

# TRAINING FOR GUYS

Bible talk this week:  
Colossians 3:20 - 4:1

Fathers and Sons, Slaves and  
Masters.

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*Our Father, I dunno what this is all about, but...*

## Your Will be Done

What's the difference between this line and "Your Kingdom Come"?

I think we can see part of the answer in Hebrews 2:8 where it says *In putting everything under Him, God left nothing that is not subject to Him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to Him.* Jesus has been crowned with glory and honour (v9) but not everything is subject to Him yet. He has a Kingdom, but His will is not being done.

Even those of us who have declared Him to be our King do things we know He does not approve of.

So 'Your will be done' starts with *me* getting myself in line with His will. I need to know what His will is, and then do it. That starts off with the general...the guidelines scripture gives us about how to live and what is and is not sin. But it moves on to the specific, tuning into His voice so that we know what to do in specific situations.

We need to pray that our church, and The Church, lives demonstrating God's will and does not give into the temptation to be worldly. Especially in a local congregation, that the church lives reflecting His love and is not made up of several distinct groups who are always quarrelling.

And of course we need to pray for God's will to be done even by those who do not know Him or even believe in Him. That laws are made in accordance with His will, and so forth. But not to do that and then forget that above all He wants His *children* to live according to His will!

## Why aren't all my prayers answered?

This links with the column to the left really, especially the Hebrew passage. There's a war on. The devil opposes Jesus and His will. But of course, Jesus is far more powerful, so why can't He just do what we ask?

Jesus said: "whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours" (Mark 11:24) so surely that must mean we never see unanswered prayer?

I don't think the problem comes at Jesus' end. I suspect we have not learnt what the word *prayer* really means. You see, Jesus did not say 'whatever you ask me for, believe that you have received it and it will be yours'. He said 'whatever you ask me for *in prayer*'.

How did Jesus pray? Mark 1:35 says *Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.* In the Garden of Gethsemane He prayed till he sweated blood. There is an intensity in what He is doing when He prays, He is more than just talking to the Father. It is a highly physical, spiritual and emotional experience.

Daniel prayed by *mourning for three weeks...no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotion at all until the 3 weeks were up* (Dan 10: 2,3). Three weeks of prayer, fasting, and no washing.... until God answered him. Can we really say we have prayed?

The word *intercession* in the Old Testament is one translation of the Hebrew word *PAGA*. It's a word that means a meeting, sometimes with a violent outcome. If you read Exodus 33:11 to 34:30 you will see Moses *PAGA*ing with God. It is bold, but it is the product of a life spent getting to know God first. Others in Israel at

the time would not have been able to approach God in this way. First, he had developed an intimacy based on humbling himself before God and coming to know Him passionately.

Too often our 'praying' consists of running up to God and saying '*Daddy, daddy, please can I have.....*' and then rushing away again to get on with other things. Moses spent 40 days on a mountain. Daniel spent 21 days on his knees. Jesus missed a lot of sleep.

People of faith can make bold proclamations of God's will and speak out and see miracles as a result because they have practised being intimate with God and know what He is saying and doing. They know His will and then simply say "You will be done".

They don't pray about what they want to happen, but about what God wants to happen. It's about lining up with God's passions, agreeing with them and then praying them into being.

The Bible speaks of Christians as soldiers in an army. Trained, disciplined, focussed. Under orders. Soldiers don't ask their COs to do things for them, they do what the CO says. They agree with it, act on it, and simply ask for the supplies required to do what is required of them.

The people of Joshua's day were PAGAIing when they marched round Jericho. God had said the Promised Land was theirs, so they were in accordance with His will to ask Him

to give it to them. They acted in faith, doing it His way, declaring loudly (with trumpets) that it was theirs. Day after day for a week. Continuing to believe even if they began to feel exposed, vulnerable and stupid.

Prayer starts with knowing what our CO wants. It is then to agree with Him and speak out in faith that it will come to pass. And then, if required, to act on it.

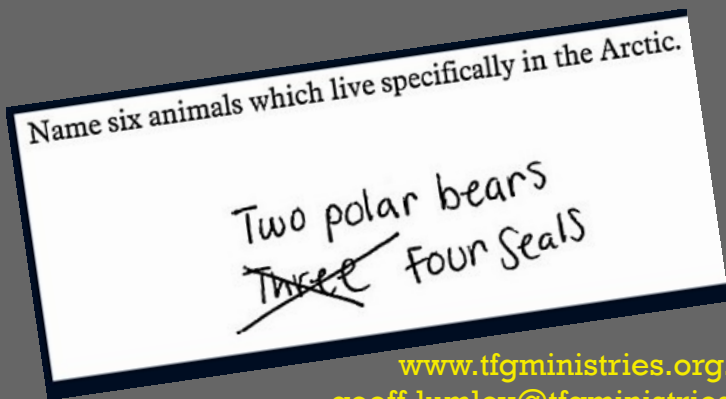
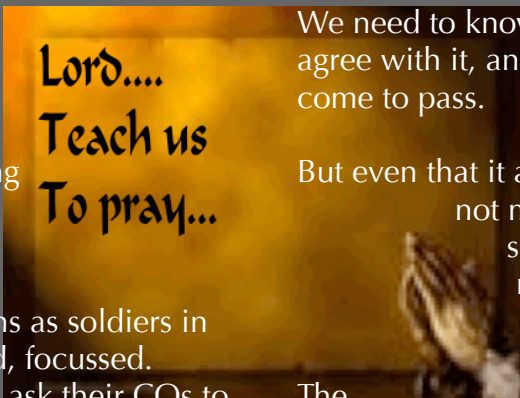
When Jesus said "*I will do whatever you ask in My Name*" (John 14:13) it wasn't a magic formula to tag on to the end of our 'prayers'. He was saying He will do whatever He has already authorised. He's already signed the cheque, so He will honour it. But it has to be a cheque He has signed. You can't cash one He hasn't written on.

We need to know what His will is, and then agree with it, and declare it in order to see it come to pass.

But even that it a simplistic thing to say. It's not meant to be a formula. It's supposed to be a relationship. And it starts with Him, not you.

The disciples came to Jesus and said "*Lord, teach us to pray*". Jesus replied with the Lord's Prayer. Asking Jesus to teach us to pray has to be a good place to start, I doubt we will ever truly finish learning.

If your 'prayer' life is anything like mine, a better question might well be *why on earth are ANY of my prayers answered?!!*



[www.tfgministries.org.uk](http://www.tfgministries.org.uk)  
[geoff.lumley@tfgministries.org.uk](mailto:geoff.lumley@tfgministries.org.uk)

