

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 84

December 11, 2020

Section 54 The Sermon on the Mount

A. T. Robertson's Harmony of the Gospels

Thank you for joining us for another edition of The Mind of Christ. We are engaged in a very, very long study based on the work that I did back in 2010 to 2017 on studying the mind of Christ. I wrote 21 journals and out of those journals is what you are getting here. It's some raw material that takes us kind of deep into the study of the mind of Christ.

For the last several weeks we have been on "The Sermon on the Mount". We will be there for quite a while because we're just taking our time going through it very, very slowly and very carefully and so we're getting quite a ways into the mind of Christ now. We're in **Matthew 6** where we're actually dealing with what is typically called The Lord's Prayer.

As we get into this we are in the part where the next phrase that we'll consider in this session is "**Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven**". Then we'll probably get to next phrase as well in this session. So, thank you for joining us and if you want to catch up on this, we have many, many recordings. You can go to on our website <https://www centralsarasota.org/> or you can go to our YouTube channel <https://www centralsarasota.org/the-mind-of-christ>, and you can find all the ones that we have video recordings of.

So the next phrase, "**Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven**". It is clearly associated with the kingdom clause that we looked at where it says, "Seek". It's talking there about "thy kingdom come" and it may actually define what that means, to say "thy kingdom come". It is *the will of God being done on earth in the same way it is done in heaven*. The doing of God's will and putting it into practice, and holding His will in your heart is really a ★key to Jesus' thinking. This is the conquering Kingdom of Jesus.

"Thy will" tells us much about God and establishes the core of our relationship with Him. What is the idea of "will" ... the word "will"? The word 'thelema' (θελημα) is the word for "will" in the Greek. It means 'something that is bent', in other words you bend towards something. It means 'an inclination, a resolve, a purpose or design'. It is sovereign pleasure or 'something you do at the behest of another person'. To my knowledge, the phrase, "**your will**" is found here and in **Matthew 26:42** when Jesus prayed in the Garden, "**My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may 'your will' be done.**"

The will of God in heaven was the death of Jesus, His Son on a cross for the sins of the whole world and this was carried out on earth, in the flesh, literally speaking. Even the idea of fulfillment is contained here. The intent or the inclination of God is fulfilled in **reality** with concrete actions. Outside the gospel, the specific phrase, "Your will" is found in **Hebrews 10:7, 9** and also in **Revelation 4:11**. Regarding Jesus' coming and quoting from **Psalm 40:7-8**, "**I delight to do Your will, O my God; thy law is in my heart.**" Thelema, the word for "will" is the word used here.

In **Revelation 4:11**, All things exist because of 'thy will'. They existed and were created. In other words, nothing was created outside the will of God.

But I see, now, it does appear often ... this idea of ‘the will of God’ does appear often and it may not be “your will” but it is the “will of God” that is expressed in many passages.

For instance, in **Matthew 7:21** the one entering the Kingdom is “he who does the will of My Father who is in Heaven”. In **Matthew 12:50**, “whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.” And then, in **Matthew 21:31**, in speaking of the two sons, Jesus asked, “which of the two did the will of the Father?” In **John 5:30** Jesus says, “His judgments are just because He seeks not His own will, but the will of Him who sent me.” It’s remarkable since Jesus’ will must be the same as God’s will, but it was combined with flesh ... “Not My will but Thy will be done!” So, because Jesus is God you would expect Jesus’ will and God’s will to be the same, but because He was in the flesh, He still had to struggle to bring that fleshly nature in alignment with the will of God.

Jesus’ specific reason to come to earth is “to do the will of the Father” in **John 6:38** and “to seek and to save the lost” according to **Luke 19:10**. Therefore, *it must be the Father’s will to save the lost*. In **John 6:39** Jesus states that the Father’s will is “*not to lose any of those the Father gives, but to raise them up at the last day.*” Then, in **John 6:40** He says, it is “God’s will to give eternal life to all who behold His Son.” So we know, very clearly, the central will of God is the *saving of the souls of mankind*.

