

Keys to Answered Prayer III

Pray & Live By God's Will

Fred R. Coulter—September 2, 2006

Let's do a little overview of a couple of things first here, let's come to Matthew 6:7. Now Jesus was telling them, "Don't pray like the heathen..." So you look at all the other religions of the world and you look at everything that they do and that's a good clue on how not to pray—actually, a direct command by Christ. Now here's another important thing to understand as far as believing God and answer to your prayers. "...for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him." So God knows. But He wants us to ask and we're going to see how we begin asking, and what we need to do and how we need to do it. So this first one will be:

I. Pray and live according to God's will

And we find this first of all right here beginning in Matthew 6:9: "Therefore, you are to pray after this manner... [Now this does not mean, as is assumed by the world, that you just memorize the prayer and that's what you pray. This is an outline prayer, and we'll see a little later, when we examine some of the Psalms, that it follows right along with this outline. So this is an outline prayer. Now, if we come to Luke 11—just hold your place here because Luke 11 is a parallel account of this and this is where the disciples came to Jesus, as we will see, and asking Him about prayer.

Luke 11:1: "Now it came to pass *that* as He was praying in a certain place... [Now, we find that Jesus would go and pray, He would leave the disciples and go pray in a private place. One account is He went up into a mountain to pray. So here He was 'praying in a certain place.' Now, it doesn't tell us what this place is, so we don't know where it is.] ...when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us how to pray, as John also taught his disciples.'"

And we're going to see that praying is one of the most vital things that we can do. As a matter of fact, it is the number one vital thing in our spiritual lives that we do. ***Absolutely the number one!*** And you've heard it over and over again through the years, I'm sure: 'prayer and study!' And that's like saying: 'food and water'—in a physical sense. So you have to be taught how to pray. Prayer does not come just as a matter of recourse, just a matter of automatically doing it.

Verse 2: "And He said to them, 'When you pray, say, "Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name; Your Kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also upon the earth.'"" Now,

we will save the physical things until later, so we're going to concentrate on the spiritual things—so let's go back here to Matthew 6:9: "Therefore, you are to pray after this manner: 'Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name.'" That means it is Holy, it is sanctified and that the name that God the Father revealed to us, through Jesus Christ, is the Father. This does not mean that we get all involved in sacred names, because the New Testament shows that there are two sacred names that we use, which are: The Father—God the Father, and the Son, Jesus Christ, and the third would be *Lord*, because He is our Lord.

Now notice, v 10: "Your kingdom come..." This is the whole summation of the Bible. That's the whole summation of the Bible. And it's the whole focus on what we are to be doing. Now just come down here to v 33 and we will see how Jesus ends this chapter. It says: "But *as for* you, seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Now that's a very interesting verse—isn't it, when you analyze it. We're always seeking first the Kingdom of God. That's the purpose and will of God. Now also, 'His righteousness.' And that means we are to come to have the very righteousness of God. And this comes through prayer and study and living. So that's why the first key is ***Pray and live according to God's will.***

Now, come back here to Matthew 5:48, and here again, this is paramount to understand: "Therefore, you shall be perfect... [that means you shall *become* perfect. Perfection takes time.] ...even as... [here's the goal—look at the perfection here] ...your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." So we have seeking the Kingdom of God first; we have that overall goal—that is the vision—and the book of Proverbs tells us: 'Where there is no vision the people perish.' We have to keep that foremost in our minds—not all the other things—*foremost*, because God has called us to enter into His kingdom. "Therefore, you shall be perfect even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." Now that's a tremendous, high goal—isn't it? And so, when we pray the first thing we do is *acknowledge* God. We can:

- praise His name
- praise His greatness
- praise His righteousness
- praise His goodness
- praise His mercy
- praise His forgiveness

—and all of these things that come from the Father.

And then we focus on the kingdom. Now we will see this as we go through other aspects of this in this series. And the whole goal is the Kingdom of God on earth. Now, not just when Christ returns, but the Kingdom of God which reaches out into the Universe as well. So you have to include in this, expand what you're thinking of this, and expand it out to Rev. 20 & 21, because that's when the full spiritual Kingdom of God, with all the sons of God now in the Kingdom of God as spirit beings, and we have the new heavens and new earth and new Jerusalem. ***So this is the goal!*** "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." And we need to understand: God's will is always being done in both places. And God's will falls into two categories:

1. To work with His saints and qualify them for eternal life

Hold your place here in Matthew and come back to Colossians, the first chapter—because it is the Father Who qualifies us. And I know in the book that I wrote, *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days, Which?*, someone asked me: 'What do I mean that they have to qualify for salvation?' Well, what I mean by that is this: They have to qualify through Jesus Christ and God the Father, because, obviously, we cannot earn salvation, we cannot earn eternal life.

