

04 – God’s Will

When Jesus’ disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, Jesus taught them what we know as the Lord’s prayer. Jesus taught them to start their prayer with ‘Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be your name’. In previous sessions we looked at how does taking the time to acknowledge that God is our Father influence how we think about our work and our workplace. Then we looked at what does it mean to for us to honor God’s Holy name and to ask God to honor his Holy name in our workplace. The Lord’s Prayer continues with the phrase ‘Your kingdom come, your will be done’. When we pray ‘your kingdom come, your will be done’ we are inviting God to continue to write his story through our lives.

Who is writing your story? Are the successes you’re enjoying in your job defining the story of your life? Are the challenges or disappointments you are facing at work today writing the story of your life? Are you allowing a bully at work to write your life story? Or do you find yourself surrounded by well meaning arm-chair critics who are itching to write the story of your life while you pioneer new ventures?

Or are you writing your own story for your life, while mining the myriad of voices around you for snippets of wisdom?

Or are you hearing God’s voice of wisdom proclaim his story, and in obedience experiencing the joy of living in his story?

When you let your work define your story, you will find yourself one day holding an empty bag. When your work changes, or ends, the purpose and satisfaction you have found in your work will evaporate.

When you let other people define your story, you will find yourself pulled in different directions trying to please everybody. And in the end, you will please nobody, and your life will be twisted into a knot. When you let other people define your story and your story is popular you will find yourself in a crowd. But when the lights are turned off at the end of the day, or when your story loses its popularity loneliness will creep in to fill the vacuum and darkness.

When you choose to write your story yourself, you have the privilege of defining your own way, you have the opportunity to choose to explore the path less travelled. When you write your own story, you have the choice to rise above the pettiness of the people around you. When you write your own story, you live alone - with the satisfaction of your accomplishments.

While choosing to write your own story for your life is a far better choice than letting your work, or people around you write the story for your life, it is not the best choice, for you are writing your story without knowing the setting, the plot or the author of the meta-narrative of the universe.

God’s story is the meta-narrative that all lives are lived in. Only in the context of God’s story does the universe and our lives have meaning. God’s story doesn’t start with a command, or demand. God’s story begins with love. The love of the Father who created this world, who lovingly created you and who lovingly created each person you work with.

God’s story is the story of God’s loving invitation from the slavery of sin to the grace of the redeemed. God’s story is an invitation to experience God’s gift of restoration to dignity and freedom. To know God’s story is to experience the joy of worshipping God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit (Jer 17:7-8).

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God’s story is not just an abstract future concept. God’s story is the reality of God’s Kingdom of grace established in our hearts bearing fruit in this world today. God’s story is a story of hope. God’s story is the rich expression of the will of our Father in heaven who is infinite in knowledge, love and power.

Your story is a unique part of God’s story. God wrote the story for your life before the dawn of creation.

God’s story shifts your priorities from your concern for yourself, your empire and your will to God’s name, God’s Kingdom and to God’s will. God’s story for your life opens your heart, your life, and your eyes to the possibility of loving others.

In the context of God’s story, you can know with confidence that each word you say, and each choice you make matters cosmically.

Entering into God’s story is to enter into a mystery. Things will happen in your work and in your life that won’t seem to make sense. From your perspective good things and bad things will happen. Participating in God’s story is to say in every situation to the author of the story, your loving heavenly Father, “Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” And having proclaimed this truth, and claimed this promise, you can in quiet trust and obedience faithfully be the unique, wonderful person God created you to be in this place where God has placed you right now.

Who will you choose to define the story for your life – Other people, yourself, or God?