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Presentation Transcript
The Lord's Prayer – Your Will Be Done
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This is Bill Jacobs *for* LifeResource Ministries. We're continuing our series on the *Lord's Prayer* today, and this is the third installment – *Your Will Be Done*.

So far, we've put forth the notion that when Jesus told His disciples to pray like this, and then He said to them what call the Lord's Prayer, He wasn't giving them a prayer to recite, but an outline of things to pray about. He didn't say, "Pray this prayer." No, instead He said, "*When* you pray, pray like this." First, He told them to address the Father in prayer. It seems, increasingly, that people think they should pray to Jesus, but Jesus' own instruction was for us to pray to the Father. And then, to recall that He is in heaven and that His name is holy, special, revered and hallowed. Then He told them to ask God that His Kingdom would come – to keep uppermost in our minds that it *is* coming and that all our troubles will be over when it does.

So, all that's very encouraging to think about, for sure. And, if we do that, it expands our minds to remember who we're talking to. After a night's sleep or a hard day's work, sometimes that's hard to remember. But, if we use Jesus' outline, it'll put us in the right place.

What's next? Well, next He said, "God's will be done." What the point of *Your will be done*? Well, one of them is, it's *God's* will and not ours that needs to be done. Let's look at something Jesus told His disciples in John 5:30.

John 5:30 – *I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and My judgement is just, because I seek not My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*

So, that's how He did it. Why is this important? Well, Jesus said that the reason He could be just and have good judgement and be righteous was because He didn't try to do things His way or figure things out His way. Instead, He sought solutions from God out of God's Word or in His life through prayer.

Once again, let's think about Jesus' first beatitude, *Blessed are the poor in spirit*. That is in Matthew, the 5th chapter. What does that mean? Well, let's take a look at Louw/Nida, the domain oriented lexicon. *Pertaining to one who is humble with regard to his own capacities*. And then it says: *This humility is in relationship to God – to be humble. Happy are those who are humble before God. In order to indicate clearly that this poverty or need is relating some way to spiritual realities, they continue, one may translate, "happy are those who recognize their need of God."* It seems we can only understand the importance of this principle if we consider the context. Jesus was with His disciples at the beginning of His ministry when He said this. He's giving them their *first* instruction about how to be a successful disciple. And this is the very first thing He teaches them – to always remember that they need God to be successful disciples. We see repetition of this in other statements in scripture as well. *Lean not on your own understanding, seek God first, follow God's laws*, etc. It was His secret to success. If God's own Son – God in the flesh – had to be completely reliant on His Father to be successful in His mission, what does this say to us – who not even know anything about God, except He reveal it to us? So, it makes sense that He would tell us, in giving us an outline of things to pray about, to include His secret to success and pray, "Your will be done."

We see Him hitting this theme over and over with His disciples. Today, our media people speak of talking points. We don't speak of deeply held tenets, pearls of truth, principles of commitment. It's a *talking point*, whatever it is. It's politically correct language – that term, talking points. It's a sly way to imply that there are no absolutes. That language is used by an increasingly godless people, who have no moorings, no solid ground to stand on, nothing to commit to, except for the certainty that God is *not* real and that they can do whatever they please – say whatever will get us what we want. That's what a *talking point* means, especially to politicians. We could compare that approach to Charlton Heston's speech, when he was President of the NRA, where he told those who were against the 2nd amendment that they could pry his gun out of his cold, dead hand. I doubt he would have considered that a *talking point*.

Look with me at a pivotal moment in Jesus' life. It was the night before He was crucified. Let's read it in Luke 22:41.

Luke 22:41 – *And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw and knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from Me." He didn't want to die that way. "Nevertheless, not My will, but Your 's'l be done." And there appeared to Him an angel from heaven strengthening Him. He didn't want to die that way, but He surrendered Himself to His Father – surrendered His will to God – Your will be done.*

Here are three reasons we need to follow Jesus' example in seeking and following God's will:

Number one. *God knows best*. In Psalms 119:105, it says:

Psalms 119:105 – *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

So, He's telling us, in the Old Testament, that God's law is a lamp that guides the way – lights the way – so that we can avoid obstacles, stay out of trouble. Have you ever awakened in the night, got up to go to the bathroom or get a drink, and you stub your toe on the dresser? Not fun. That's why God's law is in place – to keep us from having problems. He tells us that, in God only is the right way to live, and to honor God. And they're all revealed in His word. Let's look at Isaiah 45:24.

Isaiah 45:24 – *Only in the LORD, it shall be said of me, are righteousness and strength. So, David's saying – or Isaiah's saying – that the only way that we can say that we have righteousness and strength is because of God. To Him shall come and be ashamed all who are incensed against Him.* He's going to have His way in the end.

He tells us that God's ways are mysterious – beyond us – so that we go to Him for understanding. Let's see that in Ephesians 1:7.

Ephesians 1:7-10 – *In Him we have redemption through His blood – the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight – so God's gives us wisdom and insight, if we know that He has it and we don't – making known to us the mystery of His will – a mystery to others, but not to those that follow God – according to His purpose which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven, and things on earth.*

Have you met people who don't know about God's plan? How did *you* learn about it? Did you come up with it on your own? No, that's impossible. Look in 1 Corinthians 2:9.

