

THE WILL OF GOD, Week 3

Praying for God's Will to Be Done on Earth

Scripture Reading: Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:1; 1 John 5:14-15; John 15:4-5, 7

Matthew 6:10	Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.
Luke 11:1	And while He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, a certain one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray , even as John also taught his disciples.
1 John 5:14	And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.
1 John 5:15	And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.
John 15:4	Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine , so neither can you unless you abide in Me.
John 15:5	I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him , he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
John 15:7	If you abide in Me and My words abide in you , ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

THE EARTH CONTROLS HEAVEN

In verse 18 the Lord says, *"Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven."* What is special about this verse? The special thing is that **there must be a move on earth before there is a move in heaven**. It is not heaven that binds first but the **earth that binds first**. It is not heaven that looses first but the **earth that looses first**. After the earth binds, heaven binds; after the earth looses, heaven looses. **The move in heaven is controlled by the move on earth**. Everything contrary to God has to be bound, and everything in harmony with God has to be released. Everything, whether it is something to be bound or loosed, should have its binding or its loosing originate from the earth. **The move on the earth precedes the move in heaven**. The earth controls heaven.

Isaiah 45:11 has a most peculiar word, *"Thus says Jehovah, /The Holy One of Israel and the One who formed him,/Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons, /And concerning the work of My hands, command Me."* Brothers and sisters, is not this word most peculiar? Concerning the sons and the work of His hand, **God says that we can command Him**. We would almost be afraid to use the word "command." How can man command God? All those who know God realize that man cannot be haughty before Him. But God Himself says, *"Concerning My sons,/And concerning the work of My hands, command Me."* This is the earth controlling heaven. **It does not mean that we force God to do what He does not want to do. Rather, it means that we can command God to do what He wants to do**. This is our position. After we know God's will, we can say to Him, "God, we want You to do this. We are determined that You should do this. God, You must do this." We can utter such strong and powerful prayers before God. We have to ask God to open our eyes to see the kind of work He is doing in this age. In this age all His work is based on this position. **Heaven may want to accomplish something, but heaven will not do it alone; heaven waits for the earth to do it first, and then heaven does it**. Although the earth stands in the second place, at the same time, it also stands in the first place. The earth must move before heaven will move. God wants the earth to move heaven.

(The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, (Set 2) Vol. 22: "The Assembly Life & The Prayer Ministry of the Church", chapter 9, section 1)

Day 1 & Day 2

I. Although God has a will for everything, He does not act independently; rather, He wants the human will on earth to echo His will before He does anything—Matt. 6:10; 1 John 5:14-15:

- A. In the universe there are three wills: the **divine will**, the **satanic will**, and the **human will**; God wants man's will to be joined to Him and be one with Him so that **man may express and echo His will back to Him in prayer** for the good pleasure of His will—Eph. 1:5, 11; Isa. 14:12-15; Matt. 6:10; 7:21; 26:39; Phil. 2:13.
- B. **God will not act independently**, and He will not accomplish His will alone; instead, **He will accomplish His will only when His people agree with Him and are one with Him**—Col. 1:9; 4:12:
 1. If there is only a will in heaven, God will not move; the will in heaven is accomplished on earth **only when we, His people, want the will in heaven to be done on earth**—Matt. 6:10.
 2. Because God acts according to laws established by Him, He will not annul man's will on earth by His own will; **He will not usurp man's will and act independently**—Josh. 24:15, 22.
 3. Everything related to God's move and work on earth **can be accomplished only when there is a will on earth that cooperates with Him**—John 7:17.
 4. God cannot do what He wants by Himself; **He does it only with the cooperation of the church**; He accomplishes His will through the church.
 5. Whenever God's people **place their will in harmony with God's will**, the will of God will be done on earth as in heaven—Matt. 6:10.

Day 3

II. God's intention is to accomplish His will through the **believers' prayer in union with Him**—v. 10; John 15:7:

- A. **God's people must pray** before God will move on earth to accomplish His will.
- B. The prayer that is most pleasing to God is the **prayer that asks for the accomplishment of His will**—1 John 5:14.
- C. God wants us to **work with Him** to accomplish His will; **the way to work together with Him is to pray**—Luke 11:1; 18:1; 1 Thes. 5:17:
 1. The **purpose of prayer** is that **we be one with God's will so that God can work on earth to fulfill His purpose**—Rom. 8:26-29.
 2. If we do not work together with God in prayer for His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven, He cannot move on earth to accomplish His will—Matt. 6:10.
 3. If we are one with the Lord, we want what God wants, and **our will becomes one with God's will**—John 15:7.
 4. The prayer for the accomplishment of God's will is not asking God to accomplish what we want Him to do but **asking God what He Himself wants to do; such prayer is the outlet of God's will on earth**—1 John 5:14-16.

