

HWMR: CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF MATTHEW 5 THROUGH 7 (Week 9)

**Doing the Will of the Father
So That We May Enter into His Kingdom
on “That Day,” the Day of the Judgment Seat of Christ**
Scripture Reading: *Rev. 4:11; Matt. 7:21-23; Col. 1:9*

- Rev. 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of **Your will** they were, and were created.
- Matt. 7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will **enter into the kingdom of the heavens**, but he who does the **will of My Father** who is in the heavens.
- Matt. 7:22 Many will say to Me in **that day**, Lord, Lord, was it not in Your name that we prophesied, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name did many works of power?
- Matt. 7:23 And then I will declare to them: I never knew you. Depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.
- Col. 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, **do not cease praying and asking** on your behalf that you may **be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding**,

Day 1

Rev. 4:9-11 - ...When the four living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits upon the throne, ...the twenty-four elders will fall before Him who sits upon the throne and worship Him...; and they will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.

- I. “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of **Your will** they were, and were created”—Rev. 4:11:**
- A. God is a God of purpose, having a **will according to His own pleasure**:
1. He created all things **for His will** that He might accomplish and fulfill His purpose.
 2. The book of Revelation, which unveils God’s universal administration, shows us the purpose of God.
 3. In the twenty-four elders’ praise to God concerning His creation, **His creation is related to His will**.
- B. **God’s will is God’s wish**; it is what He wants to do—Eph. 1:9:
1. God’s good pleasure is of His will and is **embodied in His will**, so His will comes first—v. 5.
 2. God has made the **mystery of His will** known to us through **His revelation in Christ**, that is, through Christ’s incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension—v. 9; 3:9.
 3. God works all things according to the **counsel of His will**.
 4. **God’s will is His intention**, and His counsel is His consideration of the way to accomplish His will, or intention—1:11.

The will of God is concentrated in Christ and is for Christ; Christ is everything in the will of God. In Colossians 1:9 **God's will refers to Christ**; the will of God is profound in relation to our knowing, experiencing, and living the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, who is God, man, and the reality of every positive thing in the universe. Colossians 1:9 says, *"Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding."* I hope that we would use this verse as our prayer: "Lord, I want to be filled with the full knowledge of Your will. I want the full knowledge of Your will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding." It is very possible for us to have an **incomplete** knowledge of God's will. We may know something but **not see it in a thorough way**. According to this verse, Paul's praying for the Colossians was not that they would know who to marry, where to live, or what kind of job they should have. This is often the extent of God's children's prayer related to His will. They may pray, "Lord, what is Your will for my life? What direction should I take?" Surely, we should pray for His will concerning matters related to our human life. However, **we first need to touch God's will** so that we can know what the Lord wants in our life.

In his Epistle to the Colossians Paul goes on to show who Christ is. He is the allotted portion of the saints of the good land, the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of the old creation and of the new creation, the reality of every positive thing, our life, and all and in all in the new man. Only after speaking of Christ did Paul talk about husbands, wives, children, and parents. We need to see **that the will of God is Christ as everything**—the center and circumference of God's economy as well as the center and circumference of our life. We have to help the saints under our shepherding to care about and to touch God's will. This will affect how they pray for their marriage, education, and work. (*The Ministry of the Word, col. 29, No. 10, chapter 3*)

Day 2

Col. 1:9 - Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Col. 2:2 - That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ.

- C. The will of God is concentrated in Christ and is for Christ; **Christ is everything in the will of God**—Col. 1:9:
1. In 1:9 **God's will refers to Christ**; the will of God is profound in relation to our knowing, experiencing, and living the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, who is God, man, and the reality of every positive thing in the universe—2:9, 16-17.
 2. **Christ is the preeminent One**, the One who has the first place in everything—1:18.
 3. The all-inclusive, extensive **Christ is the centrality and universality**, the center and circumference, of God's economy—vv. 15-17; Eph. 1:10:
 - a. **In God's economy Christ is everything**; God wants Christ and Christ alone— the wonderful, preeminent, all-inclusive Christ, who is all and in all—Matt. 17:5; Col. 3:10-11.
 - b. God's intention in His economy is to work the wonderful, all-inclusive, extensive Christ into our being as our life and everything so that we may become the **corporate expression of the Triune God**—1:27; 3:4, 10-11.
 4. The **will of God** is that the all-inclusive, extensive Christ would be **our portion**— 1:9, 12.
 5. **God's will** is that we **know** Christ, **experience** Christ, **enjoy** Christ, be **saturated** with Christ, and **have** Christ as **our person and our life**—3:4, 11.

