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“Thy Will Be Done”

Introduction

Imagine sitting in one of those cool, metal chairs at the back of the chapel during Sacrament. Fast and testimony meeting is concluding, and you are wrapping up on the final hymn to end the meeting. You see a sweet old lady walk up to the pulpit to offer the closing prayer for the congregation. As you listen to the prayer, you hear her trembling voice finish her powerful prayer with one last sentence. She says, “Heavenly Father, but not our will, but Thy will be done. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.” Haven’t we all heard these words repeated in countless prayers before? What is Heavenly Father’s will and why is it important that we always do His will?

On three occasions during His ministry, Jesus Christ repeated the following words: “Thy will be done.” Doing God’s will can seem like a mountain of a task, resetting every day because with every single day comes new opportunities, trials, challenges, etc. In a talk given by Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, in the October session of the 1995 General Conference, he points out a fact that [“only by aligning our will with God’s is full happiness to be found”](#) (“Swallowed Up in the Will of the Father,” Oct. 1995 General Conference). Throughout my paper, I will dive deep into what it means to do God’s will and how I can do His will in my life today, using examples from the Book of Mormon and the life of Christ.

Book of Mormon Examples

As I think about the Christlike attribute of doing God’s will, I cannot help but reminisce about the story of Nephi and his journey into the wilderness. Over and over, Nephi chose to do God’s will over his own, seeing mighty miracles and opportunities to grow his faith. President Russell M. Nelson, current President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, pointed

out in a talk given at the October 2020 General Conference that [“As you choose to let God prevail in your lives, you will experience for yourselves that our God is “a God of miracles”](#) (“Let God Prevail,” Oct. 2020 General Conference). Nephi experienced this firsthand as he traveled back to Jerusalem to retrieve the brass plates from Laban, built a ship, traveled to and found the land of promise, etc. Nephi’s whole life, as described in the Book of Mormon, is factual evidence that Nephi followed the will of the Lord. In consequence, Nephi was highly blessed and favored by the Lord in all his doings. I love how fearless Nephi is in choosing to let God prevail in his life. One one instance, Nephi even reprimands his brothers because they were getting in the way of Nephi fulfilling the promises that the Lord had made to him to make a boat. I learned that as you faithfully do the will of the Lord, no matter the opposition, you will be able to overcome all things to accomplish what the Lord has in store for you.

Additionally, as I think of Christ’s example of doing God’s will, I often think about King Benjamin’s address to his people. In his address, he testifies to the Lord’s atonement and salvation to his people, engendering faith and righteousness among all those who listened. He noted that they (we) should trust in the Lord, be diligent in keeping His commandments, and continue in faith until the end. King Benjamin, the prophet of his time, did a fantastic job of focusing on the Savior and His mercy. In agreement with King Benjamin’s talk, Elder Quentin L. Cook, one of the current members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, [“I have come to understand that true conversion is the result of the conscious acceptance of the will of God”](#) (“Conversion to the Will of God,” Apr. 2022 General Conference). One key thing I learned from King Benjamin’s address is that one of the greatest consequences of following the Lord and His plan for you is that you will be converted unto the Lord, which will lead you to make covenants

with Him in His holy house. I continue to learn that service is an ever-important way to do God's will, no matter the situation, means, or position you might be in.

Principles

Throughout my reading of the Book of Mormon, I've encountered many scriptures that accentuate the Christlike attribute of doing the will of our Heavenly Father, but I would like to talk about two scriptures in particular.

Jacob, the little brother of Nephi, says in 2 Nephi 9:18, ["But, behold, the righteous, the saints of the Holy One of Israel, they who have believed in the Holy One of Israel, they who have endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame of it, they shall inherit the kingdom of God, which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and their joy shall be full forever."](#) This verse doesn't initially make me think of doing God's will, but after some thinking outside the box, I find that the prophet Jacob can teach us to be obedient to God's will, no matter the circumstances that may arise. I learned that **as I seek to do God's will in all aspects of my life, I will both endure hardship from the world and, more importantly, experience a fullness of joy.** This is a very important aspect to understand as a believer in Christ seeks to follow in Christ's footsteps because just because you do what God would have you do does not imply that you will not go through hard things in life. I believe wholeheartedly that you experience the joy in following God's will as you endure the crosses that are placed on your shoulders. I have seen this in my own life on many occasions and I feel very strongly that it is in your intent to do what God wants you to do that makes you happy, foregoing whatever your current the feelings associated with your trials or tribulations.

