

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Taught by Bruce Bickel

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Heavenly Father, we are just overwhelmed with your absolute grace and mercy. The deeper we probe into the biblical truths, the more we see our absolute abject sinfulness and frailty. We, as sinners, are cosmic traitors to the holiness of your Word. So Father, we just pray that you would be pleased to open our eyes once again as you have so faithfully done every Friday, that we would just see you more clearly. Father, help us develop thoughts that are worthy of you; not thoughts that we think what you should be or what you should do, but really who you are, and we know that's only going to come as your Holy Spirit is our teacher, so may he guide us into all truth and call our attention to the person and work of Christ of Jesus' sake, and may it be so. Amen.

We're studying the Sermon on the Mount. We're coming to the point now, we began studying the Disciple's Prayer of Matthew 6. I'd invite you to open your Bibles and turn to Matthew 6, beginning down around verses 5 and 6. He begins to give a pattern for prayer. Don, thank you for your music. I especially like the last one, Rescue the Perishing. That's a great one.

As we look at the Lord's Prayer, more appropriately in my mind, referred to as the Disciple's Prayer, I want you just to let your eyes roll down there because, as we've been discussing this, one of the things it reveals for us is our deep relationship with God the Father. Just look at these different phrases. I want to explain it to you in the sense of the many facets of the Disciple's Prayer.

When you look at the totality of the prayer, it reveals the relationship that we have with God our Father. Notice, first of all, the phrase, "Our Father," describes the Father/child relationship. Describes the Father/child relationship. "Hallowed be they name" describes the Deity/worshiper relationship. The Deity—God is the God, he is Deity, and we are the worshiper. We see the Father/child relationship. Hallowed be they Name—we see the Deity/worshiper relationship. "Thy kingdom come" we see the Sovereign Ruler/subject relationship. We are subject/submissive to the Sovereign Ruler. You see that in the phrase, "Thy kingdom come." In the phrase, "Thy will be done," we see the Master/servant relationship. He is the Master; we are the servant. Thy will be done. It's his will, not our will. When you see the phrase, "Give us this day our daily bread," we see the Benefactor/beneficiary relationship. He is the Giver; we are the receiver. We see that in the phrase, "give us this day our daily bread." You see the phrase, "Forgive us our debts," or "Forgive us our trespasses." We see the Savior/sinner relationship. He is the one alone who can save us from our sins. And then "Lead us not into temptation," we see the Guide/pilgrim relationship.

There are many ways that you can see the wonderful relationship we have with God the Father. Let me give you those quickly again.

Our Father = Father/child relationship
Hallowed by thy name = Deity/worshiper relationship
Thy kingdom come = Sovereign/subject relationship
Thy will be done = Master/servant relationship
Give us this day our daily bread = Benefactor/beneficiary relationship
Forgive us our debts = Savior/sinner relationship
Lead us not into temptation = Guide/pilgrim relationship

What Jesus is really teaching us there, and this is not a means of how we are just to recite this prayer, he's really describing for us a relationship that we have with God the Father in this prayer that he's saying is the pattern of your prayer. He's teaching us not only the manner of our prayer, and the matters

which we should pray about, but also the methodology, and that is to remind ourselves of this tremendous privilege we have of having a relationship with God the Father through God the Son through God the Holy Spirit. As we began last week, we began to examine a couple of these phrases.

Today, we come to the second petition, which concerns God's sovereign reign. This is where we just outlined it. You would see the Sovereign/subject relationship. Remember Jesus' definition of a disciple. People ask me, "Would you disciple me or would you help me become a disciple." I say, "Well what do you think a disciple is?" You'll get as many answers to that as people you ask. They'll say, "Well, you need to have Scripture memory." That's very important. "You have to know to do this. You have to do that. Have to know how to witness." Those are all important things of being a disciple. But the best definition of a disciple is what Jesus gives himself when he says, "If you desire to come after me, you must deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me."

In that, he is describing what a disciple is. A disciple has three main character qualities, "If you want to come after me, be my disciple, you must deny yourself." Self-denial is the first step of being a disciple. We've got to learn to deny ourselves. It's not easy. Something that takes us a long time to do. We've got to learn to deny ourselves.