I hope that we do not have perfunctory prayers in the gatherings of the leading brothers, prayers as a formality at the beginning of the meeting before we proceed to the so-called “real business.” There are times when we have to talk about church affairs; however, even in our fellowship meetings with the brothers, we should follow the pattern and principle of prayer from Psalm 27:4 : “*One thing I have asked from Jehovah; / That do I seek: / To dwell in the house of Jehovah / All the days of my life, / To behold the beauty of Jehovah, / And to inquire in His temple.*” Whenever we come together with other brothers, **we should first behold Jehovah, which is to enjoy the Lord.** Then we can inquire, “Lord, is it time to touch the matters related to the church?” The Lord may say, “Not yet. You need to keep beholding. Stay with Me.” There are times a brother would say, “Brothers, shall we get to business?” However, the rest of the brothers may have the sense to sing a hymn to enjoy the Lord a little longer. If the brothers are not having coordination meetings in which they know Christ, experience Christ, enjoy Christ, and are saturated with Christ, they cannot expect the saints and service groups under their care to be focused on Christ. Problems arise among saints when they are merely focused on things, because Christ **is not** the holding center of their service group. We should not blame the saints. Instead, we should consider what responsibility we bear in not bringing them into the **full knowledge of the will of God** in a practical way. (*The Ministry of the Word, col. 29, No. 10, chapter 3*)

Day 3

Rom. 12:2 - And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the **will of God** is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Rom. 12:5 - So we who are many are **one Body in Christ**, and individually members one of another.

- D. **God’s will** is to have the **church as the Body of Christ**—Eph. 1:9; Col. 1:18; 2:19; 3:15:
1. The will of God is to **obtain a Body for Christ** to be His fullness, His expression— Rom. 12:2, 5; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11, 22-23; 4:16:
 - a. To live the **Body life** is to “prove what the **will of God** is”—Rom. 12:2, 4-5.
 - b. If we are proper members of the Body, acting and functioning in the church life, we will be **persons in the will of God**—1 Cor. 1:1-2; Eph. 1:1; 5:17; Rom. 12:2, 4-5.
 2. The **church is the Body of Christ**, which is an entity constituted with the Triune God and His chosen and redeemed ones—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4-6.
 3. **Christ is the Head** of the Body, and **we are the members of His Body**—Col. 1:18a; 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16:
 - a. To live in the Body is to live corporately with the members under the Head— v. 15; Col. 2:19.
 - b. To live the Body life, we must be under the Head and take the Head as our life, the principal object, and the center of our whole being—1:18a; 2:19.
 4. The Body grows with the growth of God; the growth of the Body **depends on the growth of God**, the addition of God, the increase of God, within us—v. 19; Eph. 4:16.

Day 4

Matt. 12:49-50 - And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, Behold, My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the **will of My Father** who is in the heavens, he is My brother and sister and mother.

- E. **Whoever does** the will of the Father is a **relative** of the Lord Jesus—Matt. 12:50:
 1. Christ, the heavenly King, **always submitted to the Father's will**, taking God's will as His portion and not resisting anything—11:28-30; 26:39.
 2. Whoever does the will of the Father is a **brother** who helps the Lord Jesus, a **sister** who sympathizes with Him, and a **mother** who tenderly loves Him.
- F. The **kingdom** is absolutely a **matter of God's will** and completely fulfills God's will; in fact, the kingdom is God's will—6:10:
 1. The ultimate issue of the constitution of the kingdom of the heavens is the **will of the heavenly Father**—7:21.
 2. As **kingdom people**, we are on the earth **to do God's will**—12:50.
- G. The kingdom people need to **pray for the Father's will to be done on earth as in heaven**; this is to bring the kingdom of the heavens to the earth—6:10.

Whoever does the will of the Father is a brother who helps the Lord Jesus, a sister who sympathizes with Him, and a mother who tenderly loves Him. When a believer does something **in line with the will of God**, according to this **revelation**, according to the **Head and the Body**, according to **Christ and the church**, the Lord considers that a **help**. The Lord Jesus is doing the Father's will, and one who helps Him in doing the Father's will is His brother.

A sister sympathizes with the Lord. The Lord was in **need of sympathizing**. When we are doing the Father's will, He senses that we are entering into His feeling. For example, we heard this very touching word on mourning. Matthew 5:4 says, "*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*" When we mourn, we have the view that the Lord has for ourselves, for the church, and for society. We enter into His feeling and mourn with Him. The Lord considers this to be **our sympathizing with Him**. We are **entering into His feeling**, and this is a supply to the Lord.

Finally, when we are doing something according to His will, we are like a **mother tenderly loving Him**. In **Matthew 7:22** the Lord said, "*Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, was it not in Your name that we prophesied, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name did many works of power?*" Were these ones a help to the Lord? Did they enter into His feeling? Did they love Him tenderly? Or were they just presenting their résumé? Actually, many are not a help but rather a **bother** to the Lord. We may think that we are doing something in His will, but actually, we are bothering the Lord. We are **not helping** Him but rather we are **delaying** Him. It is very possible that our service is not only a bother to the Head but even a bother to the Body. We may have **no realization** at all that the Lord is not supplied by our service. Even our success may be a bother to the Body. I hope we all can receive this word. We need to pray, "Lord, I just want to sit down at Your feet. Lord, I want to know Your will. I want to be Your brother, Your sister, and Your mother." Probably many of us have never prayed: "Lord, I would like to be Your helping brother, Your sympathizing sister, and Your tenderly loving mother." (*The Ministry of the Word, col. 29, No. 10, chapter 3*)

Day 5

Matt. 7:21-22 - *Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, was it not in Your name that we prophesied, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name did many works of power?*

Day 6

Matt. 7:23 - ...Then I will declare to them: I never knew you. Depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.