Now here, Colossians 1:9: "For this cause we also, from the day that we heard of it... [that they were walking in the spirit and the love of God] ...[we] **do not cease to pray for you**... [so here we have another instruction in how to pray. You pray for the brethren. You pray for their growth; you pray for their increase; you pray for their love; you pray for their healing, and all of those things according to the will of God.] ...and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will... [we need to know the will of God. The will of God is contained where? *In the Bible!* Just make sure you have a Bible that sticks to the original Hebrew and Greek.] ...in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.... [And this is how we are to learn to grow and everything.] ...That you may walk worthily of the Lord... [So we are to be walking in His way—that's all part of it—living, walking in the ways of God.] ...unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy" (vs 9-11). Now you see what this does, this also layers our attitude and our goal and our purpose of praying. So you can see when we analyze Matt. 6 that there is a whole lot that comes from the rest of the Bible into it, showing again that Matt. 6 is only an outline.

Now notice v 12: "Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of

the inheritance of the saints in the light." Now God is the One Who qualifies us. And ***prayer is one of the most important tools and spiritual growth mechanism***—that is really not a mechanism because you don't want to reduce it down to a machine—tools, spiritual tools. So when we pray to the Father, and hallow His name, all of these things come into it. "You're will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Number one: *To qualify the saints for eternal life for the resurrection.*

2. God's will is still being done while evil is going on

Not that He's the author of evil—He is not! Satan the devil is. And so sinners out there are receiving the will of God with His punishment and with His judgment. And just take a look at all of the lives that reject God and what happens to them? Just think about it for a minute. Look at the world. If you don't love God—as we're going to see that's all part of it—and keep His commandments—that's living by God's will—is it God's will? Now, as we saw here in Matthew 6:33, we're to 'seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.' And His righteousness then is defined by His commandments; it is defined by the Word of God. By His laws; by His commandments; by His statutes; by His judgments—all of that is the righteousness of God. And even the judgment of the wicked is a righteous judgment as we find in Rev. 16. So the sinners out here think they reject God, go on their way, but lo and behold, how does the world turn out? Well, we already saw that: full of lies and cheating and wars and murders and drugs and illicit sex and homosexuality and hatefulness and deceitfulness and cheating all of the works of the flesh. And they have their god.

Now it's very interesting! We're going to see a little bit later, but it just came to mind, many of the richest men in the world do not believe in God. Now why are they rich if they don't believe in God? Come over here to Matthew 4 and we'll see. They have a god whom they are serving. They think that they are serving themselves, but if you reject God and you're an atheist there is another spirit being who can reward you. Now let's see it right here.

Matthew 4:8: "After that, the devil took Him to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory... [This is what people strive after: money, power, fame, sex, all translated into politics and business and false religions.] ...And [he] said to Him, 'All these things will I give You, if You will fall down and worship me'" (vs 8-9). Now there are people who will openly worship Satan the devil, and they know that they do. But they think that he is the real God and he has deceived them into believing that the REAL God is the evil god.

Now let's see another way that God is working out His will. This becomes important. Let's come to Daniel, the fourth chapter. Let's look at the kingdoms of this world that are going to become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ when He returns. Daniel, the fourth chapter, tells us something very important: that God's will is being done, even in the kingdoms of men, even in those that He raises up for instruments of punishment or instruments of war against His people. Now, we've already covered a lot of that with the World War III war on terror.

Now Daniel 4—this is Nebuchadnezzar and he had a dream, and the dream came from God, though he was a pagan. So God does deal with the leaders of the world regardless of their religion. So he had the dream and over here in verse seven he called the magicians, astrologers, the Chaldeans and the soothsayers and they couldn't tell him what the dream was, nor the interpretation of it. So when God gives them a dream, all the satanic forces cannot interpret it for them. Now, you see that over and over again in the Bible. So what it was, it was a prophecy of what was going to happen to Nebuchadnezzar himself, because he would get all lifted up in his vanity. And Daniel came and told him the dream.

Daniel 4:16: "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him: and let seven times [seven years] pass over him. This matter *is* by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the Holy ones... [Now those are the angels and God the Father and Jesus Christ intervening in the kingdoms of this world. So when we pray 'Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven' what goes on on the earth is according to the will of God in heaven; because this originated where? *In heaven, at God's throne.* And He told the angels who rule over this world what was going to be. And here's the purpose]: ...to the intent that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will, and sets up over it the basest of men" (vs 16-17).

