberts. I do not know whether you have ever heard of that name.

Evan Roberts is the instrument of God during the Welsh Revival of 1904-1905. Now, he was a minor, but he has such a heart for the Lord. And his prayer was bend the Church and save the world.

And God used that man in bringing such a great revival in Wales. If you have read the story of the revival of Wales, you can see that during that period even the court has no case. The judges have no case to judge anymore.

Because it just swept through that land. And during his last days, he prayed only one prayer. He is a prayer warrior.

He knows how to pray. He really agonized in prayer before the Lord. And that's how it all began.

And during his last days, he prayed only one prayer. Thy Kingdom. Thy Kingdom come.

Now that is. And I do believe that as we enter into this last age, we ought to take up this prayer. Hallowed be thy name.

Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Lord, we do acknowledge that we do not fully understand the prayer that thou hast taught.

Lord, we do ask thee that thou open our eyes, our understanding, that we may know more and more what that prayer is. What it means to thee and to us. Lord, we do pray that we may, by thy grace, through the energizing of thy Holy Spirit, really take up this prayer that is upon thy heart.

O our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

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