Secondly, "pick up your cross." That means self-sacrifice. We've got to learn to sacrifice ourselves. In the context of that statement, when Jesus made that statement, "take up your cross," the cross was the sign of death. The implication there is very strongly that it might be that as a disciple you might need to give your life for the sake of the Savior. I trust the Lord would be pleased in his grace not to ask us to do that, but if he does, we should be willing to do that, because that's what a disciple does. In the context of that statement, he says you've not only got learn to deny yourself, but you've got to be willing to give yourself, sacrifice yourself, for the cause of Christ if that is necessary. There have been, historically, we know people who've done that over the years. There are people now in our world today who are suffering for cause of Christ. They are giving their life for the cause of Christ. That's part of discipleship.

The third one is "take up your cross and follow me." That's self-submission. Submitting. We have to realize that he is the Master; we are the servant. That's where we come into this understanding today of our teaching on the Sermon on the Mount and the Disciple's Prayer is "Thy kingdom come."

Every previous generation, whenever they go to war, there's always some sort of battle cry, that it's what I would call a rallying cry. If you look back in the Scottish War of Independence from England, you'll see that the cry was "Wallace! Wallace! Wallace!" William Wallace was the leader of the Scottish movement of independence. Their rallying cry was "Wallace! Wallace! Wallace!" At the Alamo, it was "Remember the Alamo!" In World War II, it was "Remember Pearl Harbor!"

We, as the body of Christ, as the army of the Lord, we do have a rallying cry, something that we always need to think about that rallies around us so that we will be his disciples so that we will manifest those character qualities of self-denial, self-sacrifice and self-submission. Our rallying cry is this, "Thy kingdom come!" That should be the thing that is focused on our mind whenever we do anything. It is this, "Lord, what I'm about ready to do, I'm rallying around this thought of I want your kingdom to come."

Jesus tells us in that statement alone, we understand some degree of discipleship, because that's where we have to understand what it means to be submissive. It's really his movement. It's his kingdom. We've talked about being M8's here historically, over the past several years. An M8 is a mission minded-member of a movement. That movement is the kingdom of God. A mission minded-member of a movement motivated by mercy for ministry in the marketplace. You see, that's our rallying cry. M8 is

the rallying cry of the person who cries, “Thy kingdom come,” because all that we’re trying to do is become an aggressive responder to having the kingdom of God become real right in our own midst.

First of all, that kingdom has to start within ourselves. The kingdom of God must start within ourselves, then we have it become outward as we express it in a way that through our obedience, through gratitude and motivated to do the things that are pleasing to the Father.

As we come into this particular petition, “Thy kingdom come,” we need to understand it in the terms of the Sovereign Ruler/subject relationship. This is not a reference to God’s universal sovereignty, “Thy kingdom come.” It’s exercised because that is his sovereign rule is always there around the world. That’s not what we’re talking about. What he’s talking about is a reference to God’s saving reign. His relationship, a saving reign, which is in one sense present, but also is one sense its future consummation.

He’s not just talking about his sovereign rulership of all the world, the creator. He’s talking about the saving relationship, the kingdom of God that starts within the person’s life. You realize that you’re becoming a disciple as you’re learning how to self-submit, you’re learning how to self-deny and you’re learning how to be self-sacrificial. You see, the kingdom really starts within ourselves. When we’re saying, “Thy kingdom come,” we’re basically saying I want your kingdom to be in me before I give it away.

You’ve heard us say over the years that ministry is giving away to someone else what God has given you. If we don’t understand what God has given us, we have nothing to give. Even as we understand Thy kingdom, we’re saying, “Lord, make your kingdom a reality inside of me.” It starts there. Don’t worry about the politics of this world yet. You see, we need to worry about the things, the politics of my own life and how am I a kingdom citizen. Has the kingdom come in my life, personally? It does that as it comes into our life collectively, then we begin to take on the issues of society and the world. But it’s got to start within us. Do you see that? This is not a description of his sovereign reign of the universe.

We’re not praying for a theocracy in America. You’re praying for Thy kingdom come. It starts in me. Little old me. Little old you. When that happens to a group of 90 men on Friday when we become M8’s, we become mission minded members of a movement motivated by mercy for ministry in the marketplace because the kingdom of God has become a reality inside of us. He’s not talking about his universal role. He’s talking about his saving reign in the individual life.