Now, how does that square with Matthew 4, where Satan says, 'I have all of these and I give it to whomsoever I will'? It falls this way: ***Satan cannot do one thing without God's permission.*** Not a single thing! And God uses Satan as a tool in His hands and Satan thinks that he is eventually going to get all power and the upper hand on God—***but it isn't going to be!*** And so what happened—just like that—so he gave the interpretation of the dream.

Let's understand that in the end-time we have what? *Babylon the Great which rules the whole world.* So this also is prophetic of the coming Beast

who's going to rule the whole world. So Daniel gave the interpretation, v 24: "This *is* the interpretation, O king, and this *is* the decree of the Most High... [Now that's carrying out the will of God—isn't it?] ...which is come upon my lord the king: That they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, ***till you know*** that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will" (vs 24-25). So you think about what's happening in the world. Men want to have a world government. They're going to get it sooner or later. And they think that will solve their problems. But it's only going to compound them and make them worse. And they are going to be directly under the most evil, wicked man in the history of the world, and under the direct power and influence of Satan the devil. So you have the two fulfillments of the will of God: in the lives of the saints and in the world, the kingdoms of this world.

Now v 26: "And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; your kingdom shall be sure unto you, after that you shall have known that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto you... [So he was giving the will of God.] ...and break off your sins by righteousness... [called him to repentance. Now, we'll see how important repentance is for prayer as we progress through this series.] ...and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of your tranquility.... [So he got the message. But did he listen?]" (v 28): "...All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spoke, and said, 'Is not this great Babylon, that ***I*** have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of ***my*** power, and for the honor of ***my*** majesty?'" (vs 26-30).

People get all wrapped up in themselves, thinking how great they are; and what great things they can do. Listen, we only live because God created the earth, He made us and gave us food and water and air to breathe. And we would all be dead in just seconds if we didn't breathe. So if you do anything or accomplish anything, thank God for it, go on from there, don't get lifted up in it. If you do a good job, fine! If it works out good, fine! If it doesn't, then correct it and move on. Now notice:

"While the word *was* in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, *saying*, 'O king Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from you. And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make you to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over you, ***until you know***

that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever he will” (vs 31-32). So, **God’s will is being done everywhere, at all times, in all places on the earth and in heaven.** So when we come to God and say, ‘Your will be done’ it means in the world, it means in our lives. So then that happened.

“The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar... [I don’t know what happened. Did he fall down and start foaming at the mouth and become just crazy? Sounds like it—doesn’t it?] ...and he was driven from men... [Now, imagine that. Just sent out to a pasture. Maybe lived in a little hut in a pasture. Here’s the great king with all the glory, with all the power that God gave the whole civilized world in the Middle East into his hand. Even had him as the instrumentality to correct Judah and bring them into captivity.] ...and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles’ *feathers*... [great stringing down masses of hair] ...and his nails like birds’ *claws*” (v 33). Now, can you imagine not cutting your fingernails for seven years? I saw a picture of man in India who did not cut his fingernails and they grew around like a snail’s shell. It was just absolutely awful. And he had the long hair. When I saw that I thought: *there’s Nebuchadnezzar!* I imagine he look just like it.

Now notice the effect that it had—v 34: “And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High... [Isn’t that exactly what Jesus said, ‘Our Father Who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name’? *Yes!* bless God, praise God, thank God, love God.] ...and I praised and honored Him that lives forever, whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom *is* from generation to generation... [So you see, this is all important for us to understand: When we come to pray that we have in our mind the understanding of God’s power, the understanding of God’s dominion, the understanding of the righteousness of God, the love of God, the mercy of God—all of these things come with it.] ...And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing... [Just put in your margin there, Isa. 40, because it says ‘we’re all like grasshoppers and the nations are like a drop in the bucket.’] ...and He does according to His will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and **none can stay His hand**, or say unto Him, ‘What do You?’” (vs 34-35). So this puts us in a proper perspective in relationship with God in our attitude when we begin praying.

It’s the same as the reference to the potter and the clay. The potter’s going to make what he’s going to make. Now if the clay is cooperative and supple and can be worked, he can make it into a

beautiful thing. If it’s not, smashes it down, maybe puts some more water in it, works it around, kind of like a personal trial, you’re rubbed. You know, working clay like that is kind of like kneading bread. If you knead it right, you get a good quality of bread. Same way with clay, you’ve got to knead it, you have to fold it, you have to water it—then it’s ready, fine tuning. It also says that’s why ‘He hardens whom He will harden and have mercy unto whom He will have mercy.’ To execute His will. Let’s just understand this: ***there’s not one thing that’s going to go against the will of God.*** Though He gives us free choice, He says: ‘I set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life that you and your seed may live. That you may love the Lord your God.’ So we choose. When we choose to go God’s way, His will is executed toward us for the perfection toward eternal life and the resurrection. When we reject God and go the way of the world and Satan, His will is executed according to that. And always remember that there is repentance because what we are going to read next is Nebuchadnezzar’s repentance.

