

Thy Will Not Mine

- Matthew 26
- Imagine facing the biggest trial of your entire life with just eight words
- ***Not as I will, but as you will***
- Imagine that you are so bothered about having to face this trial that you take your three closest friends aside with you, and ask them to pray for you as well, and then you discover that they all fall asleep during your moment of crisis
- Imagine being so overwhelmed with sorrow that you are feeling suicidal
- Imagine praying so hard over something that you actually begin to sweat
- * Imagine being so stressed that the blood vessels around your sweat glands burst, and the sweat pushes the blood out through your skin
- Imagine that all the while that you are trying to pray, you know that a crowd is gathering with swords and spears to march out and find you, and drag you to your death
- And, imagine that you KNEW that all this was going to happen months before it ever did happen, and you had publicly prophesied it many times... But, no one ever believed you
- Imagine all the things you could have done during this trial
- The easiest thing would be to simply walk away and ignore the whole thing
- You also had the power to change your circumstances
- You could have destroyed those who were trying to kill you
- You could have changed everyone's heart so they would love you and admire you instead of want to kill you
- Imagine what you could have said
- You could have swayed them all to your side with some amazing words
- You could have passed the responsibility off onto someone else

- But, all you said was,
- ***Not as I will, but as you will***
- That is the choice that Jesus made
- It wasn't an easy choice...
- You don't get to the point where you say, *"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."* Unless things are very tough
- You aren't described by the Bible as being *"sorrowful and very heavy"* unless things are really bad
- You don't tell your friends, *"This very night you will all fall away on account of me"* unless you think things are pretty ugly
- And yet, Jesus faces all of this with the simple words...
- ***Not as I will, but as you will***
- We can follow in the example of Christ and face our challenges and trials with that same mindset
- We can make one simple decision in our lives to turn all of our decisions over to God
- We can decide to say,
- ***Not as I will, but as you will***
- A few years ago I learned a very helpful definition that has changed my life
- I learned that **Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less**
- Humility isn't about thinking that you aren't worth it, or that you have a real low value
- Humility is just not thinking about yourself as much
- Not being as concerned about what you want, what your preferences are, what you want to accomplish, when you want things, how you want them, and what things you want

- The natural association, the natural way to accomplish this goal is to think of others before yourself
- Putting others before yourself helps you to not focus on what you want, and instead to think about what they would want
- Making other people's agenda your agenda
- Making other people's priorities your priorities
- Putting other people's needs before your own
- Paul talked to the Philippians about this same idea...
- Philippians 2:1-4 NIV
 - 1) If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,
 - 2) then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.
 - 3) Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but **in humility consider others better than yourselves.**
 - 4) Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.
- So, I can **humbly** say that I have been working on this for several years...
 - *And, I can tell by your stunned reaction, that I'm not doing that well*
- You see, it's hard to do!
- Sometimes this is hard to do because you start to think that the other person doesn't really **DESERVE** for you to give them priority over yourself
- Their way of doing it isn't as good as yours
- Their idea won't work as well
- Their schedule won't allow enough time to accomplish what needs to get done
- They simply aren't as smart as you are, or they haven't thought things through as well as you have
- In **THEORY** I want to consider them better than myself, but in **PRACTICE**, they just keep proving the opposite to me over and over again...

- But, clearly that is what God asks of me
- It is the **RIGHT** thing to do, even if it is the **HARD** thing to do
- And **THAT** is where this mindset of Christ comes into the discussion!
- ***Not as I will, but as you will***
- We learn to consider others better than ourselves because that is what God wants from us
- We learn to think of others first because that is what **GOD'S WILL IS**
- Not because the other person is worthy or deserving of our preferential treatment
 - Most humans aren't
- But, we want to do God's Will, not our own
- We serve others because that is how God asks us to serve Him
- By obeying God's Will, we are called to help those around us
- Isn't that exactly what Jesus was doing in the Garden?
- Jesus didn't want to die
- Jesus didn't want to be cut short in the middle of his life
- He didn't want to stop doing the things that he was doing
- But, he did want to do God's Will
- He did realize that in order for him to save all mankind from eternal death, then he had to give up his life
- God doesn't ask us to give up our life for others, but he does ask us to help others whenever we can
- We all can help people in different ways
- There is not one right way to serve those around you
- Peter tells us that God has given each one of us different gifts to serve others

- 1st Peter 4:10 NIV

- 10) Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

- God's grace takes on many forms
- That is why God needs all of us in order to show His love to the World
- The way that I help people is completely different than the way my wife does
- And she does it completely different than you do
- God planned on that, and expects that from each one of us
- God remembers what we do for others as well
- Hebrews tells us that...

- Hebrews 6:9-12 NIV

- 9) Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case—things that accompany salvation.
- 10) God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.
- 11) We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.
- 12) We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

- To develop a lifetime dedicated to helping God's people, you have to develop the same mindset as Christ

- ***Not as I will, but as you will***

- How do we go about giving up our will?
- Look at verse 12 again...

- Hebrews 6:12 NIV

- 12) We do not want you to become lazy, but to **imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.**

- ***Who?***

- The verse is telling us to read our Bibles!
- There are many wonderful examples of people who served God's interests and not their own, and the more time we spend associating ourselves with those stories, the more their attitudes will rub off on us

- The Human Will is defined as:

The mental faculty by which one deliberately chooses or decides upon a course of action.

- Will is something deliberate, and it usually requires a choice
- After years of self-satisfying living, you can evolve into a habitual lifestyle of doing what you want first, but you can break those habits by giving it some thought, prayer and consideration
- You can deliberately choose to give your life over to others
- You can deliberately choose to put others first
- It's often a matter of **GIVING UP THINGS** in your life, and **GIVING THEM OVER** to God
- Living with an attitude that doesn't expect things for yourself, but looks for ways to help others
- Living with an attitude that gives up your preferences, your priorities, the things that you are comfortable with after so many years of having them...
- And giving those things over to God, and allowing Him to use you in the lives of those around you
- And, if you need a little further motivation to do so...
- Take a look at the last Parable that Jesus tells before he gets to Matthew 26
- Take a look at the last 15 verses of Matthew 25
- Matthew 25:31-46 NIV

31) "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

- 32) All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.
- 33) He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.
- 34) “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.
- 35) For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,
- 36) I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’
- 37) “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?
- 38) When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?
- 39) When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’
- 40) “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’

- These people had developed such a lifestyle of service, that they didn’t even realize that they were doing it
- They had turned their lives around from habitually looking for what was best for them, to habitually looking out for the needs of others
- They had said, ***Not as I will, but as you will***
- But, not everyone had...

- 41) “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.
- 42) For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,
- 43) I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’
- 44) “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’
- 45) “He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’
- 46) “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, **but the righteous to eternal life.**”