Kingdom Come: Living God's Tomorrow Today – God's Will – June 8th, 2025 – Dave Peters

I'm not sure how I feel about spin-offs shows. A spin-off show involves characters of a previous idea to make something new.

Spin-offs can succeed wildly—*The Simpsons*, first appeared on *The Tracey Ullman Show* back in 1987. It launched as its own series in 1989 and now has more than 750 episodes with new episodes still on today.

On the other side, some spin-offs fail—*Strays*, a spin-off of the popular Toronto-based show *Kim's Convenience*, only lasted two seasons.

While spin-offs can offer powerful insights and unique perspectives in media, when it comes to living our lives, losing sight of God's Will can be a tragic thing.

Instead of discovering or genuinely seeking God's Will, we are left struggling and disillusioned—*because we have forgotten the original* by focusing on the spin-offs.

Spin-offs aren't all bad. They can actually be clarifying when it comes to understanding God's Will.

We may ask:

- What is God's Will for whether I will marry?
- Or have kids?
- Or what job should I take?
- When should I retire?

Or maybe the questions become more serious and theological:

- If everything is God's Will, what about suffering or evil?
- How can it be God's Will for my family to experience tragedy?
- If everything is God's Will, how can God judge me for my sin?

The challenge comes when *we* can't tell the difference between the original Will of God and the spin-off of our own questions.

Instead of seeking to understand *"God's Will,"* it becomes *my will, my wants, and my perspective*.

Last week, Pastor Steve led us by launching our new series, *Kingdom Come: Living God's Tomorrow Today*, by starting us with the Kingdom of God.

He focused our attention on our theme verse in **Matthew 6** and provided this helpful outline to orient our series:

The Kingdom of God is about

God's Will

To restore God's world

Through God's people

In God's time.

As we discern God's will for the next chapter of our church, we are seek to **Finding Our way in God's Story (Slide that was used last week as Ministry Theme 2025)**— trusting in His Spirit, grounded in the Scriptures, and keeping our focus on Jesus as we join in the work of His Kingdom.

With prayerful focus, we are seeking His Will.

Today, we're going to be focusing on God's Will.

As Pastor Steve said, "We are going to do some Theology, folks."

Some of you may be excited by that, but others may feel a bit confused, thinking:

"I'm not a theologian... I can't even tell you the first thing about theology."

The reality is: *everyone does theology.*

Theology is simply the thought *of God*.

It comes from a combination of two Greek words:

- **Theos** – God
- **Logos** – word, thought, or reason

A lot of people assume theology is only for those who are formally educated, read their Bibles, or follow the Judeo-Christian God.

But to be a theologian is simply to have an opinion or view of how the known and unknown universe works.

For example:

- An atheist is practicing theology by claiming, *"There is no God,"* because they are claiming insight about the entire known and unknown universe.
- When people say, *"Put good thoughts out into the universe and they'll come back to you,"* they are claiming the universe has a guided purpose or mechanism.

- “May the Force be with You” is claim that there is some spiritual power to tap into.

Everyone is a theologian, because we are always forming beliefs and making determinations—whether consciously or unconsciously—about how things work.

The challenge isn’t *if* we’re doing theology. The challenge is *how* we are doing theology.

We are all theologians, but that doesn’t mean we are practicing good theology.

To align our *spin-off* narratives about God’s Will, we must first *direct ourselves to understand what God’s Will truly is* by knowing from what source we find our truth in.

Once we start to align with God’s Will, *we can know the original,* which then helps us understand the spin-offs.

At Cornerstone, we believe that good theology is first rooted in the Word of God—being the final authority in all matters of faith and practice, which leads us to the person of Jesus Christ.

In the biblical narrative, there are two main meanings of God’s Will, with other expressions of God’s Will falling under one of these categories:

1. **God’s Sovereign Will** — all of God’s predetermined plans for the universe and His sovereign rule over it.
2. **God’s Will of Command** — His commands to do what is right, which may or may not be obeyed.

The Bible uses the term *“will of God”* in both ways.

To understand God’s Will in **Matthew 6:10** — *“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”* (NIV)

— we must discern whether it refers to God’s Sovereign Will or His Will of Command.

This raises a significant question: **Why does this matter?**

Because while we may wrestle with the questions of God—even as believers—we do not question the fact that suffering is an all too real thing.

We may ask why, explain it, trivialize it, philosophize it, ignore it, spiritualize it, or suffer under it, but we do not question that suffering is real.

So then, on one side, we are faced with the ugliness of sin and suffering. Do we claim this is God’s Will?

Yet on the other side, if we say God's Will is not in control, we are left with a God who is weak and insignificant - incapable of doing good.

The reality is: **we need to hold both in view**.

Theologian John Piper puts it this way:

"You need a God who disapproves of the ugliness, and you need a God who ordains that all things come to pass and is so sovereign He can take everything — including that — and work it for good."

Understanding the difference between God's Sovereign Will and His Will of Command helps us see that:

- God is Sovereign, not a micro-manager, but the Authority of the God who sets all into motion.
- And at the same time, God disapproves of evil and sin and can empathize with us.

