

## **Your Will– 4/08/2019**

***Your kingdom come.***

***Your will be done,***

***On earth as it is in heaven. Mt.6:10***

Beloved in the Lord,

My mother in law's dog Benji really dislikes driving in the car. Every time that he senses that he is about to go for a car ride, he hides under the table or a chair. Most of the time, his trips in the car are short these days, as they usually mean a visit to our place. He likes coming over to our place to visit with Zac.

On Monday I went over to Tamara's place to do some things. As soon as I got there, Benji indicated that he would like to go for a walk. I put on his harness and lead and he happily came with me out the gate. It was a sunny afternoon and I decided that I should put on my sunglasses, which were in my car. As soon as Benji saw that we were heading towards the car, he sat down and didn't want to come with me. I had to drag him along. I got my glasses and we headed up the road. When Benji realised that we were not going to drive anywhere, he began to trot along quite happily. For a brief moment he was not happy to walk with me, while he thought we were going in the car, but then when he realised that we were not, he was happy to follow me.

This incident made me think about mine and your relationship with God. When I first heard and felt God's call to follow Him, I set off with great joy and enthusiasm. I walked with God the best I could. After a while, when I began to think that God was taking me along a path that I didn't like, or that I imagined I didn't like, then to use a dog metaphor – my tail was down and God had to drag me along.

As I look back over my life, I have to acknowledge that God's path was always the right one at the right time. Sometimes I kick myself for being so stubborn and reluctant to follow Him. I am trying hard to be better, but I don't always succeed. I believe that I am not alone in this. All who try to follow God and walk in His ways experience this. I believe that it is for this reason that Jesus included this phrase in The Lord's Prayer- "Your will be done..."

When we pray that God's will be done, then we are submitting to God's will. This is a blessed thing to do. When we are submissive to God's will and obey Him, then we function at our very best. This is why Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans:

***"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. "***

***Rom.12:1-2***

I remind you that the original Greek would be better translated as "Continue to present your bodies..." Please note that these words are written to the brethren – that is fellow believers in The Lord Jesus Christ. A Christian is one who has already submitted to God in

faith. What Paul is teaching us is that this submitting to God and His will is an ongoing practice. All too easily we take back the control of our lives, we take back the reins so to speak. We submit to Him with great enthusiasm, but when His will and our will lead in different directions we wrestle back the control and try to steer God the way we want to go. A bit like my experience with Benji on Monday.

Another example is our dog Zac. He likes to walk down to our local Vet hospital. The courtyard fascinates him and there are lots of interesting smells. He drags me in through the gate and even into the clinic itself. If we are there for vaccinations, the moment he sees the vet coming, he changes his mind. Sometimes he even begins to growl and I literally have to drag him into the consulting room. I sometimes feel a little guilty that his pleasure is suddenly gone and that for a short while he will have to endure some discomfort, but I also know that the jab he will get will vaccinate him from serious illness.

In The Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches us to pray: "Your will be done."

This is a prayer that we should pray often, as we find ourselves in a constant battle between God's will and our own will. If our will is different to God's, then the right choice is always to follow God's Will. He knows everything. He knows and sees what we do not. He knows the end from the beginning. We see things with a very narrow perspective.

On Monday, when I went out with Benji I knew that we were not going to drive anywhere. He didn't understand that. I dragged him along past the car, against his will at that moment, because I knew that he would benefit from, and enjoy the walk, which he did. In the end he was happy that he had had a walk. If he had been able to understand that I was merely going to the car to get my glasses and not to drive him anywhere, he wouldn't have resisted. In the same way as he didn't discern the full picture, we don't discern and understand the full picture of what God is doing. When we learn to simply trust in Him, then our journey through life is a lot smoother and more peaceful.

I often like to remind myself of this powerful passage in the Old Testament where God speaks to us through His prophet Isaiah:

***"Let the wicked forsake his way  
And the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
And let him return to the Lord,  
And He will have compassion on him,  
And to our God,  
For He will abundantly pardon.***

***<sup>8</sup> "For My thoughts are not your thoughts,  
Nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.***

***<sup>9</sup> "For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
So are My ways higher than your ways  
And My thoughts than your thoughts.***

***<sup>10</sup> "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,  
And do not return there without watering the earth  
And making it bear and sprout,  
And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;***

***<sup>11</sup> So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth;***

***It will not return to Me empty,  
Without accomplishing what I desire,  
And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.  
12 "For you will go out with joy  
And be led forth with peace;  
The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you,  
And all the trees of the field will clap their hands.  
13 "Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up,  
And instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up,  
And it will be a memorial to the Lord,  
For an everlasting sign which will not be cut off." Is.55:7-13***

This passage is so powerful and beautiful. God is clearly reminding us that His ways and His will are far superior to ours. We are limited and He is not. Our motivation is often selfish, God's is always love. Our strength is limited and we are often weak and helpless, God is omnipotent (all-powerful). Our knowledge is limited- God is omniscient (all-knowing). God is ever present everywhere (Omni -present). Given that God is Omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, and we are not, whose will is better?

God also reminds us that His Word is always fulfilled. His Word is always accomplished. That means that His will and His ways will always be accomplished no matter what. Whether we stand with Him or against Him, His will, will be fulfilled. Personally, I choose to stand with Him, because there is a great blessing that goes with that:

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What a beautiful scene we have depicted here. This is a victor's parade. The mountains and hills are rejoicing and the trees are clapping as you go past.

When we submit our will to God's will then that brings Him glory, and blessings to us and those around us.

Jesus is the prime example. In the garden of Gethsemane He had a battle between His Father's will and His own human will. He prayed that if it were possible, that the cup of suffering would by pass Him. He knew this was an extremely bitter cup and His human side was fearful. He wrestled so hard that His sweat dropped down like droplets of blood. But then He finally prayed: ***"yet not as I will, but as You will." Mt.26:39***

At that moment our salvation was secured. Jesus submitted to the Father's will and His obedience has made it possible for all people to be saved, to receive forgiveness from sin, and to live eternally with Him in Heaven. Secondly, His obedience and humility, led to His

exaltation where He now sits at the right hand of the Father, and one say every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord.

Praise God.

I close with an excerpt from Psalm 32:

***Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding,  
Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check,  
Otherwise they will not come near to you.***

***<sup>10</sup> Many are the sorrows of the wicked,***

***But he who trusts in the Lord, lovingkindness shall surround him.***

***<sup>11</sup> Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous ones;***

***And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.***

Amen

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