So, how is the saving the lost and keeping the saved, saved and giving your eternal life done in heaven, because He says we do His will on earth as it is done in heaven. So *how are people saved in Heaven, or kept saved, or given eternal life in Heaven?* That’s a difficult question to consider since in the past, a third of the angels were lost. Does God still work in heaven not to lose any more of the angels? Is it possible to lose some more angels because a third of them were lost in the past? It sounds absurd to ask, but if it happened once, and the basic nature of angels has not changed, what prevents it from happening again? If Jesus could lose one out of the Twelve, what is to prevent others from losing their place in heaven?

All is speculation, but it is clear what “God wills”. However, other “wills” are also in play; not only the will of God, Jesus could will, and by nature ‘that’ will was free because He was part man. Jesus *had a will* and therefore He had freedom in that will. Jesus *chose to ‘conform’ His will to the will of the Father* because they came out of the one and the same character.

Paul proclaimed in **Acts 13:22** that “as a man after God’s own heart”, David will do ‘all my will’ it says. So how is David being *a man after God’s own heart* defined ... he will do all of my will? Now Jesus is one thing; because He was able to do the will of the Father perfectly; all of God’s will; but what about David? How could it be said that he did *all God’s will?* He was a murderer. He was an adulterer. He neglected his kids. He distrusted God by counting the ‘fighting men’. Yet we have this designation that ‘he was a man after God’s own heart doing all the will of God’.

Well, it’s a curious thing. Obviously “all” does not mean “all” in every situation, but it may have meant that ‘even when he did wrong, he did the will of God in the correcting of the wrong.

In **Romans 12:2** there is something that happens in the “doing” of **His will**. Moving from confirmation (in other words ... conforming to the world); moving from that place to transformation makes it possible for us to test and approve God’s good, pleasing, acceptable and perfect will.

Discovering the will of God is not merely academic ... it is experiential. “Wisdom is proved right by her children”, Jesus says. It is in the fruit; by putting what we learn into practice; filling up the abstract with the concrete makes ‘the will of God’ visible.

Ephesians 6:6 says that the will of God must be done *from the heart*; not to please men. Jesus taught this about prayer and giving and fasting. It is *not to be seen*. “Motivate me to strive out of an overwhelming desire to please You; and not out of pride and shame” is my prayer.

Hebrews 13:21 says, “God equips us to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight.” In **Matthew 18:14** it says, “It is not God’s will that any little one should perish” and then in **John 6:39**, God’s will for Jesus was “not to lose anything that had been given to Him by His Father, but to raise it up at the last day.” In **Acts 22:14** Ananias told Saul (or Paul at the time) “the God of our Fathers has appointed you to know His will and to see the righteous one.” Paul’s previous behavior, though zealous for God, *did not reflect God’s will* on earth as it existed in heaven; the Lamb slain since the foundation of the world. It wasn’t reflecting what was going on in heaven in regard to the salvation of men.

But back to **Hebrews 10** ... Jesus coming to do God’s will equals the sacrifice of Christ’s body once for all, **taking away the first covenant to establish the second** setting in motion the *means by which to bring all the enemies of God under Christ’s feet and perfecting, by this offering, all who have been set apart*. That, in a nutshell, is the will of God. That’s the will that Jesus came to do.

God’s will is centered in the work of Christ on our behalf. When I seek the will of God, for my personal, individual life, I must *firmly and closely link what I conclude* in any situation as to the will of God. The *fundamental* will of God is **sending Christ to the earth to redeem mankind, and to establish a new covenant with him**. Our desire to ‘do God’s will’ must see the good we do in the context of eternity and salvation. Soteriology, the study of salvation, must inform *benevolence*. In other words, *salvation* determines the good that we do in a practical way in the lives of other people.

So, again, what is the connection to heaven here; because the will of God is to be done on earth *as it is done in heaven*? What is the connection to heaven? What is “the same way” He says, or “same as” or “just as”? Well, it could have a number of different kinds of meanings to it. It could be ‘*immediacy*’, in other words ‘I do the will of God on earth as it’s done in heaven’ ... meaning it’s done there *immediately*. It could be done with *urgency*, it could be done with *faithfulness*, it could be done with ‘*attention to detail*’, it could be done with *commitment to or the study of*, or *the determination to carry out God’s will as a servant obeys his master*. It seems we often get back to the **saving men and keeping them saved** (or growing in Christ). Those are the two fundamental tenets of the will of God ... saving man and keeping man saved.