This is to say that, and to pray that God’s saving reign will be expanded. It will be expanded now and much more, and that he will usher in the final kingdom inaugurated by Jesus’ return in glory. What he’s talking about is there’s an evidence of the kingdom of God is real right now in you and in me, but we’re also anticipating his glorious return.

One of the great motivations that I read when I was reading all my Puritan sermons when I was studying for my doctorate was the wonderful view they had of heaven. They kept looking for heaven. They were understanding that yes the kingdom of God is right now in me, in my present state, but there’s also going to be a final consummation of that when he returns in all of his glory and majesty. They had this great anticipation of heaven.

It doesn’t mean that we are so heavenly minded that we’re no earthly good. That’s not what I’m saying. What I’m saying is this. You and I need to have an expectation of the Lord’s return. One of the things that’s going to motivate us to become an M8 and to learn those three character qualities of a disciple—self-denial, self-sacrifice and self-submission—is the understanding that we’re working for something that’s going to have a consummation in great glory when the Lord Jesus returns in all of his magnificent triumph. You see, that’s part of the kingdom we’re looking for. We know that it’s present, but we also

know that there's a future consummation. We're waiting eagerly for that to come. That's part of our motivation. Our motivation is the realization that his kingdom will finally come in its final consummation when the Lord returns in all of his glory.

The early believers eagerly prayed that this was their thought. Look at 1 Corinthians 16:21-22. Paul concludes his letter to the church of Corinth with these words, ²¹"I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. ²²If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come!" You see, there's the desire for the kingdom to come in its fullest consummation. He's just basically saying, "Lord, in the midst of this world, there are people who don't believe you, they don't trust you. In the midst of that, would you just come?"

Guys, do you ever get the feeling sometimes that when you get so exasperated, at least I get this way, sometimes I just want to say, "Lord Jesus, just come. Just come, Lord Jesus. I just can't handle this much more." Sometimes in my frailty, in my weakness, in my humanity, you know, the only thing I can cry out is, "Lord Jesus just come." That's kind of what Paul is saying here. He's just saying, "Lord, in the midst of these people who have no love for you, would you just come. Come Lord Jesus."

***Audience Member:** Bruce, is that what Maranatha means?*

That means come Lord. That's just a cry of just saying, "Lord, would your kingdom just be coming in its greatest fruition." Just, "Come Lord." You see, even in the midst of that, there's nothing wrong with our just praying that. Sometimes in our exasperation and our futility, sometimes all we can say is, "Lord Jesus, just come."

***Ted:** For me, it's more than exasperation or futility, just as the older you get, you begin to realize how meaningless the world is.*

Yeah, good point.

***Ted:** In terms of what it has to offer. I'm not necessarily exasperated, just why am I wasting my time.*

Thanks. Good point.

***Ted:** Of course, I'm not speaking against activity, but...*

No, I understand. That's a good point. When you think of the kingdom and Thy Kingdom coming, you see the contrast between what the kingdom is and what it will be and where we are now.

***Audience Member:** If you're wasting your time, aren't you doing the wrong things?*

***Ted:** What's that? Am I doing a good/bad work.*

***Audience Member:** Yes. That's what I'm saying. If you say you're wasting your time, then maybe you're not doing enough of what the Lord's asking you...*

Ted: I know, and I'm not doing enough. That's my problem.

Well let's don't get into a contest here.

***Thomas:** [UNCLEAR]*

There you go. Here's the other side. What Ted is saying, and what I'm saying, is this is a sign of hope. We will never do enough. I'll never do the right thing. But in the midst of that, there's a hope that we have that the Lord's going to return.

Audience Member: [UNCLEAR]...say Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Yes.

Audience Member: That covers [UNCLEAR].

That's a good summary statement. Give that again please.

Audience Member: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

You see, there's our hope, isn't it. I'm sure that Bishop Rogers, he's had a lot of international ministry, could tell us a little bit about people having that be their final hope and what's the motivation of how that really inspires people in other cultures to realize that the situation they're in right now will be one day consummated with him in all of his glory. It is a tremendous hope that we have. But that's our battle cry, "Thy Kingdom come." Let's take look at another verse—2 Peter 3,

Audience Member: [UNCLEAR] as a whole and try to understand how small in reality we are in comparison to God [UNCLEAR]...