Verse 36: “At the same time my reason returned unto me... [He probably looked down and said, ‘Ghastly! Look at this: the fingernails, the hair, the dirt, the beard, the eyebrows.] ...and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me... [‘Oh yes, king, we see you’re well.’ Oh bow and scrape and do obeisance. ‘May I cut your fingernails?’ *Oh yes, by all means.* ‘May I cut your hair?’ *Yes.* ‘Would you like to take a bath?’ *Yes.* ‘Let’s trim your beard down.’ *Sounds like a good idea. Where is a tub of hot water?* You know, you can read all of that in there. And then he put on his royal garments again and everyone came around doing obeisance: ‘Yes, lord, what would you like my lord the king?’ You can just hear it. They ‘sought unto me’ bowing and scraping and all of those who had ideas of taking over while he was insane were probably there just wishing that they could have executed it. But God said his kingdom would be secure.] ...and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. **Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all Whose works are Truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase**” (vs 36-37).

You’re not going to go before God and have Him endorse YOUR will. That’s the most important thing to remember in answered prayer. If you do, God’s answer is probably going to be ‘no.’ Comment was made (from audience): Just like Job’s experience, he had to be humbled and come to see the power and greatness of God, and to repent.

Now let's come to Psalm 143:10. How do you know what the will of God is? He expects you to go by His will. Well, we've said it is in the Bible—didn't we? "Teach me... [Now how does God teach us? *Through His Word, with His Spirit and through life-circumstances.*] ...Teach me to do Your will... [Then it is implied, *not my will.*] ...for You *are* my God: Your spirit *is* good... [So it's God's Spirit doing the teaching.] ...lead me into the land of uprightness." Now see how that ties in with Matt. 6:33: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."

Since we're in the book of Psalms 40—and as we know, just put in your notes there: John 6:45; we are all taught by the Father. And we'll look at this and examine that a little bit more. Now this is a prophecy of Jesus, we'll read this again a little bit later—Psalm 40:8: "I **delight** to do Your will..." Now think about that.

- Is it God's will that we keep the Sabbath? *Yes!*
- Do you delight in it?
- Is it God's will that we keep His Passover and Holy Days? *Yes!*
- Do you delight in it?
- Is it God's will that we live by the Ten Commandments? *Yes!*
- Do you delight in it?
- Is it God's will that with His Spirit He puts in you, His love, His truth, His laws, His commandments written right in the very heart and table of your mind? *Yes!*

And if that's so, ***you delight to do it.*** And doesn't He say there in Isa. 56 that if we call the Sabbath honorable and delight in it then He will make the Sabbath a good thing for us. Now if you don't want to keep the commandments of God, but you do it because God says so; or you do it because the preacher says so and you'd really rather be out there playing baseball or football or fishing or watching sports, you're not delighting to do the will of God! You have to delight to do it.

(go to the next track)

Now let's see Jesus Christ, our example, and come to Hebrews, the tenth chapter, and we'll pick up the quote of it there, what we read in Psa. 40. And again, we're focusing on the will of God. Let's see how Jesus followed the will of God. How did He live when He was in the flesh? Remember, He took upon Him human nature, subject to sin, subject to death. Let's see how He lived His life.

Hebrews 10:5: "For this reason, when He comes into the world, He says, 'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me.... [Jesus did not offer one single sacrifice at the temple. Whenever He went to the

temple He was teaching and witnessing to the people and against the religious leaders there.]: ...You did not delight in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin.... [We've already seen that, haven't we, in Isaiah 66.] ...Then said I, "Lo, I come (*as it is written of Me in the scroll of the book*) to do Your will, O God".... [Now, if you don't have the series on Hebrews, you can go online and especially draw down #27 in Hebrews, because that is a special one on the covenant that was between God the Father and Jesus Christ, while Jesus was in the flesh on the earth.] (v 8): ...In the saying above, *he said*, 'Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin (which are offered according to the law) You did not desire nor delight in'; then He said, 'Lo, I come to do Your will, O God'.... [Now that's all included: *Your will be done*—in my life; *Your will be done* in the lives of your saints; *Your will be done* in the world; etc. 'I delight to do Your will, O God.')] ...He takes away the first *covenant* in order that He may establish the second *covenant*. By **Whose will**... [Now notice again the will of God, the will of Christ Who willingly died for us.] ...***we are sanctified***... [set aside for a Holy purpose, Holy life and eternal life] ...through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ***once for all***" (vs 5-10).

