

Jesus's Prayerful Understanding Of God's Will

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[0 : 0 0] Let's turn for a little to the chapter we read in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 11, verse 25. We find that at that time Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. We so often think of Jesus' ministry as a very gentle ministry, a very winsome ministry, one where he was constantly drawing people to himself and inviting people and dealing so caringly and so compassionately with people.

And that is absolutely correct, because that is one of the great facts. You cannot read the Gospel accounts of the life of the Lord without being struck with this overwhelming compassion and care and tenderness for people, particularly those who are in trouble, those who are in need, and see the wonderful way that he would put himself out all the time, dealing with the sick and those who are outcasts.

So it is absolutely true to say that his ministry was one of gentleness. But we must not overlook also that along with his ministry, we have to take in his teaching, because his teaching accompanied his ministry.

And very often, although he had wonderful words, as we have at the end of this declaration that Jesus makes, where he says, Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

[1 : 5 2] You cannot have a sweeter, more beautiful invitation than that. It is so wide in its embrace, so open, and it's just, it's out there to everybody.

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. And so there were so many glorious and beautiful invitations given by the Lord Jesus Christ.

But he also spent a lot of time warning, because nobody in this world knew in any way just how awful it was to reject the Lord Jesus Christ, like Jesus.

Jesus knew as nobody else knew. And so that is why he spends so much time warning people. The invitation is beautiful, but to reject the invitation is serious.

It's not like somebody walking by inviting you to come and join a particular political party. You'll often find, particularly in the cities, there are always wee stalls here and there.

[2 : 5 8] The last time I was in that city, there were people handing out leaflets. There were people from various political parties, and there were little stalls that were handing out.

There were these. People don't encroach on people's space the same way as they used to now. But there's just such a variety of thoughts today, and people are always saying, oh, you come with me and you'll get this or that or the next thing.

And so there are just such a wide variety of invitations coming along. But Jesus, Jesus is the only, he is the only one who is the way and the truth and the life.

And Jesus knows the seriousness of being sidetracked, of going in any other direction, but of following him. And Jesus here is heaping woes on these towns and cities that had beheld his mighty works.

We find this from verse 20. It's entitled here, Woe to the Unrepentant Cities. He began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they didn't repent.

[4 : 1 3] So you see, it's a very serious thing. As I was saying, you can be invited by this person, that person, to take this, to take that, and you can say, oh no, that's not for me.

And there's no great consequences. You can, I'm sure when we're out, in the course of a year, we're handed a lot of literature by different people who mean well, and they say, well, this is what I believe in, this is what I support, I'd like you to support as well.

And it's no great deal if you take it or leave it, because it has no great consequences. But this has, this has incredible consequences, because this has eternal consequences.

And that is why Jesus is saying, my life, my ministry, my works, my teaching, my everything here, it has repercussions for your life.

because what you do, with what I have taught, what you do, with my ministry, will affect you, forever, and ever, and ever. And Jesus shows us, that these cities, that beheld his mighty works, these were where he did his great miracles, where he healed the sick, the lepers, the deaf, the dumb, the blind, the paralyzed, where he made, where he fed the thousands, from five loaves, and two fish, where he walked on the water, where he did so many miraculous things, he even raised the dead.

[5 : 46] People had never, ever, ever seen anything like it. And these were also the people, who had the scripture. These were people, who were built, and taught up, with the Old Testament scripture, telling about the Messiah, telling the sort of person, he was going to be.

And he was going to be someone, who was going to be opening, the eyes of the blind, and restoring, the hearing of the deaf. He was somebody, who was going to be, doing, exactly what he was doing.

And yet, they were so blinkered, they were so prejudiced, that they refused, to believe. And Jesus said to them, you are in big trouble. Because, what you don't realize is, that the more light you have, the greater the responsibility, and the greater the accountability.

And that is why, Jesus said to them, it's going to be better, for Tyre, and for Sidon, and even for Sodom, in the day of judgment, that it will be for you.

Because he said, if these cities, had the light, that you have, they would have repented, long ago. They didn't have the light. And as such, their judgment, it shows us very clearly, that there will be levels, of judgment.