There you go. That's right. He's just talking about how humbling it is, your statement about not doing enough and just how humbling it is to realize that we're such a small part of something so big and glorious. Remember humility...that's a good point...humility is this—seeing that which is perfect and realizing I can't achieve it. You see, we see the kingdom of God as perfect, and we realize we can't achieve it, and that produces humility in us. Humility is one of our greatest assets that we have as a kingdom citizen. We know that which is perfect is his kingdom, and we know that we cannot achieve it, and that drives us to the point of really recognizing that he really is in control. You see, that's all part of the understanding of this phrase, "Thy Kingdom come." He is the Sovereign; we are the subject.

Look at 2 Peter 3:13, "But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells." Looking for a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. You see, we know the end of the story. What was it, that radio host who used to say, "The rest of the story."

Audience Members: Paul Harvey.

Paul Harvey. You see, we know the rest of the story. The rest of the story is there will be a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness reigns. That's what gives us our hope. One of the things, you know, when all else fails, we just need to realize we have a tremendous hope, and that is in this phrase, "Thy Kingdom come." When you get discouraged, brothers, just pray that little thought, "Lord, Thy Kingdom come." It'll get your mind off of where you are and where you think you should be and where we know we will be.

Don: Bruce, could that be one reason, on purpose, of suffering, to focus our minds off of this world and on to heaven?

I think that's a great point, Don.

Don: *Because I think that sometimes, particularly we Americans, we love our TV's, we love our cell phones, we love all the comforts and conveniences we have. Then when something bad happens, "Oh no!" when sometimes, perhaps the Lord is saying, "Hey, this world is not your home."*

Amen to that. Our citizenship is where?

Don: *In heaven.*

You see, sometimes suffering may be the means by which God in his sovereign grace will give us a severe mercy, permit us to go through some suffering to get us refocused upon the fact that we are not citizens of this world; our citizenship is in heaven and we do have a hope, and that is his eternal glory when he comes. I think suffering can be a "wonderful way", wonderful in the sense of God sovereignly using it, not saying it's easy or comfortable, but it may be one of the means in which God sovereignly may say, "Let me get you refocused upon the real issue, which is the kingdom, 'Thy Kingdom coming,' not your own little world." I think that's a very profound statement, and I would certainly agree with that.

Let's take a look at Revelation 22:20. Somebody read it please.

Audience Member: *"He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"*

There's our great encouragement, "Yes! I'm coming soon." Sometimes, you know, we just collectively ought to say, "Come Lord Jesus." Just, "Come Lord Jesus." That's our battle cry, you see. That's what we mean we say, "Thy Kingdom come." We're basically saying, "Come Lord Jesus." We're saying, "Would you come. Would you now reign as you have promised to do that," and we'll be part of that wonderful, glorious reign.

We should not pray this prayer lightly or thoughtlessly. There is some deep meaning behind this. Those persecuted for the cause of Christ prayed this with meaning and with purpose, as Don has suggested. You see, as they were being persecuted, they prayed, "Lord Jesus come," because they understood his coming reign in all of his glory. Do we really hunger for his kingdom to come? Or do we want to experience what we want first? That's one of the questions we have to ask ourselves. Do we really want his kingdom to come, or do we want to experience what we want to experience first? I can't answer that for you, but that's a question that we all need to ask.

Let's just pause for a moment. One of the things we want to make sure, those of us who teach, we want to make sure that we're teaching to the point of understanding, not to the point of agreement. Remember, learning should not stop at knowledge. Learning should lead to living. What we are learning should teach us how to live more effectively. That means we need to be teaching to the point of understanding, not to the point of agreement. Do you understand what the Scripture teaching us? The question then is now what am I going to do about what I just learned? Let's just reflect upon that for a moment and pause upon that.

What are we going to do about what we've just learned about that one particular phrase, "Thy Kingdom come," as it relates to you where you are in your relationship to the Lord.? What are you going to do about what you have just learned as it relates to our understanding of Thy Kingdom come? Would anybody just want to make some application? What we're trying to say is let's don't have this just be some nice knowledge. You don't want to walk out of here and say, "Oh, I learned what Thy Kingdom come means." What you want to say is, "I learned what kingdom of God means, and this is what I'm going to do about what I just learned." What is it, brothers, you're going to do about what you just

learned?