HARMONY OF WILL

Some may ask why God would want the earth to control heaven. If we want to understand this, we have to remember that our God is limited by time. Time refers to the section between the two eternities. There is an eternity past and an eternity future. Between these two eternities, there is time. Within this section called time, God is limited. He cannot work as freely as He wants to. This is a limitation God encountered in the creation of man. According to Genesis 2, **God gave man a free will when He created him**. God has a will, and man has a will. **Whenever man's will is not one with God's will, God is limited**. In this room, there is a table, chair, floor, and ceiling. If a man comes in, he can do whatever he wants and not be restricted. The table, chair, floor, and ceiling will not be able to restrict him. God is a powerful God; He can do anything. If the earth was filled with spiritless material, God would be without restriction. But one day, God created man. The man He created was not like a piece of stone or wood; he was not a table or a chair, which could be placed here or there by God at will. **The man that God created had a free will**. Man could choose to obey God's word, and he also could choose to disobey His word. God did not create a man who was obligated to obey Him. He created a man with a free will, one who could obey or disobey His word. After God created a man with a free will, His power was limited by this man. He could no longer act according to what He wanted. He had to ask whether man wanted the same thing and whether he was willing to do the same thing. God cannot treat man like a stone, a piece of wood, a table, or a chair, because man has a free will. Since the day God created man, man could choose to allow God's authority to be carried out or to be blocked. This is why we say that within time, the period between the two eternities, God's authority is limited by man.

God is willing to be limited in time because He wants to gain a harmonious will in the second eternity. He wants man's free will to **be harmonious with His will**. This is a glory to God. If you put a book on the table, it remains on the table. If you put it on the shelf, it remains on the shelf. It is very obedient to you. But even though it is obedient, you are still not satisfied, because it does not have a free will; it is completely passive. God does not want the man He created to be like a book that can be shuffled around at will. Even though God wants man to be fully submissive to Him, He also gave man a free will. **God's intention is that man's free will would choose to obey Him**. This is a glory to God! In eternity future the free will of man will be joined to God's eternal will. That will be the time for God's eternal will to be fulfilled and for man's free will to become harmonious with God's eternal will. Every man has a free will. **In eternity future man will still have a free will, but it will stand on God's side**. He will still have the ability to oppose God, but he will not oppose Him. Hallelujah! Even though man will have the freedom to oppose God, he will not oppose Him. He will do what God wants. This harmony of will is a glory to God!

In eternity future, although man's will is free, it will be in conformity to God's will, and there will be no will that is not subordinate to God's authority. However, in time, God is limited by man. Man does not do what God wants, or man does only a little of what God wants. God may want something to be big, yet man may want it to be small. Or God may want something to be small, yet man may want it to be big. God has no freedom at all! **God's move is controlled by man in time**. This speaking is in reference to the church. All of God's moves are limited by the church in time because the church represents man in eternity future. **The church is standing on the earth today for God's will**. If the church comes up to the standard of God's will, He will not be limited. But if it does not come up to the standard of His will, God will be limited. **God is doing what He wants to do through the church**. Today the church is taking the position that man will take in eternity. Then, even though man's will is free, it will stand completely on the side of God's eternal will. The church is taking that position ahead of time. Just as God will express Himself in eternity through the New Jerusalem, the Lamb's wife, He also is expressing Himself today through the Body of Christ. **Although the church has a free will, it submits this will to God's authority as if no other will existed**. This allows God to do whatever He wants to do. When the church places its will under God's will today, He will move in the same way that He will in eternity; He will move as if no other will were opposing Him. This is a glory to God!

Now we can see the church's position before God. We cannot make the church so low by suggesting that it is merely a meeting. **No, the church is a group of people who have been redeemed by the blood, who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, who have committed themselves to God's hand, and who are willing to take God's will, do His will, and stand for God on earth for the sake of maintaining His testimony**. We have to see that God works according to a law. Since there is free will on earth, God will not annul man by His own will. Brothers and sisters, do not think that this is a strange thing. This is a fact. God is in heaven. Yet all His works on earth can be accomplished only when there is a will on earth that agrees with and decides to do the works. He will not put aside man's will on earth. He will not usurp man's will on earth and act independently. **Everything related to Him can be accomplished only when there is a will on earth that cooperates with Him. When the earth works, God works**. When the earth decides, God acts. God must have man's will in harmony with His will. **This harmony in will is a great glory to God!**

(Collected Works of Watchman Nee, The (Set 2) Vol. 22: The Assembly Life & The Prayer Ministry of the Church, Chapter 9, Section 2)

