

Episode 1

Doing God's Will

What does it mean to live as a son of God? Jesus taught that we are all children of God, but what does this mean to me personally? What does it mean to be a son of God? And more importantly, what does it mean to *live* as a son of God? This is a question I have long pondered. If I am to live wholeheartedly as God's child how should I live? What *changes* in my beliefs and actions are called for?

Numerous answers. When I ask this question of myself I come up with numerous answers, all of which I realize are true, and that I should institute in my life. These are life-changing concepts that I need not only to believe, but also to *achieve* in my daily life.

Do the Father's Will

Do the Father's will. My first and most basic answer to this question is that, as God's child, my part is to do my Father's will. When I truly realize that I am a son of God, my natural reaction is to choose and do my Father's will. This is true just as a trusting and unspoiled child will naturally obey his parents and follow their will. In our lives we must elevate God's will above our own, especially in those instances where our personal will pulls us in one direction and God's will pulls us in another. This is how we grow spiritually and move forward in God's

kingdom. We should follow the Master's example in the garden of Gethsemane where he prayed, "Not *my* will, but *yours* be done."

The Father's will is the kingdom of God. This teaching, that God is our Father, and our part is to do our Father's will, was the core of Jesus' *personal* religion.

The gospel of the kingdom. His religion was known as "the gospel of the kingdom." Now the meaning of "gospel" is "good news," and the good news that Jesus proclaimed was that God is our loving heavenly Father and we are all his earthly children, sons and daughters of God, and brothers and sisters to one another. This gospel of Jesus may be summarized as, "the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man.

Gaining entrance into the kingdom. The good news of the gospel of the kingdom is *also* that when we *believe* Jesus' teaching that we are children of God, the Father's will becomes our will, and we gain entrance into the kingdom of heaven. In other words, Jesus taught that when we confess our *faith* that God is our Father we thereby declare our dedication to the doing of our Father's will and we achieve citizenship in the heavenly kingdom.

The kingdom of God is the will of God. To better understand the meaning of "kingdom of God" we may observe that the literal meaning of "kingdom" is the domain over which a king rules; likewise, the literal meaning of the kingdom of

God is the domain over which God rules. Jesus confirmed this basic meaning of kingdom and revealed the essence of the kingdom of God in the prayer he taught his followers, “Your kingdom come. Your will be done.” (Mt 6:10) In other words *the kingdom of God is the will of God*. Where God’s will rules, there *is* the kingdom of God. Jesus commanded his disciples to, “Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God.” (Mt. 6:33) In other words, he urged his followers to seek *first* to do the will of God.

Only those who do the will of God can enter the kingdom. Jesus also referred to the kingdom of God as the kingdom of heaven. His identification of the kingdom of heaven with the will of God was also clearly expressed in his Sermon on the Mount. Here he declared, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but rather he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” (Mt 7:21) In other words it is not enough simply to acknowledge Jesus as Lord; we must also choose and do the Father’s will. To the degree that we do the Father’s will we enter into and are part of the kingdom of heaven.

The kingdom is God’s inner rule. Jesus further clarified his teaching that the kingdom of heaven is the will of God with his great pronouncement that, “the kingdom of heaven is *within* you.” (Lk. 17:21) This inner kingdom that Jesus taught is the will of his heavenly Father dominant and transcendent in the heart of the individual believer.