Now, I just read a quote from Bishop Spong who says it's silly for us to believe that Jesus died for our sins. And he's supposed to be a high, mucky-muck Episcopalian bishop. Notice, v 11: "Now every high priest stands ministering day-by-day, offering the same sacrifices repeatedly, which are never able to remove sins; But He [Jesus], after offering one sacrifice for sins... [of Himself] ...for ever... [that is all sin for all time] ...sat down at *the* right hand of God. Since that time, He is waiting until His enemies are placed *as* a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified" (vs 11-14). Very interesting—isn't it? That goes right back to what we started. We are to be 'perfect as our Father in heaven in perfect'—and that comes through Christ.

Now again, let's see how Jesus continually did the will of the Father. He delighted to do it. Let's come to John, the fifth chapter. Now all of these things become important because it shows us how when we ask God for His will to be done in heaven as well as on earth, that we understand how it's done. This is after He healed the man who had the infirmity for 38 years, and the Scribes and Pharisees were all upset because He told him to 'pick up your bedroll and walk.' It's like picking up a sleeping bag.

John 5:18: "So then, on account of this *saying*... [when He said: 'My Father is working until now, and I work' (v 17).] ...So then, on

account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had loosed the Sabbath, but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.... [And they understood exactly what He was saying.] ...Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, **the Son has no power to do anything of Himself**... [it all came from the Father] ...but only what He sees the Father do, for whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner" (vs 17-19).

Now come over here to v 30: "I have no power to do anything of Myself... [This is the way we need to look at it in the things that we do. God gives us life. God gives us breath. He's given us our minds. He's given us our bodies. And everything that we do is because God has given us the power to do it—likewise, spiritually. This is why it's so insane for ministers and teacher and preachers and evangelists to get all lifted up in vanity and to how great they are. See, because they're not! Look at Jesus, Who was God before He became a human being. Look at His attitude. He didn't say, 'Well, you ought to recognize Me. I'm God in the flesh.' No, He says]: ...I have no power to do anything of Myself... [and *of* comes from the Greek "ek" meaning *out from within*—just His own fleshly body.] ...but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me." So He delighted to do the will of God. Everything He did was seeking the will of God. So this is all included when we ask God that His will be done.

Now notice, let's come here to Mark, the third chapter, and see what Jesus said. Who does He look to? Who is important to Jesus? We're going to see, yes, you're important to Jesus. Mark 3:31: "Then *His* brothers..." He did have brothers. Now the Catholic Bible, because they have to uphold the false doctrine of the virginity of Mary, perpetual virginity, that she never had children, that they ignore the verses over here in Mark 6—let's come over here in Mark, the sixth chapter, and let's see where it talks about the brothers and sisters of Jesus.

Mark 6:1: "And He left there and came into His *own* country, and His disciples followed Him. Now when the Sabbath day came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and many *of those* who heard Him were astonished, saying, 'From where did this *man* get these things? And what *is* this wisdom that has been given to Him, that by His hands many miracles are done also? Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and **the brother** of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not **His sisters** here with us?' And they were offended in Him" (vs 1-3).

Since God is a family, it's obvious that Jesus also grew up in a family, having brothers and sisters.

So when we read over here in Mark, the third chapter—let's come back there now—Mark 3:31: "...and His mother came and were standing outside; *and* they sent to Him, calling Him.... [that is sent a message calling for Him] ...And the multitude sat around Him; and they said to Him, 'Behold, Your mother and Your brothers *are* outside; *and* they are seeking You.'.... [And He immediately dropped everything that He did and ran out and talked to them. Now that would be the human way of doing it, right? *No, He didn't do that.*] ...But He answered them, saying... [People could take this as an insult, but it isn't. It is a profound spiritual lesson.] ...'who is My mother and *who are* My brothers?' And He looked around at those who were sitting in a circle around Him, *and* said, 'Behold My mother and My brothers... [all the people there] ...**for whosoever shall do the will of God**... [Now this tells you whether you are a brother or sister of Christ—right?] ...**that one is My brother, and My sister, and mother**'" (vs 31–35). Now He wouldn't say that unless they were really His brothers and His sisters and His mother. And we know, of course, that Mary was there (Acts 1) when the 120 disciples all got together after Jesus was ascended to heaven.