[7 : 06] Those who have much, will be, much of them, will be required. Those who have had little, little of them, will be required. And Jesus is showing, that the most serious thing, we can do, is to have had the light, to know the truth, to then, make a deliberate choice, that we're not going, to submit to the truth, and turn our back, upon the truth, and reject Jesus.

That is the ultimate, that is the ultimate sin. And that is why, there's just so many, warnings in scripture, about it. And that's what, what makes it so, dangerous, particularly for people, who, sit under the gospel, and yet continue to, push Jesus away.

It's the most serious thing, that we can do. And that's one of the, I'm sure that the Lord Jesus, would say the same thing, over, this island.

An island, that has had so many favors, gospel favors, and gospel blessings, of Lewis and Harris, in particular. Where, there has been periods, outbreaks, of revival.

And some of the older people here, will remember, these times of revival. Where the influence, of God's spirit, was so powerful. And, whole communities, were affected, although not everybody, in the community, was converted.

[8 : 25] But the, the communities, were affected by it. And yet, to see that, to know that, to know the truth, and yet to turn away, from it. You think about every, every funeral.

So many people, come into the church, into the seminary, and we do that, all around the island. Every funeral, every, the word of God, is read, at everyone.

God's truth, is read. And we, we pray, to God. So that, people hear this. Nobody can say, at the end of the day, I never heard.

The influence, within, our communities, is such, that people, do know. And it's, quite, quite surprising, how often, you just see it, in the press, how often, the Bible is quoted.

People are, often quoting, out from the Bible. They're taking things, from the Bible, putting it in, to every, people know, far more, than they let on. So that's why, at the end of the day, we will be told, you have no excuse.

[9 : 29] We will be, just the same, as Capernaum, and Bethsaida, and all these places, of great privilege. Because not everybody, has had that opportunity. Not everybody, has had the blessings, that we have enjoyed.

So it's a serious thing. And so the Lord, is saying, this is what he's saying, to us, that it is so serious, to reject, this great salvation. And then, Jesus, then thanks, the Father.

And he says, at that time, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. And Jesus, of course, here is, is recognizing, his Father in heaven.
And Jesus, is recognizing, that he is a son, by eternal generation. Jesus, is very aware, of his own, he's aware, of his own, humanity, and he's aware, of his own divinity.
Now, of course, it's a great mystery. And, we know that, the fact that, the two natures, in one person, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that it's a mystery, to us.
[10 : 40] And what the Bible, says that, great is the mystery, of godliness, Christ, manifest in the flesh. But, Jesus was always aware, of who he was, of his own identity.

And, Jesus took, human nature, his, his humanity, was exactly, like yours and mine. With the one exception, that, he was, free of sin.
The defilement, of sin, was not in him, or found within him. That, apart, he was, completely human. In that, he experienced, pain, in the same way, as you and I.
He experienced, exhaustion. We find that, like on the boat, he was so tired, and the disciples, were beside themselves, with fear in the storm, and yet, Jesus slept.
And, there were times, there are times, he indicates, to his weariness, to his, tiredness, we hear of him, talking of his thirst, of his hunger, of all the different things.
[11 : 46] So, he was, absolutely human, same as you and I. But, he was also divine. And, he knew that. But, as he was our, mediator, as he was our, representative, in this world, he wasn't, his, divine nature, was giving merit, to his human nature, but he wasn't, acting, on his divine nature, he was acting, in absolute dependence, upon the Holy Spirit.

He had to be, in order to be, our representative, to be one with us. Everything he did, was in dependence, upon the Father, and the ministry, he had the Holy Spirit, without measure.
Because, if he had just, gone through this world, completely, as it were, resting, on his divine nature, then he wouldn't, be exactly, like us.
So, it was like, his divine nature, was eclipsed, but his divine nature, was giving merit, to everything, that he was doing, for us, and in our place. And so, Jesus is recognizing, that he is, the eternal, Son of God.