1 John 3:4 - Everyone who practices sin practices lawlessness also, and sin is lawlessness.

II. “Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens”—7:21:

- A. To call on the Lord suffices for us to be saved, but to **enter into the kingdom of the heavens**, we also need to **do the will of the heavenly Father**—Rom. 10:13; 12:2; Matt. 12:50; Eph. 5:17; Col. 1:9.
- B. Since entering into the kingdom of the heavens **requires doing the will of the heavenly Father**, it is clearly different from entering into the kingdom of God through regeneration—John 3:3, 5.
- C. The entrance into the kingdom of the heavens is gained through the **living of the divine life**—1:12-13; 3:5-6; Matt. 7:21; 12:50.
- D. The Lord Jesus **rebuked** those who prophesied, cast out demons, and did many works of power in His name, because as “workers of lawlessness,” they did these things **out of themselves, not out of obedience to God’s will**—7:22-23:
 - 1. There are **two principles** in the universe—the principle of God’s authority and the principle of Satan’s rebellion—Acts 1:7; Isa. 14:13-14.
 - 2. We **cannot** serve God on the one hand and take the way of rebellion on the other hand.
 - 3. We must **turn away** from the principle of lawlessness and **reject** the way of rebellion—Matt. 28:18; Jude 11.
 - 4. **Serving God** is directly linked to His authority.
 - 5. If we **do not settle** the matter of authority, we will have **problems** in all the areas of our service.
- E. May the Lord **preserve our service** in the principle of submission to God’s authority and the Father’s will—Acts 1:7; Matt. 7:21; 12:50.

In the church not only is there the question of **submission to authority**, but there is also the question of **being the authority**. **To submit to authority** means that **others have the authority and you submit to it**. **To be an authority** means that **authority is with you and you should act as the authority**. On one hand, the elders should submit to authority; on the other, they are also the authority. Strictly speaking, this principle applies not only to the church, but to all representative authorities among human communities. On the one hand, there is the submission to authority, and on the other hand there is the exercise of authority.

In some local churches, the elders were born humble. They are influenced by the modern age and are quite democratic. They never know what authority is. You can predict that the churches under their hands will never be strong. In order for a local church to be strong, **there must be some submitting-to-authority brothers who act as the authority**. They will **neither try to nullify** everyone’s feeling, **nor will they allow** everyone to say what they will. In some churches, you do not touch any authority; what you touch is only arguments and much opinion. The reason for this is that, on the one hand, their elders failed to learn the lesson of submission to authority, and on the other hand, much less have the elders themselves learned to be the authority.

In some local churches, I have met some elders who, because of their unwillingness to submit to authority, have **purposely made things a little more democratic**. I believe you understand what I mean. Such ones want to condemn the authority that they are supposed to submit to; they do not want any authority. As a result, they do not want to be the authority themselves, and everything becomes democratic. However, I want to tell the brothers and sisters that this kind of action **betrays the church and sacrifices it**. In order to justify their refusal to submit to authority, they try not to be the authority themselves. Whatever things happen, **they just go along with what the brothers and sisters deem best**. The meaning of this, to put it in a blunt way, is simply: **"I don't mind other people's business, so don't mind my business. I will not be anyone's authority, and I will not submit to anyone else's authority."** Brothers and sisters, this is something from Babel. It is something that comes from the spirit of Babel. The church in such a place should be called Babylon, because there is confusion, and the tongues have been confounded, and those in it do not speak the same language any longer. To have many languages and to have the tongues confounded is a sign of punishment from God. It shows that there is no authority. It was not a good sign to have no king in Israel and to have every man doing that which was right in his own eyes.

Brothers, whenever you propose democracy or autocracy in the church, you are denying God's authority. **In the church there is no democracy, and there is likewise no autocracy. In the church, there should only be God's presence and God's delegated authority.** The elders need to learn to touch authority, to submit to authority, and to be the authority. The church is not a place where people express their opinion or where they debate. It is a place where God is feared, His lordship is honored, and His presence rests and is represented. Only when such is found is there the church.

To repeat, in the church, there is **God's presence**, and the representation of this presence. This representation is the **authority**. If you submit to it and allow it to manifest itself upon you, you will eventually become the authority. If you are an elder in a local church, but you can never be an authority, you have to realize that you have utterly failed.

(The Elders' Management of the Church, Chapter 5)