Now let's come to John 7—again, we're focusing on the will of God. How you know what the will of God is. How you determine the will of God. Well, it's all contained in the Scriptures. And we also come to the point: once we know and understand that, we know that it is of God. And as we are to grow in the will and knowledge and grace of God, then we learn to make the decisions and evaluate things according to God's way.

Now let's pick it up here in John 7:14: "But then, about the middle of the Feast, Jesus went up into the temple and was teaching. And the Jews were amazed, saying, 'How does this man know letters, having never been schooled?' Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His Who sent Me.... [So He didn't even saying anything that the Father didn't want Him to say. He didn't do anything that the Father didn't want Him to do. Always sought the will of the Father. As we saw, 'I delight to do Your will, O God.' Now, we need to translate that to our lives. Do we delight to do the will of God?]' (Now notice v 17): ...If anyone desires to do His will... [You have to have the desire.] ...he shall know of the doctrine [teaching], **whether it is from God, or whether I speak from My own self**" (vs 14-17). That's why we are to prove all things. That's why whatever we do must be based on the Truth of the Word of God. Notice that this verse (17) starts out with 'IF' you desire. So it has to come from within. It's not a demand.

- God is not going to meet your demand.
- God is not going to do your will.
- God is not going to honor your thoughts.

Now notice, v 18: “The one who speaks of himself is seeking his own glory... [to build his own kingdom, to build his own following, to have his own pet doctrine.] ...but He Who seeks the glory of Him Who sent Him is true... [He’s talking about Himself] ...and there is no unrighteousness in Him.” So that’s how Jesus lived His life, and He lived His life that way unto the end, didn’t He?

Let’s come to Luke 22. Even in the most trying circumstances, and a lot of people misunderstand why Jesus said what He said here when He went to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane just before He was arrested. Luke 22:40: “And when He arrived at the place, He said to them, ‘Pray *that you* do not enter into temptation. And He withdrew from them about a stone’s throw; and falling to *His* knees, He prayed, saying, ‘Father, **if You are willing**... [if this was a last minute thing] ...to take away this cup from Me—; nevertheless... [regardless of the consequences that He faced] ...**not My will, but Your will be done.**’” (vs 40-42). And that’s what we are to pray in the model prayer—right? ‘Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.’ *Yes!* So Jesus was true to the end.

Now let’s come here to Ephesians 5, and let’s begin translating this into things that we need to do; and how we incorporate this into our lives; and how led of the Holy Spirit of God—we’ll get to that in just a minute—we will see now what is the will of God in our lives. We’ve seen it in the world with the sinful and the wicked. We’ve seen some admonitions for us. We’ve seen it in Jesus’ life. Now let’s look at it here in *our* lives. Ephesians 5:17: “For this reason, do not be foolish... [Of course, if you’re seeking your own will you’re being foolish.] ...but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.”

That’s why we study so we know what the will of the Lord is. We’re not to go around saying: ‘You’re will be done. Oh God, I wonder what your will is?’ Now when we pray for God’s blessings, we don’t exactly know what God’s will is, but for our good, *always!* Whether it is even a trial or it is a difficulty that we’re confronted with, it is always for our own good. And the way that God has made us is this: When we go through a trial, and after we get out to the other side of it what do we see? *We see the reason for it.* Many times going through it, the only thing we can do is in faith and trust God and ask God His will be done. That’s perfect, spiritual, 20/20 hindsight. That’s what God wants us, how He wants us, to understand. But He wants us to do this: Are we willing to continue in the will of God until we understand it? That’s the whole point. And sometimes you will have some heavy things laid upon you. And when they are, you just have to go to God and say, ‘Oh God, please give me

understanding. Give me help. Give me strength. Please intervene and take care of these things for us.’

Now let’s come over here to Ephesians 6:5^[transcriber’s correction]—and let’s apply this spiritually to us. It is for servants and slaves in those days as to what they were to do. “Servants, obey *your* masters according to the flesh with reverence and trembling in singleness of heart, as unto Christ... [Now, that’s how we’re to do everything that we do.] ...Not *merely* with eye service, as *do* pleasers of men; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God **from the heart**. Do service with goodwill, *as* to the Lord, and not to men” (vs 5-7). So this is how we need to run our lives, live our lives. Now, let’s look at it this way: We are servants of Christ—right? Christ is our Master. Therefore, we’re not going to do things to show-off to men. But it’s with singleness of heart to Christ. ***One thought, one mind, one purpose, one goal!***

Now let’s see how this works. Come back to John 14—now we’ve covered this before. What is the most important foundation of the will of God for us? And how does that work in our lives? And how does that relate to prayer? Let’s come down here to John 14:21—we’ll come back up to some other verses in just a minute. Now, is it the will of God that you keep His commandments? *Yes!* To delight to do His will. The Ten Commandments ***express*** the will of God for us, as a major trunk of the tree how we’re to live.