And of course, there's a big difference, between Jesus's, relationship, to the Father, and ours. Although we say, our Father, which art in heaven, and Jesus says, our Father.
[13 : 12] Remember when Jesus, was speaking to Mary Magdalene, after he had risen, from the dead, and he said, I ascend, to my Father, and, to your Father.

There is a difference, and yet, it's the same Father. Christ, Jesus, is a Son, by eternal generation, we become, sons and daughters, by adoption.
The moment, that we are born again, we are immediately, brought, into, the family of God. And Jesus, straight away says, remember how it tells us, that he is not ashamed, to call, them, brethren. That's, that's a wonderful thing. You know, the moment, that you're born again, and let us remember, that our experience, we term conversion, where we, come to faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so many people, they cannot, give an hour, or a day, or whatever, but all they know, is that there has been a, a gradual, there has been an experience, taking place in their heart, where they have, where they've been turned, to God.

[14 : 19] Where they've come to, look to the Lord. Where there's a growing, trust in the Lord. Where their eyes, have been opened. They've come to see, what they couldn't see before. To understand, what they couldn't understand before.

Their heart is drawn out, to the Lord. And that is, that is, from our point of view, we're able to say, you know, I've been, I've been converted. But of course, ultimately, it's God's work.
And that, it, we are born again, in a moment. We are justified. And the moment, that that takes place, where God's spirit, comes in, to our heart, to dwell.
And where God's seed, as it were, is planted in our heart, we're adopted. We're justified, made just, in God's sight. And that is why, if a person is saved, a person can be, supposing, we talk of 11th hour conversion, so supposing, we've heard the saying, from the stirrup to the ground, mercy sought, mercy found.

A person can call to the Lord, like that, and in a, in a moment, be born again. That's all it takes, just in a moment. And that moment, that they're born again, that moment they're born again, they're born into the family of God.

[15 : 34] God adopts them. Now, mine. So that, you're now, you're able to say, my father. You really mean, you can say it, but God says, yes, you're my sons and daughters.

And Jesus Christ says, now you're family. We're all family together. It's the most wonderful thing. But then Jesus says something, that is baffling.

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I thank you, he says, that you have hidden, these things from the wise, and understanding, and revealed them, to little children.

Now, at one level, it's almost impossible, for us to understand this. that Jesus is thanking the father, that he has hidden, these things, from the wise, and the understanding, or the wise, and prudent, and revealed them, to little children, or to babes.

And it's, it's kind of, it's strange, it's, it's mysterious, but you see, Jesus is so, aware, and so in tune, with the will of the father. Now, all of us, by nature, are, blind, to the things of God.

[16 : 52] They're all hidden to us, until the Holy Spirit, opens our eyes to see. The God of this world, has blinded the minds, of those who do not believe. The scripture tells us that.

So there's a double blinding. We're blinded, by ourselves, naturally, that's the way we're born, where we don't see, the things of God. And Satan, will keep our minds, from seeing the things of God.

Bible tells us, that's how we are. It's only, when God, opens our eyes, that we can see. And yet, Jesus is saying, I thank thee, Father, that these things, remain hidden.

That these things, are hidden, from the wise, and the understanding. Now, who are these wise, and understanding? Well, those are the people, who are wise, and understanding, in their own eyes.

A warning, that we have in scripture, be not wise, in your own eyes. Because, our own wisdom, if you, the world's wisdom, will take us, down the wrong road.

[17 : 57] The world's wisdom, is already, on the broad road. And the world's wisdom, will lead us, all the way down, that broad road, into destruction. And we've always, got to remember that.

And if we are, simply remain wise, in our own eyes, we are in, going in the wrong direction. Be not wise, in your own eyes, is what the word, of God says.

And that's what, Jesus is saying, that the gospel, has been hidden, from those, who are wise, in their own eyes. And that is, where you have, find so many people today. People who trust, in their own, goodness, and their own morality.

People who, trust in themselves. People who say, I don't need this gospel. I don't, I don't need to go to church. Why do so many, few people go to church today?

Because they don't see any need. Some people who, they may have differing reasons. But the majority of people say, well, I don't, it's not, it's not for me. I've spoken to people, and I've said to people, how about coming to church?