Audience Member: *If I understand it fully, what you were talking about earlier, then have something to give someone else.*

Excellent. Now you've learned something, so you now, when somebody talks about the kingdom of God or frustration, you now have something to give, and that might be give them some hope, giving some hope by helping them understand the Lord Jesus will return. Good. You've got something now to give away. Ministry is giving away to someone else what God has given you. If we don't understand what God has given us through his Word, we have nothing to give away. Nothing of spiritual value will ever occur. Very good. Somebody else; any other application?

Brian: *One is live this out more responsibly because [UNCLEAR]...*

Good.

Brian: *The second thing is a lot of times I say, "Lord, please don't come yet, because there's so many of my family, so many loved ones that don't know you yet." I'm not proclaiming truth as often as I should for whatever reason [UNCLEAR] so it drives me to want to proclaim the truth [UNCLEAR].*

Did you hear that? That motivation? Motivation to be more responsible in proclaiming the Gospel to his family and loved ones, and so he's saying, "Lord, don't come yet because there are things that I think I still need to do that I need to be more responsible and live out more responsibility." Remember the word responsibility is the ability to respond—response able. It's knowing and doing what's expected of me.

When you study the doctrine of eschatology, which is the second coming...you know, there's a lot of pizzazz about the second coming, and a lot about the...you start looking for floods and tornadoes and disasters, and you start looking for all the signs. People get all excited about that. Do you know why you teach eschatology, the second coming? It's to make people more pure. It's to purify them so they're ready when the Lord returns. It's holiness. The reason you teach eschatology is not to say you read the signs and look at the newspaper and see the YouTube. It's to help that person become more pure and ready when the Lord returns, so that when he comes back...it's exactly what Brian is saying. I'm more fit now because I'm designed to be more holy because I want to be holy when he comes. You teach eschatology...the purpose of that is to produce holiness, not to produce answers.

Audience Member: *In the early 1960's I heard Bob Richards, Reverend Bob Richards, speak at a coaches [UNCLEAR] 5,000 men were there to here Lombardi. Lombardi said the only thing is winning. Bob Richards said, "I'm going to give you a formula for success—preparation plus opportunity equals success." You're talking about preparation.*

Yes, we're talking about preparation. You see, the reason you teach the end times, the reason you teach eschatology, it's because you want people to become more pure. It's really the motivation for holiness. It's the motivation for holiness. We should not take this petition, "Thy Kingdom come," lightly. We need to take it very seriously. Any questions on that as we move to the next one?

Don: *I think a good application for that, too, is that when we pray, we need to lift up our pastors on Sunday morning.*

Amen!

Don: *We need to lift up missionaries. We need to lift up people who in one way, or one capacity or*

whatever, are sharing the Gospel, whether it be here in our community or around the world.

That's an excellent point. You see, one of the things when we're talking about the kingdom...remember the whole Lord's Prayer, the Disciple's Prayer, as we're studying, starts with, "Our Father." That means this is a family prayer. When you're praying this prayer in the contents and the methodology of this prayer, you're praying for all the family of God elsewhere, which means our pastors, missionaries and so forth. They're the ones who are much more often times in the battle and the struggle than we are here in the United States. Don's point is really excellent. We need to support one another in this prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done." We need to pray for you are pastors who are preaching kingdom, that the Lord will return, our missionaries who are out proclaiming the Gospel. We need to be very supportive in our prayer life that it's really not about me alone; it's about Our Father, not my Father. This is really a family prayer.

As we talked about in our introduction, remember, we should never pray anything that would injure anybody else in the family of God. You see that wrapped up in the spirit of this prayer, is that every prayer you're praying really involves the whole family of God elsewhere.

***Tom:** It think, too, a lot of us that come to church, or get involved in church because we are observers. We are being entertained. We go there to feel good, and we don't focus on the spiritual gift or gifts that God has given us to participate and build up the church, and that's what we have to give. That's what God has given us, not just forgiveness of sins and the power of the Gospel, but he's given us things that are not ours by our nature, but are by the Holy Spirit, for building up the church. We forget about that.*

We do. Remember, two things are going last forever. It's going to be his Word and his Church, the body of Christ. Those are the two things. If you want to be involved in something that has eternal consequence, give yourself to the church and to the Word. Those are the two things that will last forever. Everything else will dissipate and fall away. The United States won't be around. What will be around will be the Word and those who are the remnant, those who are in the family of God, the Church. Give yourself to that however you can because those are the two things...hook your wagon to that star because you'll know you're dealing with something with permanence.

