

There was once a man who loved donuts. But he had sworn them off to try and lose weight. After a couple of weeks of trying to lose weight without much success, he showed up at work with a box of donuts.

His co-workers said, "What happened? I thought you wanted to lose weight?"

He said, "I do want to lose weight. But today, I was craving donuts so bad that on my way to work I prayed, 'God, if you want me to have a donut today, you will open a parking spot for me in front of the donut shop.'"

One of his co-workers asked, surprised, "And there was a spot open when you went by?"

He said, "Well, I had to drive around the block five times before one opened up."

I love that story. That man really wanted a donut. And he was willing to drive around the block many times to get his desires fulfilled. What are you willing to do to get your desires fulfilled? What are you willing to do to get your way?

Most of us are pretty good at working to get our way. I learned early on when I was growing up, that if I thought my dad might say no to something, that it was always best to approach my mom first with a request. I even learned how to ask and when to ask for something that might increase my chances of success.

Today, we are continuing our sermon series *Living the Lord's Prayer for Today*. When you look at the Lord's Prayer, it is divided up into two main parts. The first part is known of as the God petitions. Last week, we looked at the first of the God petitions, *Holy is your name*. Today, we are going to look at the second and third God Petitions and we are going to focus on the third one. The second petition is *Your Kingdom Come*. The third petition is *Your Will Be Done. On earth as it is in heaven*.

In many ways, these two petitions are similar. Yearning for God's kingdom to come is to yearn for a world of healing, in the midst of the brokenness of this world. It is a yearning for justice, in the midst of a world where injustice runs rampant.

Praying that God's will be done, is the petition that personally demands the most of me. It is a petition that challenges me to look at myself and ask am I living for God today, in this moment. Or am I choosing to live for myself?

The reality is I can be too much like the man on a diet, driving around the block many times until I can get what I want. What about you? How are you at getting what you want? How are you at taking care of your desires?

If we are going to pray this prayer, *thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*, it means we are going to take seriously placing ourselves under God's leadership. Under God's direction. Are you willing to place yourself under God's direction?

I am not saying that we need to be irresponsible here. We don't need to be like the lady who purchased a new car and got behind the wheel and said, "God, I want you to guide me today. Guide my decision making and help keep me safe." As she traveled down the road, everything was going along fine until it looked like she was going to get into an accident with a garbage truck. Then she closed her eyes, threw her hands up in the air and yelled, "God, you take the wheel."

I am not talking about being irresponsible. But I am suggesting that one of the issues in life most of us deal with is our issues of control. We like to take charge. We like to be in control. And not only do we like to take charge of our lives, but we like to take charge of the people around us too. If we are not careful we can work at being in charge of the institutions we belong to, whether they are work, or our families or even the church. What are the control issues you face?

I have a friend who is a church consultant. He likes to ask of churches that he works with, how do you make decisions? Do you make

them out of personal preference? Meaning, do you do those things that feel good to you? Do you decide those things that feel comfortable to you and the leadership of the church? Or are you willing to make decisions out of a sense of mission? Out of that sense of doing what is believed that God is asking the church to do? Even if that means upsetting the status quo?

What he sees, my friend the church consultant is that churches like ours and people like us, become comfortable. When we do, then we make decisions designed to keep us comfortable and not out of a decision to be in mission and ministry in the world.

*Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.* This part of the prayer, invites us to make a conscious decision in our lives to trust God for our life. It is a conscious decision in our lives for us to look to God and live for God and for God's justice in our world.

Let me tell you a story of someone who has sought to live this phrase in her life. Her name is Susie Krabacher. Before Susie married her husband, Joe, her name was Susie Scott. In the early 1980's she was a centerfold girl in *Playboy*. She spent the next 10 years doing modeling, acting and promotional work for the magazine. She made a good living and enjoyed the kind of celebrity that came with that lifestyle. But not everything was perfect. After a failed marriage, she moved to Colorado.

Eventually she married Joe, who is a successful lawyer in Aspen, Colorado. Then she settled into a very comfortable life of wealth and prestige. Until, until she saw a TV documentary on orphans in Mongolia and she felt that she ought to do something to help. A friend of hers suggested she ought to consider helping Orphans in Haiti. It was a much poorer nation and it was in the backyard of the United States.

She traveled to Haiti. She asked a taxi driver to take her to where "the poor people are." He drove her to a shantytown and quickly sped off. There, a family of 17 took her in for the night, and Susie learned firsthand the plight of many people in that country, which is on of the worlds poorest countries.

On that first visit, Susie later told a reporter, "I knew I was born again on that day." She went on to say that she completely committed herself to Christ when she started working in Haiti. Since then, she and her husband have launched the Foundation for Worldwide Mercy and Sharing, an organization dedicated to serving the children of Haiti. The foundation operates six schools, five orphanages and a hospital ward for abandoned children. Susie's group feeds, clothes, and nurses up to 2,000 children on an ongoing basis.

Susie has not only set this up, but she spends up to half of each year there, herself, nursing sick children and helping in every way she can. Along the way, she has contracted lice, scabies and mange, and has been treated for encephalitis. She has been threatened by gangs and troubled by bureaucrats, but she has stuck it out, and has won the respect of the Haitian government.

Susie has come to realize that her money, her position and privilege, her celebrity and her life experience were treasures from God, on loan from God, and she wants to use them in way that honors God. So she seeks to honor God by using her life and resources to help work for God's will to be done, for justice to be done on this earth.

The reality is not many of us have the resources of Susie and Joe. But all of us, who have life in this room today, have been given treasures by God. Who we are, and what we have, are not just meant for our personal pleasure. They are meant to be used in the service of God's Kingdom.

So, I ask you today, are you willing to work for God's will to be done on earth?

May God help us live, lives of faith.

Amen