Devotion to God must keep this as central to all man's activities. "Seeking first the Kingdom and His righteousness" **Matthew 6:33**, or "of first importance" **1 Cor. 15:1 and following**, those phrases, or having the heart of God, His Son and His work **should not be in vain** *because we are prioritizing the will of God in our lives ... so that* our lives will not be in vain and our work will not be in vain.

How to incorporate this into every part of our lives requires thought, intention and prayer. Yes, **this is the prayer.** He is, of course, even giving this phrase in the middle of the prayer. Show me, I would say, **how to do your will on earth as it is in heaven!**

In **Matthew 6:11** Jesus continues the prayer with this phrase, "Give us this day our daily bread". By the way, **Luke 11** does not have the phrase about "doing God's will". **Luke 11:3** has this in the prayer.

Living in God's provision within the moment, without fear or worry about the next moment or day, Jesus elaborates later in this chapter. This is a very direct request of God; another demonstration of our dependence on Him. It ***immediately*** reminds us of the provision of manna in the wilderness. ***It was a day-by-day provision.*** The purpose of **daily** bread as it relates to manna was, according to **Deuteronomy 8:3, 16** ***it was to humble and test you*** so that in the end, it may go 'well' with you; to ***teach*** you that ***man does not live by bread alone*** 'but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'.

Of course, quoted by Jesus in **Matthew 4** during the Temptation to turn the stones into bread, the manna ended when they entered Canaan and they are food that was provided for them there (as found in **Joshua 5:12**). God commanded a pot of manna to be placed in the Ark of the Covenant to **remind them** of God's 40-year provision ... a demonstration of His faithfulness (in **Hebrews 9:4**). The idea of daily provision or daily providence tests man's ability to **trust**.

The principle of saving or planning is taught in Scripture but it is held **'in tension' with daily trust**. A madman might capture another and give them only enough to keep them alive so as to create a dependence for the purpose of 'control' and 'manipulation'. So how is God's provision different from a madman who simply wants to keep somebody alive enough to control them?

Well, **first**, we are, in fact, ***absolutely*** dependant on God no matter ***how*** it appears. In other words, the difference is that we're ***already dependent on God*** **regardless** of what we think. We just need to know that we **are** dependent upon Him and acknowledge it. It can be ***no other way***.

Second, God's consistent daily provision is for the purpose of ***relationship and training***. Learning a healthy dependence on God teaches us to manage life and its provisions properly for the sake of others. What God releases from His hand into our charge, shows us He has confidence in our ability to manage things. We're stewards. ***The management of temporal things makes us more fit to the management of eternal things***. Remember, God is, in fact, our Father training us. The phrasing of this is interesting. He says, "Give us this day our daily bread" ... not tomorrow ... **this** day.

Living in the day is important to Jesus. In **Matthew 6:34**, Jesus says not to be anxious about tomorrow, each day has enough trouble as its own. “This day” emphasizes our aliveness now. Yesterday cannot be relived and tomorrow is not here to live...only now. **“This day” emphasizes the frailty of life.** It has a shelf-life. **December 3, 2011**; that’s the day that I wrote in this journal. Eleven hours and thirty minutes old this day; only twelve hours and thirty minutes remain, and ‘this day’ will have expired. Pack it full ... wasting minutes versus filling up the time with meaningful and purposeful activity. Manna got buggy after one day. What if all our food expired after one day? Milk soured, eggs rotted, bread molded and picked fruit turns to mush. Surely we would only gather enough for today and consume it all within that day; otherwise we would have considerable waste.

How much money would we save if we bought only enough for today? Perhaps we would spend about the same amount of time; shopping shorter and more frequent trips. Would this help us fulfill this passage? Outwardly, maybe, but there would still be a matter of the heart not addressed, and that is the matter of gratitude.

Daily provision is meant to provoke daily thanksgiving enough just in time to stave off hunger. We are saved again by the benevolent hand of God. He came through again! One more day ... He is consistently faithful. Daily bread has a different idea from the weekly bread or monthly bread. Daily bread demands constant attention. Daily keeps us connected. Just as I sit here daily and read, study and reflect and journal, ***I build a greater dependence and a greater appreciation that God’s grace is ever new. Daily requires some discipline. Daily recognizes the importance of the relationship. Daily keeps us on our toes.*** It gives us a sense of importance. He delivers to my house daily.