John 14:21: “The one who has My commandments... [Now it’s not just enough to have them. A lot of people can memorize them, but they don’t keep them.] ...and ***is keeping them***... [present tense, ongoing way of living—that’s the will of God.] ...that is the one who loves Me...”

And we know there in 1-John 5:3: “For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome.”

- When you understand the purpose of the Sabbath, *it’s not a burden.*
- When you understand the purpose of the Passover and the Holy Days, *it’s not a burden.*
- When you understand living by every Word of God, *it’s not a burden.*
- Now, there may be some difficulties in the world. But *it’s not a burden.*

John 14:21: “...that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father... [What more could you have in your life? What greater assurance can you have than God the Father loving you? In all circumstances? At all times? Loving you so much that He will reveal even your sins to you that you can repent of them and He

can forgive them. That He loves you.] ...and I [Jesus] will love him... [Now Jesus loves you, too. With that there is nothing greater in the world in your life than the love of God the Father and Jesus Christ for you—and you loving them, and then, of course, love the brethren; so forth.] ...and will manifest Myself to him.”

How does God manifest Himself, how does Jesus manifest Himself to you? Did you one night, while you were sleeping, wake up and have a vision that said, ‘I’m Jesus, I’m manifesting Myself to you’? *No! He manifests Himself to you through His Word.* What happened in your life one day that God began to deal with you? And what happened in your life that you began to really want to know the will of God and His Word? That’s how God began to deal with you. That’s how He manifests Himself to you.

“Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, Lord, what has happened that you are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world.... [How can You do that? How can God, Christ, manifest Himself to you, individually, and nobody else around you may even understand it?] ...Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word [commandments]... [that’s how Jesus manifests Himself to you. It begins with the commandments and everything else from there.] ...and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him” (vs 22-23). Now you know we’ve covered that with receiving the Holy Spirit of God.

As I’ve mentioned, you were made to receive the Holy Spirit of God—this is how it comes. Now notice on the other hand: “The one who does not love Me does not keep My Words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me” (v 24). That’s why He said, ‘If you reject Me and My words, you’ve rejected the One Who sent Me.’ Now you think about what an awesome thing that is to reject God the Father and Jesus Christ. That’s why prayer is so important. And (as we’re going to see) that’s why prayer is necessary every day. If you think eating is necessary every day. Drinking water is necessary every day. How about breathing—necessary every minute, right? I dare say there would be very few among us who could hold our breath for one whole minute—60 seconds—I doubt that. That shows you how dependent you are on God—right? *Yes!* So those who are so dependent on God, God in His mercy still sends the rain and the sunshine and food for the evil and the unthankful—doesn’t He? *Yes, that’s how God even loves His enemies. Yes, that’s how God loves the whole world.* But He has special love for those that He has called. And it’s expressed this way.

Now notice, come up here to v 13: “And whatever you shall ask in My name... [we can put in there: according to the will of God.] ...this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son.... [Now let’s understand this: all prayers are not answered instantly. Some are. Some take a long time. Some take a lot of endurance and persevering in prayers, as we will see.] (But notice this, v 14): ...If you ask anything in My name, ***I will do it.*** If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: even the Spirit of the Truth...” (vs 13-17). And ***receiving the Holy Spirit of God by begetting from the Father is the greatest thing that can happen to you in this life!*** And that’s why prayer becomes so important.

Now, let’s come to Mark, the twelfth chapter, and let’s see how this is to be in our lives. And this is the most important thing that we need to do and understand and realize, and help us maintain our relationship from prayer, full relationship and attitude with God. Mark 12:29: “The Jesus answered him, ‘*The first of all the commandments is, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.” This is the first commandment*’” (vs 29-30). That is the greatest expression of the will of God, because then you have a relationship with God, and ***prayer is the tool*** of maintaining that relationship with God.

Now human nature’s funny—and we all have human nature. And human nature does this: ‘Well, I should pray. Well, I’ll pray later. Well, I’ll get around to it.’ And then you get a guilty conscience because you haven’t prayed and you know you need to pray and you know you want to pray, but your human nature says, ‘Well, not yet. Get yourself right with God before you go pray.’ Well tell me, how can you get yourself right with God before you pray?—***unless you pray and repent!*** So it’s kind of like the squirrel in the cage, keeps going around and around and around and around and around with carnal thinking. That’s why Jesus rose early in the morning and prayed. And that’s why it has to become a habit in your life. And we’re going to see later on Paul said, ‘Pray without ceasing’—and we’ll understand what that means. And that’s surely not repeating ‘Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven...’ You’re not going around repeating that like a broken record.