This is the tension of the *not yet known*—the secret will of God.

The Secret Will of God – God has revealed aspects of His will without disclosing how or what He is accomplishing.

We don't fully understand how God can be completely ruler over everything and create free-willing humans.

God sets the boundaries, but we still make choices.

They two co-exist with each other but the details of how every situation works out remains a mystery.

But something interesting happens when people try to figure out the will of God.

They can become hard-headed, saying things like:

"It can only be this way and there can be no other way."
"The Will of God cannot change."

This is accurate **if** we're speaking of the **Necessary Will of God**—what is essential to His nature and being.

But that's not the only will of God—**not practically and not biblically**.

Just as human will can choose something:

- eagerly or reflectively,
- happily, or with regret,
- in secret or in public—

God can do the same.

As we begin to unfold Jesus' model of Prayer in Matt 6:9-10 what we will do is focus on discerning how the Will of God works

By working from the three phrases. (Phil if you have a slide for this or just the word texts)

Your Name
Your Kingdom and
Your Will

We will begin to value the difference between the two and at the same time discern which of the Will of God, Jesus is referencing in Matt 6:10

Who is still with me?

Our passage here in **Matthew 6:10** is at the center of the entire Sermon on the Mount of Matthew 5-7 (Put up Sermon on the Mount Outline Slide behind me) because it is meant to be a central place in the lives of His followers.

On one side is **Matthew 5**, which contains the Beatitudes, highlighting the characteristics of those who are in the Kingdom.

They emphasize what Kingdom-oriented followers are to be.

On the other side is **Matthew 7**, which instructs us on how to examine and live out Christian living.

Jesus was the one who perfectly embodied the characteristics and the living of what it means to be following God's Will.

By placing this prayer in the middle, it highlights the importance of what Jesus is calling us to pay attention to.

Notice how **Matthew 6:9** begins:
"This, then, is how you should pray..." (NIV)

It does **not** say *what* you should pray, nor does it say this is the **only** way to pray.

It says *how* offering an example and a model for prayer.

Leading up to this, Jesus warns about how the hypocrites pray, and how some attempt to manipulate God's Will through their prayers.

People often misuse the Lord's Prayer in two ways.

The first is the **hypocrisy method**, which goes something like this:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven... GIVE US OUR DAILY BREAD..."
"…and that's where it really gets interesting for me."

In this, we attempt to *spin off* God—using Him not to know or glorify Him, but to gain something from Him.

Instead of coming **to** God, they are trying to get **from** God.

Hypocrisy misuses the purpose of prayer—it diverts the glory of God to the glory and reward of self. (Keep definition by itself for one slide)

Now, don't misunderstand me:

It is **not** wrong to ask God for things. That form of prayer is called **petition**.

The mistake happens when we no longer see God as **God our Father**, but as **God the great lottery ticket**—a means to our ends.

The second misuse is **verbosity**.

Verbosity reduces prayer from a real, personal interaction with God to a **recitation** of words—lifeless and empty. (Combine with definition of Hypocrisy)

Jesus cautions against both **hypocrisy** and **verbosity** by inviting us to begin prayer this way:

"Our Father in heaven..." (*Matthew 6:9, NIV*)

Say "Our Father"

Notice, it doesn't say "*My* Father in heaven."

Jesus, the Son of God, is the **first and only** one with the right to call God "Abba" or "Father" in the fullest sense.

Yet He invites us to pray, calling God **"Our Father"**—both **personal** and **above us all**, "in heaven."

This speaks of both God's **closeness** and **greatness**.

The concept of fatherhood might be difficult for some of us, because we know how earthly fathers fail.

But Jesus reframes this by pointing us to the **perfect** image of a loving Father—one who is compassionate, trustworthy, holy, and just.

We are not approaching a distant or impartial deity.
We are approaching **our Father**—the one who holds the truth of who He is and invites us into that relationship.

"Hallowed be your name" v.9 (NIV)

Holy is His name.

It's not merely the name of God, whether in Greek, Hebrew, English, or any other language.

"Name" refers to one's person, character, and authority.

What is holy is already holy; we cannot make God's name holy.

We can only treat it as Holy.

In Revelation 4, we encounter a powerful scene of the King in the throne room of His Kingdom.

The Sovereign Will of God is emphasized in this image, building to this verse:

Revelation 4:11 (NIV):
"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

Worthy is the Name of God, to receive glory.

By Your Sovereign Will, all things are created, and all things exists.

The Sovereign Will of God is that all things find their existence, meaning, and purpose in Him.

Because that Name is holy and our Father is personal, we yearn for the fuller experience of God, where God's Kingdom reigns and acts.

Matt 6:10 "Your Kingdom Come" (NIV)

Pastor Steve last week talked about how the Kingdom is about God's rule and reign as the divine King.

It is both in the "Already"—the Kingdom of God is already established—but "Not Yet" in that the Kingdom has not yet come into full view.