[18 : 59] It's not for me. It's alright, it's okay for others, but it's not for me. You know, it's one of the saddest things, I hear, people saying that.

Because, that's somebody, who is wise, in their own eyes. They think, I don't need this. I'm alright, I can, I can deal with things, in my own way. I don't need, and so, this is what, what Jesus is, is here praying about.

And of course, pride is the great obstacle, in coming to faith, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. And of course, faith, does come by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

But salvation, is God's work. Because this is one thing, that comes through, in this. At that time, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you've hidden these things, from the wise, and understanding.

In other words, you've left them, you've left them, as they are. These things are hidden, and unless you show them, Lord, God, heaven, of heaven and earth, they will remain hidden.

[20 : 06] But, this is what Jesus goes on to, and you have revealed them, to little children. Now, or to babes. Now, we have to take, that doesn't mean, that every little baby, that the Lord, begins to reveal, what has happened.

Jesus is, talking here, at a different level. And he's saying that, he's talking about people, coming to accept, the Lord, as little babies.

This is, this is what it is. Now, the fear of the Lord, as we know, is the beginning of wisdom. A person, will never come to Christ, as long as they're all, puffed up in themselves.

As we said, as long as they're wise, in their own eyes, dependent upon themselves, thinking there's something, they're not going to go, to the Lord Jesus Christ. They're only going to go, as little

children.

In the weakness, in the helplessness, of little children. you look, at a little baby, and a little baby, can't do anything, for himself, or herself.

[21 : 14] Completely, dependent upon parents, or whoever is tending to them. They can't dress themselves, they can't feed themselves, they can't do, they can't clean themselves, they can't do anything.

Absolutely helpless. And that is the way, that we come, to the Lord Jesus Christ, in our helplessness. And, that is why, that is why, the gospel of Jesus Christ, is an offense, to so many people.

When you tell people, when you, in order to come, to the Lord Jesus Christ, you can't, there is nothing, that you can bring. You can't, as it were, come to the Lord, and present, before the Lord, all the things, that you are, and all the things, that you have done.

And say to the Lord, right Lord, here I come, and I want you, to take me, to heaven, because, I have had a good upbringing, I went to Sunday school, I was taught, to read my Bible, I was taught, to pray, I come to church, I put in the collection, I have done all these things, Lord, you have to, accept me.

The Lord said, no, these are good, these are good things, but I am not going to, accept you, because of these things. It's not, we have nothing, that we can bring.

[22 : 42] Supposing we give our body, to be burned, supposing it doesn't matter, what we do, there is only one thing, that we can do, is to come in our, utter helplessness, and say, Lord, without you, I'm finished.

I can't do, anything myself. I have tried this, and I've tried that, I've never got your peace yet. Lord, here I am, in my uselessness, in my brokenness, in my worthlessness, in my helplessness, Lord, will you save me?

Yes, the Lord will say, I will. That's the only way to come. And that is the way we remain. It's not that you come to faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ, like that, and then all of a sudden, you say, right, that's me, that's me sorted, I'm on my own now.

No, we're not. It's the attitude of the babe, all our lives. And in fact, it's more so, as we go on, we're coming to see, more and more, of our unworthiness, of our own unfitness, and we say to ourselves, the older we get, I am less fit for entering the kingdom of heaven, than I ever was.

That's the way we so often feel. But as we know, in the kingdom, in order to grow up, we have to grow down. That's the way it is. And so, this is the way of the babe, in total dependence.

[24 : 10] And, you know, the thing is, is God will see to it, that we have to come, in total dependence. And God has to break us.

Every person in here, who's come to faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ, has had to be broken, one way or another. Your, your spirit has to be broken. Something has to be broken.

And you know, the funny thing, it's not a funny thing, but what the Lord continues to break us, right throughout life. And the more and more, we find ourselves, being broken by the Lord.

And you know, when something is, if you break a bone in your body, it's painful. Sometimes it doesn't heal properly. Sometimes you're left with a limp. Sometimes, things are never quite the same again.