Day 4

- D. **Prayer for God's will** to be done on earth consists of four steps—Matt. 6:10:
1. **God intends** to do something according to His will—Eph. 1:5, 11.
 2. **He reveals** His will to us through the Spirit for us to know His will.
 3. **We return** and echo His will back to Him **through prayer**—1 John 5:14.
 4. **God accomplishes** His work according to His will—v. 15.
- E. God needs us to **exercise our spirit with our resurrected will** to **pray according to His divine will** for Christ to be manifested and enjoyed by us, for the Body life to be practiced by us, and for the Body of Christ to be built up through us—Heb. 10:5-10; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 1:4-6, 9, 11, 22b-23; 3:16-19; 4:16:

Day 5

1. A genuine man of prayer is one whose **desires** are **fully blended** into God's desires and whose **thoughts** are **fully one** with God's thoughts; he is a man in whom God's desires are imprinted, a man of revelation whose heart is a duplication of God's heart—1 Sam. 2:35; 3:21; 12:23.
2. When we come to the Lord in prayer, we need to allow the Spirit to **mingle our desires with His desires, lead our thoughts into His thoughts, and imprint His desires and thoughts into us**; then the prayers that we utter to God with His inward desires will be **precious, weighty, and valuable** to Him and will cause Satan to suffer loss—Rom. 8:26-27; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2, 12; Mark 9:28-29; Eph. 6:10-20.

III. Effective prayers for God's will to be done on earth are the **expression of God's desire and intention** and are the **issue of our abiding in the Lord and of His words abiding in us**—John 15:4-5, 7:

- A. **Prayer** is God's heart's desire **passing through us and returning to God**:
1. The desire in our prayers does not originate with us; it **originates with God and is an expression of what God desires**—Eph. 1:5, 11.
 2. God's desire and intention are **anointed into us through the Spirit** and thus become our desire and intention, which **we express to God in prayer**—1 John 2:20, 27; 5:14-15.
 3. **Our prayer**, therefore, is God's desire and intention **coming out from God, passing through us, and going back to Him**—vv. 14-15.

Day 6

- B. **All prevailing prayers**—prayers that can be **counted effective** before God—are **the result of our abiding in the Lord and allowing His words to abide in us**—John 15:4-5, 7:
1. When we **abide** in the Lord and His words **abide** in us, **we touch God's feeling and understand His desire**—v. 7.
 2. After we touch God's feeling and understand His intention, we will spontaneously have His desire that comes out of His words in us—v. 7.
 3. **His desire will become our desire, what He wants will be what we want, and then we will pray according to this desire.**
 4. The **Lord will answer this kind of prayer**, and thus the will of God **"will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth"**—Matt. 6:10.

To Pray for Much Fruit-bearing That the Father May Be Glorified

While the Lord is moving, acting, motivating, and energizing within us, what shall we do? Should we keep our mouths closed? No, we shall certainly feel impelled to utter something. **We shall surely express what we feel within.** This is spiritual prayer, prayer in the spirit. **The spiritual prayer expresses the moving of Christ within us.** Christ in, through, and as the Word is moving, acting, motivating, and energizing within us. When this happens, we cannot be silent. I believe that we all have experienced this. Sometimes I could not sleep at night but had to rise up because something was moving and energizing me. I had to rise up and say, "Lord, I am here. I praise You." Is this kind of prayer simply an expression of our opinion, idea, thought, feeling, or imagination? No, we are expressing that which the Lord moves and energizes within. We become the mouthpiece for the Lord to utter what is within us at that very moment.

In verse 7 the Lord said, *"If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall come to pass to you."* **When we abide in the Lord and let His words abide in us, we are actually one with Him, and He is working within us.** Then, whatever we ask, it is not only we who are praying but also He who is praying in our praying. This kind of prayer is related to fruit-bearing (v. 8) and surely it will be fulfilled. We cannot have this kind of prayer on our own. This prayer in the spirit comes from the indwelling Christ, through the Spirit, and by His word. **If we abide in the Lord, keep ourselves always in contact and in fellowship with the Lord, and let the Lord with His word live, move, motivate, and energize within us, we will be unable to keep our mouths shut.** We will have to utter something. What we speak will be a real prayer in the spirit. This is the expression of the indwelling Christ speaking as the Spirit with His words.

When the Lord's words abide in us, His communication and expression will abide in us. Therefore, we may "ask whatever you will." We shall express by praying what we have received of the Lord, and it shall be done to us. This prayer is not the human, natural prayer; it is the divine prayer, the expression of the divine communication. **While the Lord is abiding in us, expressing His thoughts, desires, intentions, and will, we then take His word and put it into expression by means of prayer.** This kind of prayer is very divine, for it is the utterance and expression of the will, desire, and mind of the One who is abiding in us and communicating Himself to us.

(Life-Study of John, chapter 34, section 3)