

Thy Will Be Done

John 12:20-43 ²⁰ Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. ²¹ Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." ²² Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. ²³ But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. ²⁴ "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵ "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him *My* Father will honor. ²⁷ "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? `Father, save Me from this hour '? But for this purpose I came to this hour. ²⁸ "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, *saying*, "I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again." ²⁹ Therefore the people who stood by and heard *it* said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him." ³⁰ Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. ³¹ "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. ³² "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself." ³³ This He said, signifying by what death He would die. ³⁴ The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how *can* You say, `The Son of Man must be lifted up '? Who is this Son of Man?" ³⁵ Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶ "While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them. ³⁷ But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?" ³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: ⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with *their* eyes, Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn, So that I should heal them." ⁴¹ These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. ⁴² Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

What is the will of God? What are we asking when we pray, Thy will be done?

First it is God's will that Jesus die for our sins and that we are saved through His death.

John 12:27 ²⁷ "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? `Father, save Me from this hour '? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

It is God's will that Jesus came to die for our sins. Jesus has to emphasize this point over and over in our text because the Jews simply don't believe. They respond to Jesus "The Messiah will remain forever," in other words the Messiah wouldn't die.

Yet the Father himself intervenes to make it clear that it is His will that Jesus die for our sins. God speaks from heaven praising Jesus because he is doing the will of the Father

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem the crowds cry out hosanna, and you may remember that the Jewish leaders ask Jesus to make them stop. To which Jesus replied that if these were silent the very stones would cry out.

Why is it so important that Jesus receive praise? Certainly, Jesus ought to be praised simply because He is God and because he came to die for us. Yet Jesus tells us in our text that the voice from heaven glorifying Jesus was not for His sake, but for ours. The same is true of the Hosannas on Palm Sunday. They are not for Jesus sake but for ours. Jesus will be praised so that we might know that this is the will of the Father.

We always make sure to tell Kaylee, "good job" whenever she does something right so that she will be encouraged to keep doing that. Now Kaylee tells herself good job, whenever she wants. It works out well for all of us. For our sakes the Father speaks from heaven that we might know this is what He approves of.

If there were any who did the Father's will the Father would speak from heaven on their behalf as well. Yet it is only Jesus who receives the acclamation from the Father, "this is my beloved son." It is only Jesus who receives the praise of the people as He rides into Jerusalem and it is only Jesus concerning whom it is written in the book of Revelation:

"Worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive honor and glory."

The praise on Palm Sunday, the voice of the Father and the proclamation in heaven in the book of revelation are not given because Jesus craves the praise of men. They are given so that we might know this is good. This is the Father's will.

Think of those things that we usually praise? We usually praise those who win wars, those who entertain us, those who make great discoveries. The Father only ever praises Jesus, because Jesus alone accomplishes the Father will. This is the Father's will that Jesus die for our sins and that we are saved through his death. First and foremost this is what we are praying when we pray "Thy Will Be Done."

It is the Father's will that we follow Jesus through the gates of Jerusalem to the cross.

The Greeks come looking to meet Jesus. Jesus tells them in effect I am on my way to the cross, if you want to talk to me, if you want to follow me come and be crucified with me.

John 12:25-26 ²⁵ "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

There is a book where a man everyday rides the metro train the wrong way so that he can sit next to a girl and talk to her. That is the way she is going. So he goes the same way. If we want to go with Jesus we need to go the way He is going.

Jesus tells the Greeks and us, I am going to the cross, if you would be with me come with me to the cross.

The other gospels record a saying of Jesus that has the same meaning as these verses but is more succinct and precise.

Luke 9:23 If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me

When Jesus died on the cross He was sacrificing His own life for us, so that we might live. When scripture tells us to take up our own cross, it means nothing less than that we ought to sacrifice our own happiness, our own goals, our own desires, our own goods for others. Whatever other things that we treasure in this life we ought to be willing to gladly sacrifice to others.

Luke even adds the word "daily," daily we should pick up our cross. This isn't something we do every once in a while. This isn't our weekly good deed. Daily pick up your cross and follow Jesus.

Jesus reminds us whoever seeks to save his life will lose it. Clinging to Jesus takes two hands. You can cling to Jesus or you can cling to earthly things. You can't cling to both.

Our epistle reading reminds us "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." If you like these Greeks want to meet Jesus follow Him to the cross.

What Jesus is saying here is that nothing ever is all about me. We ought to always make it about others.

This is the second thing we mean when we pray "Thy will be done." That we would follow Jesus to the cross, take up our own cross and follow Him. That His will would be done here on earth as it is in heaven. In heaven Jesus gave up everything to come and die for our sins. We pray that we would have the same mind, the same attitude.

Thirdly, It is the Father's will that Jesus draws all people to himself through his death and resurrection.

"When I am lifted up I will draw all people to myself"

The NKJ says "if I am lifted up" but it should be "when I am lifted up." The Greek grammar involved could easily be translated either way but the context is clear that there is no if, only when. Jesus will be lifted up.

The term lifted up refers both to Jesus crucifixion and his ascension.

John 3:14 ¹⁴ "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Acts 2:33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

In the Greek it is the same word. "Being exalted" is the same as "lifted up."

When you are climbing the up the stairs you don't distinguish between the first step and the second or the third. All the steps are simply part of the same action going up the stairs.

Jesus crucifixion is the first step of His being lifted up, His resurrection the second, His ascension the third. Because the Father knew that we would not daily pick up our cross and follow Jesus, therefore it is also His will that Jesus draws us to himself.

The Greeks come seeking Jesus. At first Jesus tells them they also must pick up their own cross and follow Him, but now He promises to draw "all" that is not just the Jews but also Gentiles to himself.

When I was little my father would go out on bike rides every morning. One day I asked to go with him.

"If you come," he said, "you must keep up. I am not going to slow down or turn around."

I assure him that I would keep up, but of course I didn't and of course he did turn around and come back for me whenever I fell behind.

When we fall behind, Jesus comes back for us.

Jesus draws us to His death so that His death becomes our death. He draws us to His resurrection and His ascension.

Ephesians 2:5-6 ⁵ **even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),** ⁶ **and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,**

That is to say He has bound us to himself. As He promised through the prophet Hosea

Hos 11:4 I drew them with gentle cords, With bands of love, And I was to them as those who take the yoke from their neck. I stooped and fed them.

This is God's good and gracious will that Jesus die for our sins, that we pick up our cross and follow Jesus, and that Jesus binds us to himself and draws us on. May all this be accomplished in our hearts and lives dear heavenly Father. Amen