Let's go to the third petition. We come to this. This acknowledges the Father's will, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This is to pray that the kingdom of God might come in all of its fullness. "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This will be the perfect accomplishment of our Father's will. That's what we're praying for. We really want your perfect accomplishment, without any rebellion, without any provocation, without any delay or any evil agencies which God works through men's evil hearts. In other words we're saying, "We really want your kingdom to come and your will to be done in all of its fullest sense." Where does that start?

***Audience Member:** With us.*

With us. Exactly. You see, Thy Kingdom come—where does that start? With us. "Thy will be done." Where does that start? With us. That means we need to understand the difference between God's secret will and God's revealed will. Deuteronomy 29:29 teaches us that the secret things belong to God, those things that are the revealed are for you and for your children in the next generation. In other words, there's going to be a lot of things that the Scripture does not reveal to us, and that is sovereignly designed to be that way. Yet we spend so much of our time trying to find out the secret things. We conjure up all these secret things that we think is God's will. Like I want the perfect job. You're never going to find that in the Scripture. It will tell you how to be the perfect employee in the job that you take, but it will not tell you thou shall work at PNC, Mellon or UPMC. You're not going to find that. That's secret. But what you will find out is what kind of employee to do I need to be as a kingdom

citizen, as an M8, if I choose to go work at PNC, Mellon or UPMC. You see, that's the real issue.

The kingdom is about you; it's not about your job. God's will is not a job. God's will is who you are where you are. You have great freedom in Christ, as long as it doesn't violate the Scripture, to take any job that you want. Just think. Let's just say, for example, somebody takes a job at Factory A, and God's will is that they work in Factory B. Do you realize that the moment that they take Factory A because they didn't find the right job, that everything they do in the rest of their life is outside of his will because they didn't take the right job. You see how ludicrous that is. But that's the way that we think. We're always looking for ways to rationalize our decision making, to justify my decision, "Well God led me here."

How many times have you heard somebody say, "Well the Lord's leading me away from my present position," and you ask them why, "Because I don't get along well with my boss, and I know that God doesn't want me to be unhappy, so it's obvious the Lord is leading me away from my present employer." Based upon what? You see, that's based upon our mindset of justifying what we think is God's will, because we think that God's will is basically about me. It's really not about me. You see, it may be, as we're discussing today, that God's will will be you stay right that because he's molding you into something where you might be salt and light and he might be using you there to slow down corruption and expose sin. You just don't know that. The real issue is not am I in the right job. The issue is this—am I the right person in the job where I am? That's what the Scripture teaches you. It never teaches you about your employment. It teaches you about your conduct. It teaches us about our character. That's where we become kingdom citizens and Thy Kingdom come is when the kingdom of his will starts inside of me. Quit looking for these secret things. What house should I buy?

***Ted:** I'm wondering if that analogy you've just given could actually apply to marriage as well, thinking about looking for the perfect marriage or the perfect woman. That's not my calling. My calling is to be the perfect husband.*

Correct.

***Ted:** I've often thought I probably could be married to several different women, all at the same time. {LAUGHTER} That's another subject all together. I'm just saying...I was being silly about that.*

That's a good point. That's a very, very good point. The real issue is not is she the perfect wife. The real issue is what kind of husband am I? Am I really the man I need be? You see, we're always looking outside of us. When you look at this phrase, "Thy will be done," you're basically saying, "I want your kingdom to come, and I want that to start in me. That means, first of all, the way that that's going to be manifested and demonstrated is going to be your will being done in me." That's how the kingdom comes, "Thy will be done." That's because thy kingdom has come and it's coming inside of us. The real issue is not what job do I have; it's who am I in that job where I am?" It's the character of who I am. That's where we see God's will. Be careful, guys that you don't spend all of your time looking for the secret things. Because guess what? You won't find them because they're secret.

So many times somebody always comes to me and says, "Bruce, I'm in a job search." "Why are you doing that?" Well there may be reasons, and I'm not saying it's inappropriate to leave. There may be a time when you do have to shake to the dust off your feet and your sandals and leave. I don't know when that would be. I can't tell you and to do that. But you can't use an excuse that you're not happy as the means of changing your job.