To help us, there is an image showing the Already and Not Yet (Kingdom of God – Timeline)

The Secret Will of God is at work as the Kingdom has come through Jesus, but His reign is still to be revealed in the coming return of Jesus.

We aren't called to wait to escape the earth; we are to seek God's Kingdom now and here, and at the same time, find our hope and victory in the Kingdom to come.

To a familiar place from a previous Sermon Series "The God Story" to understand the Kingdom of God

"Defined simply, the kingdom of God is the place where God is acknowledged as King, where God's will and God's ways are realized. Or another way to put it is, the kingdom of God will always look like King Jesus." *The God Story* p. 140

"Your Kingdom Come" is an absolute wrecker to MY Personal Kingdom.

Many people pray "Your Kingdom Come; Your Will be done," but what they are asking "My Kingdom Vanish, my will not be done."

To recognize God's Kingdom, is to recognize Jesus' way, will, and kingdom.

While earthly kingdoms marginalize the poor, hatred to the immigrant, wealth over morality, and values the privileged.

Jesus elevates the poor, healing the sick, humility in power, and valuing those that society has no value for.

Jesus is the embodiment and fullness of God's Will on earth as all the biblical narrative comes to a critical place of the Cross.

The Will of God to save, first revealed in secret in the Garden of Eden that humanity will not be abandoned and forgotten

That the Will of God has come in the person of Jesus shown in how he lived his life, ministry, death, and resurrection.

Jesus who through him all things were created as the opening chapter of the book of the Gospel of John.

As we are washed away with the enormity of Jesus, the one who made all things through Him, who conquered death, sin and Satan, and who is the height of the Kingdom.

He calls us to pray.

“Your Will be Done, on earth as it is in heaven” v.10 (NIV)

To recognize that the Will of God is good, acceptable, and perfectly seen in all things and most clearly seen in the person, life, and deity of Jesus.

As His name is Holy, so is His will.

"On Earth as in Heaven."

What’s the difference between the two?

In Heaven, there is no rebellion and sin.
On Earth, there is majority rebellion and sin.

We are not just praying—we are **commanded** to pray and actively live in a way that makes earth more like heaven.

Since we are incapable of righting every wrong, forgiving sins ourselves, and working out our salvation, we are left with one result.

We ask Jesus to shape us, to be the people whom He uses to live out His will to restore a broken world.

33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (NIV Matt 6:33)

Seek first His Kingdom, to put our whole lives into Him.

Rather, we are to look for every opportunity to expand more fully his already established rule in our lives and in our world

Desire above all else to enter, submit to, and be in God’s reign by living as Jesus lived and fixing our eyes on him.

The passage of Matthew reveals the different wills of God.

- God's Necessary Will is in His name being Holy
- God’s Secret Will in Already the Kingdom is Here but Not Yet is it fully revealed.
- God’s Sovereign Will is in His reign and creation as being above all.
- God’s Will of Command is on God’s Will being done and Kingdom Come.

We ask that God's Will overrides our will.

We do this by focusing on the person of Jesus, by doing what He called us to do by caring about what Jesus focused on and living His mission.

To not use God as our escape or our lottery ticket.

To be in God's Kingdom means you recognize Your will is not His will, but rather we seek first the kingdom of God.

God's Will before the spin-offs,
Our Father before My Lottery Ticket.
Our Savior before my strength.
Our God's Will before My will.

Transition into Prayer 1st Service only

Transition into Baptism for 2nd service

Benediction

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24
"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it."

Baptism Service

Today, we have those who are seeking to do God's Will by following God's will of command in entering the waters of baptism, as stated in Acts 2: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ."
We will have our candidates at the following times: Rachael Lee, Sara Gonzalez, Brandon Parry

In deciding to get baptized, they are acknowledging that Jesus is Lord over their life and for the forgiveness of their sin, receiving and choosing God's redemption through the cross.

Baptism is a declaration of turning away from their personal will to be shaped and molded by God's Will be done.

They are outwardly declaring to you, the congregation, that Jesus has inwardly saved them as their Lord and Savior.

Jesus Himself said: **"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."** (Matt 28:19-20)

Baptism is one of the first acts of obedience disciples take in following Jesus.
If you realize you have not been baptized, we would love to talk to you more.
Today we will hear testimonies from:

- Rachael Lee
- Sara Gonzalez
- Brandon Parry

Questions to Candidates
I'm going to invite the rest of the candidates to come up on stage.
Would you give them a hand as they make their way up?
I'm going to ask you all some questions. You can respond together as a group.

- Do you believe you are a sinner in need of a Savior? If so, say, "I do."
- Do you believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose from the dead so that you could have eternal life? If so, say, "I do."
- Do you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord? If so, say, "I do."
- Do you believe in your heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead? If so, say, "I do."
- Do you renounce Satan and all his works? If so, say, "I renounce them."
- Do you intend to follow Jesus the rest of your days? If so, say, "With all my heart."
- Do you accept God's summons to join Him in His mission to restore this world in a way that fits the gifts, talents, and callings He gives you? If so, say, "I do."

Please warmly welcome our first testimony reader: Rachael