1 Corinthians 2:9 – *But as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined what God has prepared for those who love Him.*

So, nobody's ever thought of this kind of plan on their own. I meet people from time to time who believe once they die, that that's all there is. They think they will eventually pass out of memory of all living. In Psalm 31:12, David said he had been forgotten, like a dead man – out of mind. And that surely is our mortal fate without God. Without God, we die, but God reveals His plan to those who seek Him. *"Those who seek Me with all their heart will surely find Me,"* He says. But any knowledge we have of God comes from Him.

So, that's the first point – God knows best. And the second point is, that *we do not*. We're all like blind people when it comes to what God thinks, does, wants – about all His plans and His purposes – and the only way to find out is to seek Him.

Now, I know that this is Christianity 1A. I know you all know this. It might seem passé to some of you. Of course we should seek God's will! It's almost a duh! So, why don't we then? Why don't we seek God's will? We can talk about it and know it, but somehow, when it gets down to doing it, we don't do it. Why do we seek our *own* will, and follow our *own* instincts, and rely on our *own* efforts to the exclusion of God most of the time? Well, here's one answer. It's in Isaiah 55:9.

Isaiah 55:9 – *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts higher than your thoughts.*

We don't think like God thinks. And He doesn't think like we think. He's on a different plane of being. It's foreign to us. And it's even more complex than that. Not only is it different. It's backwards and upside down to the way we think – parallel.

I heard a sermon once about the great spiritual paradoxes. Some of them were these: *To be rich, you have to be poor.* That doesn't make sense to people. *To live forever, we have to die* – to sin. *To be exalted, we have to first be abased.* People really don't get that one.

You know there were all these actors and media people that were against Donald Trump before the election. And now that we're looking at the celebration for his inauguration, we find out that some of those very people are calling him on the sly and asking if they can go to his inaugural party, because they want to be seen there. They want to be on the inside. Talk about hypocrisy!

What are some other ones? Well, *position of authority is not control, but service and example* – just the opposite to the way we think about it. Just look at church and how that goes most of the time in most places. *To see, we have to acknowledge blindness.* We tend to forget these things when we're under pressure, too, or when we're anxious or angry – exactly when we need to remember them the most. We kind of go back into fallback mode – back toward our human nature side.

So, humans are hopeless messes without God. We're completely out of sync with what works and with God's will – and often with the world, as well, since He designed a lot of the world to operate the way *He* operates.

So, always caring about us, Jesus inserted the phrase, "Your will be done," in His prayer outline, so that we would have a chance to remember who God is, what He's like, who we are, and what we are like. If we follow Jesus' example, and seek our Father's will *first*, we will likely be more in tune with God – less anxious, happier, and fulfilled people. Think about it. What a blessing that is that He gave us that outline!

Okay, so the first reason was, that *God knows best.* The second reason was, that *we don't know.* Here comes the third one. And that is, that *we have staked our lives on a promise to seek God's*

will. It's a part of our baptismal covenant. When we made Jesus Christ our Lord and Master, that means we're going to do what He said. And He said that we should seek God's will first. So, while seeking God's will is a good idea, it's not *just* that. It's something that we have staked our lives on doing.

God told Adam and Eve to stay away from the fruit of the tree of life in the Garden. But, oh no, they listened to the devil, and did just the opposite of what God told them to do. Look with me in Genesis 3:6.

Genesis 3:6 – *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise – where did she learn that? Well, the devil pointed that out to her. And he subtly implied that God wasn't really giving her everything that she could have in telling her the truth – she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*

Now, some think that that's just a nice little story, but let me remind you that this verse is God's explanation of how everything went south for Adam and Eve, and then for all of us, ever since. So, it's important – Your will be done.

But there's more, isn't there? Jesus said something else. He said, "Your will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven." What's that about? Well, the first thing is, that we're on earth, and we're asking God to make the earth the place where His will is done, which is another way to look forward – "Your Kingdom come." And it's not just about all y'all doing God's will. We're reminding ourselves that we need to let God help us keep His will in our lives on earth.

Now, second, His will actually *is* being on earth, in a way, even though indescribable evil occurs on earth now. He allows everything we see for an overarching purpose – "bringing many children to glory," as Paul said. A lot of people are really bitter about that. They say, "How could a loving God allow this, or that, or the other, but all that proves to me is – if you look at the suffering going on – it's worth it because of the greatness of His purpose and what He's going to wind up giving to all of us.

Now, third: God's will is *always* done in heaven. "Your will be done on earth *as* it is in heaven." So what's the difference? Well, in heaven, God doesn't have to tolerate evil or violations of His will for His plan's sake, because there are none. Everyone up there is committed to God and His will, so nobody violates it. Someday soon, it's going to be that way on earth.

So, here's something we can look forward to and pray for fervently: "Come Lord Jesus. God speed that day! Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

If you missed the first two of this series, *The Lord's Prayer*, you can go back and listen to them on our Website, liferesource.org. You can hear or read them, or you can even download them for

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Until next time, this is Bill Jacobs for LifeResource Ministries, serving children, families, and the Church of God.