I have a young friend who said, "I'm praying that God will put me in a managerial position." For three years he struggled with that and finally they put him in a managerial position. About ten months later, he

said, “I know the Lord’s leading me out of this managerial position.” I said, “Why is that?” He said, “Because people don’t like me, so I need to go someplace where I’m liked.” You see, his mindset was this, “Oh God’s will is always about me.” It is about us, but it’s also about his will in us. That’s the issue, guys.

We’ve done this before. Let me give you...

***Don:** I think, too, and I don’t mean to muddy the waters, but I think in Scripture there different ways in which the will of God is used. For example, his decreed will always comes to pass.*

Absolutely.

***Don:** This opens a can of worms, I know. Everything, in a sense, that is happening, is God’s will because it’s decreed.*

That’s right. He’s ordained it.

***Don:** But, I think that when we pray his will be done on earth as it is in heaven, it means his receptive will, what he longs for—salvation for his people, those kinds of things, that he would be universally worshipped, universally obeyed, that he is the universal sovereign of his people. I think that’s probably what he means.*

That’s excellent. That’s an excellent point. You see, “Thy will,” not my will. You see, what is it that he wants to accomplish? You’ll know that by the things that are revealed in the Scripture. That’s his revealed will. That is ordained. That is decreed. Often times people say, “Well the reason this happened is because God permits it.” Why does he permit it? It’s because he’s decreed it. He permits it because he’s ordained it. You see, all those that are happening God has ordained.

We don’t understand that because those things are what? Secret. They’re secret. We don’t understand that. Our role is to trust it because that’s where you say, “Thy will.” We’re basically saying, “We want the things that are near and dear on your heart to happen here, not the things that I think should happen in my heart.” Don’s point is really an excellent point. We need to realize whose will are we saying we want it to be? It’s got to be his and the things that he decrees, the things that he ordains. That’s what we’re looking for

Let me just give you a quick summary. We’ve done this before. There are six things that deal with what Don is saying, that God has decreed or ordained, that are six revealed things of the will of God for you and me personally, and they’re all the same. I’m going to go through them quickly. First of all, that you’re saved. God desires that you have a saving relationship. His elect—the reason the Lord Jesus has not come back yet is because all of his elect have not come to saving faith. He will not come back until they do, because he decreed that. He’s ordained that. Now do I understand that? Absolutely not. I trust it and I have to preach it and teach it because I know this—he will not return until the last person who was chosen before the foundation of the world comes to saving faith. God’s will is this—that you have a saving relationship with God the Father through God the Son. Number one—are you saved?

Number two—are you sanctified? That means you’re set apart for holiness. 1 Thessalonians 4:3, “This is God’s will, your sanctification.” You want to know what God’s will is? It’s your holiness. God desires, his will for you is to be holy. Not have the right job. It’s be holy. Be holy in the job that you take.

Number three is that you’re submissive. Know what the Lord’s will is (Ephesians 5:18). Know what the Lord’s will is. You’re submissive. Here you see this is what we’re talking about now; the sovereign

ruler, the master—we are the submissive one, as we understand discipleship. It's self-denial, self-sacrifice and self-submission. The question is God's will for me is that I'm submissive, not that I'm successful. You see, how am I successful? By being submissive. You're saved, you're sanctified, you're submissive.

Next is that you're suffering. It is God's will that we suffer for Christ. All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. You see, it may be that God's will is that you suffer. There reasons behind that. You and I may not understand that, but if that's his will, then we need to say, 'Lord, your will be done. Thy Kingdom come, your will be done.' It may be that.

Next one is that you're saying thanks (1 Thessalonians 5:18), "In all things give thanks for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." There are six things that are God's revealed will about everybody's the same for us.

Ted: *I have five.*

I'm thinking of the sixth one. {LAUGHTER}

Ted: *I could see you hesitating early in the process.*

That's right. You see, I'm out here thinking, "Now what's that sixth one?"

Ted: *Bruce, is it absolutely coincidental that all of them begin with an "s"? Is that part of God's will that every one [UNCLEAR]?*

Absolutely. {LAUGHTER} No question about that.

Audience Member: *What's number five?*

Alright, here we go. Let me recite them again. First of all, it's saved, sanctified, submissive, spirit-filled—led by the spirit—then suffering, then saying thanks. Thanks, Ted. Those are the six. It's God's sovereign rule in eternity past that they all begin with "s." Isn't that amazing?