And so it is spiritually. Because things happen in your life. Whether it's in your health, or in your home, or in your work, or things. And you're saying to the Lord, Lord, what are you doing?

[25 : 08] Lord is saying, I'm breaking you. Why are you breaking me? Because I want to make you more like myself. That's what he's doing. And the quicker we submit to his will, the better it is for us.

Rather than to fight against it, and resist which, which we're liable to do, because that's the way we are. And life is full of things.

If we could look back over our lives, and say, what? And you know, you'll often come, you're like Jacob. There are times, remember the Lord put Jacob's hip out of joint.

Jacob would never forget that. I would imagine that there was always a weakness in Jacob's hip from then on. Probably always walked with a limp after that. And you know, we walk spiritually with limps throughout this world, because of what the Lord is doing, in his breaking, and molding, and shaping us.

And Jesus is thanking his Father, because that's a way. It's not the way of the flesh. It's not the way of our wisdom. But it's a way of God's wisdom.

[26 : 17] This is a way that God sees is best to do it. And that's why we always say that, not we say, but the word says, that God's ways, and our thoughts, and our ways, are as distant as the heaven is from the earth.

And so, we have to thank the Lord for what he has done with us. And as we say, the Christian will feel like a babe all throughout his or her life.

And so, Jesus then says, I'm not going to look at that, yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. And let us always remember that God takes glory out of everything that he does.

and that may seem strange to us, but it's a fact. He does all things for his own glory. And you say to yourself, I don't understand that.

I don't. But it's true. And that's why we have to submit and say, Lord, I know that you know. And I know that somehow you're taking glory to your name through this.

[27 : 29] Help me, Lord, to submit before your gracious will. That was one of the things that Jesus did all the time. Because you've got to remember that God's will for Jesus as a son, humanly speaking, was awful.

It was a fearful thing that he had to do. And Jesus was aware of it. This was God's will for him. And when you think about it, here's the Father sending his son to be despised and rejected of men, to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

In the end, to be hung up on a cross and vilified and mocked and in his greatest anguish and pain on the cross.

Does the Father say, that's enough? No. The Father then pours down his wrath and his anger upon his bruised, battered son. That's God's way.

That's God's will. And Jesus thanks the Father for that will. And that's why you and I have to learn to submit to God's will.

[28 : 40] Difficult and all though it is. Because God knows what is best for us. And so Jesus then says, all things have been handed over to me by my Father and no one knows the Son except the Father and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

This is the only way of salvation. You know, so many people will say today, so many people today aren't interested in salvation. They don't believe in God. They don't believe in anything. Their philosophy is when you're dead, you're dead.

We know that that's absolutely ridiculous. It's incredible how when you go around this world there are actually very, very, unless you go into communism and places like that where there is no God in their thinking at all.

But so many areas and so many right throughout history they have believed in an afterlife. Even when they haven't got the Bible and when they haven't, they're aware of, they're always aware that there is a higher power.

They're aware that death is not the end. You follow through history, world history and you will see throughout the generations that has been the thought by and large of people.

[30 : 00] There are people who refuse to believe that. But the thing is, there are so many people who will tell you, as long as you're sincere, God will accept.

You know, there is no other way but in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us pray. Lord our God, we pray to bless us today.

We give thanks, Lord, for your word, that it is a gracious word, that it is a challenging word, that it's an encouraging word, it's a rebuking word, it's a word of exhortation, it's a word of invitation.

And help us, Lord, always to be found in your word. Help us, Lord, to submit before your will. Help us, Lord, to be willing to accept you as Savior.

Lord, help us in all the difficulties and the torment so often we experience in life and the things that we can't work out because sometimes we can't think too much about things.

[31 : 01] Help us, Lord, to just come like little babies. Because so often as we bring all our own mental faculties to bear and think things through and sometimes we can tie ourselves in knots.

Help us, Lord, just like the little babies just to come and to trust. And so we pray that you will bless us, that we might have teachable spirits. Go before us, take us to our home safely and watch over us for giving us our sin in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.