Contained in the word ‘daily’ is the word *ousia* (ουσια) ... it’s the word substance of our being, support of life. This is a very important concept. It’s the subsistence, or what is needful ... what is needful. “Give us this day, our needful subsistence ... our bread”. God responds to our substance, or ***our most basic needs***. Think of it. Why concentrate on providing the ‘fluff’ of life; the ‘icing’, when the most ***basic needs*** go unmet? What if we were to spend the majority of our resources; our time, our money, our energy on the most basic of needs?

I heard a pharmacist today speak about a tonic prescription or herbal treatment as being that which nourishes the cells of an organ to keep it healthy. The ‘Free Dictionary’ defines the noun ‘tonic’ as ***an agent, such as a medication that restores or increases body tone***. That’s why it’s called a tonic ...because it increases the tone of the body... an invigorating, refreshing or restorative agent or an influence...the adjective, producing or stimulating physical, mental or emotional vigor. In music, it is the keynote related to the tone. In Greek it' is *tonikos* ... capable of extension, of stretching. We speak of ‘muscle tone’, the ability of a muscle to extend and contract. That’s what happens in a tone of music; it’s a chord that extends and contracts or vibrates. What I am thinking is that we devote lots of attention to things that do not speak to our subsistence ... the things that cause us to be able to exist.

In **Luke 12:15** he says, “Beware and be on your guard against every form of greed, for not even when one has an abundance, does his life **consist of his possessions**. The word “consist” is two words. It is “upo” (υπο) and “archo” (αρχω). Arc comes from “archo”.

It means to “exist”, it is our substance. It has to do with “what is first”, an authority” or an origin or something that’s old or ancient or primary. Jesus warns us against coveting things which are not “primary” to our existence ... to our substance. In other words, we are to seek the “first” things. Knowing where to put our pursuit, our quest, our journey or our adventure as priority either in the physical realm (of bread) or in the spiritual (which is the Kingdom of God and His righteousness) *is the tonic of life*. Most translations use the term “consist” ... of what does life consist? Definitely not in the abundance of one’s possessions; but *what nourishes our spirit?*

To reduce life to the essentials of consistency is so difficult, and looks different to different people. The Monks and the Ascetics took *vows of poverty to get there*. Many have sworn off modern innovations but even their horse and buggies were innovations at one point in history. We all seek the ‘right spot’, but when does “too much” prevent us from having “just right”?

Again, Jesus is the model but even this must be looked at carefully lest we get confused by incidentals. I look at the clutter in my world and I wonder if I am ‘better off’ or ‘worse off’ for it. I know it saps my energy and it distracts and it causes me to want to organize and reduce but this is a never-ending endeavor like sweeping the tide. Such is the nature of our modern world. Some is just our undisciplined or ‘too busy’ life. I long for the simplicity of daily bread; but *how much* do I long for it?

I’ve been reading a book about the history of *salt*. Even such a simple commodity has one controlling factor in world kingdoms. So much of the world fought over rights for salts. Their *economies* were *based on salt* many times. Is this just part of man’s subjection of the planet and encouraged by God? To what extent are we *too involved in this world* that we neglect the other world?

“Daily bread” is learning to be satisfied with “enough” so we can find “more” where “more” is to be found. The work required to keep it appearing each day is not simple. The support of seven billion of us on this planet is a complicated process. So, how can simplicity be realized for all of us? *Is it merely for the wealthy?* Can I have simplicity even in the midst of details and obligations by my escapes to solitude? This was *one means* by which Jesus lived ‘daily bread’.

In **John 4:32** Jesus says, “I have bread that you don’t know or food that you don’t know anything about.” Daily bread keeps me from focusing too much on what I can’t control ... that is ‘tomorrow’; what is before me ... satisfaction with my present blessings without longing for what is not mine. Teach me, Father, this essential lesson. Show me how to live.

Well, we’re going to stop here. Today we have covered these two aspects of the Lord’s Prayer and the next time we get together we’ll begin to talk about the idea of forgiveness.

I’m glad you joined us and I encourage you to check out our website: <https://www.centalsarasota.org/> where you’ll have links to all kinds of information there and if there is anything we can do to help you, please give us a ring or an email. Thank you again for joining us today for another edition of “The Mind of Christ”.