Audience Member: *Yeah, wow!*

Isn't that amazing? He's so organized.

Ted: *It's like greater than the parting of the Red Sea.*

That's right. {LAUGHTER} Now do you understand? Now look at those. Look at these. I'll give you the verses if you want. Sig, we'll put this on the web page. I'll send this out. But guys, look at this. This is really practical. This is God's revealed will, not his secret will. His secret will we don't know what that is. But in the midst of the unrevealed things, he said, "Here are six things in your life that is my will for you, and that is that you are saved, that you are sanctified, that you are spirit-filled, that you're submissive, that you're suffering and your saying thanks." When somebody says, "What is God's will for me?" You know, it's the same thing for the guy sitting right beside you. It's all the same. And yet we say, "I want God's perfect will." Well we just gave it to you. That's it. It's the same as everybody else. God's will for you is no different than it is for me or for Bishop Rogers. It's the same thing, because that's his revealed will. That's why his kingdom comes in us first. As we say, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done," you see, we need to say are those six things a reality in me? That's what you want in my life to be a demonstration of my kingdom in you that will help the kingdom come about.

Are you saved, sanctified, spirit-filled, submissive, suffering and saying thanks? See how practical that is? Focus on that. That's his revealed will. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done. God's will for you, brothers, is the same as everybody else in the kingdom of God. Any questions?

Audience Member: Bruce, the other thing is as suffering produces character, God's plan for us is that we would be conformed the image and likeness of Jesus Christ, so that helps us in those difficult job situations or difficult marriage situations to say, "Thank you, Lord, for this challenge that I'm facing, because I know that you're doing a work in me," because we don't produce our own character. God is the one who produces [UNCLEAR]...

Amen. That's right. Amen to that. That's it means to be spirit-filled. When we talk about being spirit-filled, we're not talking about a second blessing. We're not talking about something that comes after your regeneration. Scripture makes it very clear if you don't have the spirit of Christ in you, you're not in Christ at all. We're not talking about a second blessing that says I've been baptized by the spirit. The spirit doesn't baptize; Christ baptizes, and you're baptized with the spirit. That's what you're baptized with. We're talking about spirit-filled means this—be being kept filled. When you look at that verse in Ephesians 5, "Be led by the spirit, be spirit filled," it means be in a condition of being led by the spirit continually. It's a verb tense in the Greek that says there's a past event in your life, your regeneration, where the spirit infused you with his life, and now be being kept filled. In other words, you want to have a daily existence with you're constantly be being kept filled by the spirit. That's what it means. It does not mean a second blessing. Understand that? It means a present condition right now that's constantly going on. It's not a second blessing. When God gives you himself, he can't give you anything else. When he gave you his life at your regeneration, he gave you everything he had.

Bob: *It strikes me as I look these six that there's only one or two that we can do something, like we can say thanks. That's our role. But the saving and the sanctification, the spirit-filled and all that, we can do nothing about those. Right? It's sort of interesting that that's the only one that...*

That's interesting. One of our responses is the response of what? Gratitude. You see, what motivates us? It's not success. It's gratitude. That's why he says, "In all things give thanks." What happens when you start saying thanks for the difficult things? What happens?

Audience Member: *They're not as difficult.*

Not as difficult, but where does it get your mind? On the Lord, not on yourself. You see, saying thanks does that. One of the greatest panaceas for pain is thanks, because it gets your mind off that.

Audience Member: *Del Tackett in the Truth Project, when he explains the spheres that God created, like family and church and government and labor and man/God relationship and community—in each one of those, he explains there's an authority, like you were saying, and a submissive role. He placed man, a husband, as the authority in the family, Christ as the head of the church, and when he created the state, he put himself in the position of authority, and the state will submit to God.*

Thank you. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we just are overwhelmed by the power of your Word. Father, we just pray that you would help us understand what it means when we say this phrase, "Thy Kingdom come," help us understand that we're saying would you begin that in me, begin that in me, and Thy will be done, we're basically saying, Father, make sure that these six revealed things are part of my life, that you've brought them into my life and that's who I am, so that I will learn the characteristics of self-denial, self-submission and self-sacrifice. May it be so for Jesus' sake. And all the Brave Men said...Amen!! Thank you, brothers.