Now, here’s the attitude we need to come to: Psalm 119. This is one of the great goals of life, as well as the great goal of being in the Kingdom of God, as well as the great goal of eternal life. Here is

the pathway to eternal life with God's Spirit. Psalm 119:123—now notice David's attitude in this prayer: "Mine eyes fail for Your salvation... [in other words there's nothing greater than the salvation of God. What is it going to be like to have a spirit body, a spirit mind, and be glorified and live forever. There's nothing on this earth.] ...Mine eyes fail for Your salvation... [In other words, it is so great that the eye cannot see the great salvation that God has.] ...and for the word of Your righteousness. Deal with Your servant according unto Your mercy... [This also gives us an understanding of how to pray to God.] ...and teach me Your statutes. I *am* Your servant; give me understanding, that I may know Your testimonies.... [Now all of this fits in with what? *To learn the will of God. To be taught the will of God.*] ... *It is time for You, LORD, to work: for they have made void thy law. Therefore I love Your commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore, I esteem all Your precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way*" (vs 123-128). We come to the point in our lives concerning the will of God that we esteem everything, all things of God, to be right in everything that there is—every precept.

Now you will notice as you go through, each section, is there are 22 sections of 8 verses—and 8 is the number of perfection and new beginning. In other words, symbolically this is saying: *here are the steps to your new life*, that's what it's saying. So when we come to that point that we do everything that way, then we are going to want to pray. We're going to have a desire to pray. We are not going to look at it as a duty. We're not going to look at it as putting in clock-time. People will say: 'I haven't been praying. I'll put a clock and pray for an hour.' So you go in and pray five minutes and it seems like an eternity and you look at the clock and say, 'Five minutes!' *No!* If you have the right attitude, the right way.

Let's come to Proverbs 15—and we're going to see that God is there. He desires to answer our prayers. He wants to hear our prayers. He wants to hear our praise to Him. All the Proverbs are great because it's right and wrong, black and white, truth and evil, righteousness and goodness vs evil and iniquity. Proverbs 15:8: "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD... [I can't help but think of that when I was watching John Paul II's funeral, and everything that they did. Oh how righteous it was. You know what Jesus said, 'If you do your righteousness out in the open you've had your reward.' Hey, they had their reward! The whole world saw them! Right?]) (now notice): ...**but the prayer of the upright is his delight.**"

- Can God delight in you? *Yes!*
- Does He love you? *Yes!*

- Is prayer important for that relationship? *Yes!*

Verse 9: "The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loves him that follows after righteousness."

Now come over here to v 28: "The heart of the righteous studies to answer... [now that gets into the realm of studying. It says in the New Testament: 'Give an answer to those who ask of the hope that lies within'—right? How are you going to do that unless you study?] ...but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.... [Enough said!] ...The LORD is far from the wicked: but He hears the prayer of the righteous" (vs 28-29). ***God hears you!***

So we'll continue next time with: pray and live according to the will of God.

Old Testament Scriptures from the *King James Version*
New Testament Scriptures from *The New Testament in Its Original Order—A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 6:7, 9
- 2) Luke 11:1-2
- 3) Matthew 6:9-10, 33
- 4) Matthew 5:48
- 5) Colossians 1:9-12
- 6) Matthew 4:8-9
- 7) Daniel 4:16-17, 24-37
- 8) Psalm 143:10
- 9) Psalm 40:8
- 10) Hebrews 10:5-14
- 11) John 5:17-19, 30
- 12) Mark 3:31
- 13) Mark 6:1-3
- 14) Mark 3:31-35
- 15) John 7:14-18
- 16) Luke 22:40-42
- 17) Ephesians 5:17
- 18) Ephesians 6:5-7
- 19) John 14:21
- 20) John 5:3
- 21) John 14:21-24, 13-14
- 22) Mark 12:29-30
- 23) Psalm 119:123-128
- 24) Proverbs 15:8-9, 28-29

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 20, 21, 16
- Isaiah 40
- John 6:45
- Isaiah 40, 56 & 66
- Acts 1
- 1 John 5:3

Also referenced:

- Book: *Occult Holiday or God's Holy Days, Which?* by Fred R. Coulter
- Sermon Series: Hebrews (#27 noted)

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