

Luke 22:39-46 (NIV)

³⁹Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him.

⁴⁰On reaching the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”

⁴¹He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed,

⁴²“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”

⁴³An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.

⁴⁴And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

⁴⁵When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow.

⁴⁶“Why are you sleeping?” he asked them. “Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.”

42-22-01-The Best Prayer

Kingdom, free-will, prayer, surrender

Luke 22:39-46

The best prayer we can pray is for God’s *Kingdom will* to be done.

INTRODUCTION:

–God created us in His image with *minds* to reason, *emotions* to feel, and *wills* to choose, so that we could work *with* Him as co-creators. But our first parents made wrong choices that gave us a *fallen world* where we live together as *broken people following suit with similar wrong choices* that hurt ourselves and others. It’s into this *human condition* that Jesus came teaching us to ask a special request of God the Father: “Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”

–Rom 14:17 says “the kingdom of God is... righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” It’s *God’s will* that these Kingdom elements rule in us *as individuals* and in *all the world’s societies*. But *His will* is in conflict with *kingdoms of self and selfishness* that have been built up within people and the societies they live in. Jesus came to deliver us from the sins and sin-disease that create these *dysfunctional human kingdoms*. His “Follow Me” calls us to choose *God’s will* with *our will*. That choice begins in *prayer*, and **HOM.idea**. But in trying to pray that, we face...

I. A Temptation Problem– v.40, “On reaching the place, he said to them, Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”.... **v.46**, “Why are you sleeping?” he asked them. “Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.”

- A. What is “temptation”? Most often, it’s being lured to say, “**My will be done**” rather than “**Thy will be done.**” [Satan tempted Jesus in the desert to do things *on His own*, rather than waiting on His Father’s leading.]
- B. *Even on the day Jesus ascended*, His disciples still held on to a political view of “the kingdom”– in Acts 1:6, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” (We often tend to pray that God work according how we see things. But *God sees all things clearly* and sets a priority on bringing about His Kingdom.)

TRANS: This is why **HOM.idea**. His Kingdom of “righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” had a *costly price tag*. Jesus *wrestled with that cost* in Gethsemane and He met the struggle with...

II. An Ultimate Petition— v.41-42. *He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."*

- A. In His absolutely authentic humanity, Jesus had a human will that did not want to drink that cup of suffering, but He was also totally consistent in submitting His human will to His Father's will:
1. In John 8:28, ...Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me."
 2. His human choice was foretold even before the Incarnation— Heb 10:5-7, Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, 'Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God.' "
 3. Think about this... the Son of God saved us only by becoming the obedient Son of Man, the "perfect" *sacrificial Lamb of God— Heb 5:7-9*, During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, **he learned obedience** from what he suffered and, once made **perfect**, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.
- B. These passages show Christ's *obedient human will* as a authentic example of how we are to respond to God's *Kingdom will*. (His will was as human as ours, so His "Follow Me" isn't just a totally *legitimate call* but a *doable call* for each and every one of us.)

TRANS: Trading our own ideas and our own agendas for God's *Kingdom will* is *no easy task!* Jesus struggled with it, and so do we. But in His "Follow Me" is an implied resource of gracious help,

III. A Sustaining Power— v.43. *An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.*

- A. That "an angel" came to help Jesus in His struggle of will isn't just another proof that He was fully human but a promising precedent to us who also struggle with surrender. (No angel chooses God's will for us, but often our weak wills need to be "strengthened.")
- B. Praise God for v.44, "*And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.*" (Sometimes we may make *spur-of-moment* decisions of surrender to God's will, but Christ's own example shows that it can also be an excruciating

process, a painful struggle that ends up being rightly resolved only by praying *the best prayer* to pray in response to God.)

CONCLUSION:

—**That best prayer is for God's Kingdom will to be done**, not our own will. I often pray and encourage others to pray the last prayer in the Bible: "Even so, come Lord Jesus." Christ's 2nd Coming will put an end to *all the havoc and atrocities* perpetrated by *sin and selfishness* in lives that are unsundered to the King of Kings. In the meantime, there are *crosses to bear, cups of suffering to drink, plans and dreams to give up in exchange for divine priorities and Kingdom strategies*. That's where we must follow Jesus in praying *the best prayer*: "Not my will, but Thine be done." So, I want to conclude with a poem I wrote January 2nd of 2023:

THE BEST PRAYER

Heirs to marvels causing wonder,
crafted infinitely well,
we should logically be under
duty's obligated spell
to renounce our finite reason
with its plans, by folly spun,
and pronounce this spring artesian:
"Not my will, but Thine be done."

Life is rife with deadly dangers,
as its yearly cycles pass;
loss and grief are never strangers,
while our sand flows through the glass;
but God's comfort is time-tested,
and His grace has just begun,
when, by faith, we have requested,
"Not my will, but Thine be done."

Majesty within creation
lifts our downward gazing hearts
to God's higher elevation—
lofty realms of loving arts—
where sweet miracles abounding
draw us closer to His Son,
Who enjoins our tongues, resounding,
"Not my will, but Thine be done."

When we've taken wrong directions,
chosen willful ways to walk,
darkly duped with foul infections
from deceptive demon-talk,
safety's hope is still remaining
(though the devil says there's none),
if we pray, without refraining:
"Not my will, but Thine be done."

Let's pray the Lord's Prayer again together.