Secondly, as Mormon abridges the large plates in The Words of Mormon, he adds his insights to the importance of doing God's will. He notes in verse 7 of the first and only chapter,

[“And I do this for a wise purpose; for thus it whispereth me, according to the workings of the Spirit of the Lord which is in me. And now, I do not know all things; but the Lord knoweth all things which are to come; wherefore, he worketh in me to do according to his will.”](#) I love this verse because Mormon knew without a shadow of a doubt the importance of his role in bringing to pass God’s work through doing His will. Mormon teaches me that **the Lord knows all things, He has a perfect plan, and as I follow His will, He will bring about miracles and marvelous work**. I cannot deny all the blessings, miracles, and “coincidences” that the Lord has allowed me to take part in throughout my life, and I am very grateful for those experiences that have shaped my testimony of my Heavenly Father and Savior Jesus Christ.

Witness of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ exemplifies every attribute that is good and of God. He is the perfect exemplar, which is why I find great joy in relating how He portrays humility and obedience in following and perfectly doing God’s will. I will detail two excerpts from the Book of Mormon that best show Christ’s love and mercy in doing the will of God.

To start, I love how [the story of the allegory of the tame and wild olive tree](#) in Jacob 5 of the Book of Mormon portrays the relationship between the Master of the vineyard and the servant. As I read this story with my Savior as the servant, I continue to be filled with His love for me and “the vineyard.” Towards the end of the story, the Master of the vineyard is ready to essentially give up on his vineyard that he has worked tirelessly to bring forth good fruit. The servant, Jesus Christ, begs the Master one last time to spare the vineyard just a little longer. Jesus portrays following God’s will because I believe that our Heavenly Father listens to His covenant-keeping sons and daughters. One might read this story and think that Christ wasn’t doing God’s will because He asked God to do something contrary to what we read that God wanted to do. On

the contrary, I believe that this is doing God's will because we are able to use our agency to counsel with our Father in Heaven. He created us to be agents, acting for good, and that is exactly what Christ did in this story. Our Savior loves every single one of us so deeply and personally that He asked the Father on our behalf to spare us a little longer so that we might return to His fold. Jesus has our best interest in His heart, and that is the will of our Father.

Moreover, I love how Enos portrays the Savior in [his story of his wrestle with God](#). Enos teaches me that the Lord is aware of me and my battles to do His will. I find it very interesting that their wrestle lasted all day long, and all night. In the last few months, I have come to realize that doing God's will doesn't necessarily happen in one decision on one day, but rather that it is multiple decisions across time. I love how this story teaches me that my Savior is patient with me as I strive to do His will. The Lord knows what needs to be done, especially in my life, but that He's so aware of me and my personality that He lets me come to that conclusion myself. Sometimes I'm like Enos and I have to wrestle with Him to understand His will, and other times I just listen without ever questioning it. The Savior Himself had somewhat of a wrestle with God when He asked Him to take the cup from Him. Nevertheless, Jesus always does God's will no matter how hard the experience might be, and He shows this through His interactions with Enos.

I have grown a closer relationship with my Savior as I have studied with this attribute in mind. It has opened the heavens to allow me to understand how I can do God's will through the covenants I have made in His holy house. This world has issues and debates that aren't so black and white, and neither does the church. The world that we live in is everchanging, and so are the people in it. I have learned that Jesus really cares about every single person, not just the people that fit into the "black and white" mold I mentioned previously. I have also learned that Jesus aligned His will with the Father's in all that He did during His ministry. This is important in my

life because it helps me maintain focus and purpose in my life to do everything that allows me to make and keep my covenants, leaving behind anything that might hinder my covenants. I am better able to do Heavenly Father's will in my personal life as I've studied with this attribute in mind.

Application

While thinking of how I can apply the Christlike attribute of doing God's will, I find myself thinking about my morning. When the sun comes up, it symbolizes the start of a new day. When you are baptized, it signifies the start of a new life in Christ. Every single day will bring about new opportunities to do God's will and act in faith. I can better manifest this attribute as I pray every morning, asking for God to recognize the opportunities to do His will. I can be a changed person every day as I have this quote from President Nelson in mind...["The Lord is gathering those who will choose to let God be the most important influence in their lives."](#) He will gather me and help me return to my Heavenly Home as I choose to let Him influence all my actions, thoughts, words, etc. This may sound cliché, but I want to work on following God's will for me as I date. Who I marry will be the most important decision I will ever make because the person I marry will directly impact me for better or for worse. I believe with full confidence that as I follow His will while dating, I will be blessed to date the right type of people, and one day, marry the person that will help me return to live with God and my Savior again.

Conclusion

Finally, I have come to know my Savior on a more personal level as I have examined the Book of Mormon through the lens of doing God's will like Christ. From Nephi to Enos, Jacob to King Benjamin, real people with real experiences in the Book of Mormon try their very best to follow what God would have them do. This is ultra important in our world as many choose to

live how they see fit, we must stand as faithful Christians who want to follow the Lord's plan of happiness. After all, King Benjamin sums it up very nicely...["consider the blessed and happy state of those who keep the commandments of God."](#) I have experienced indescribable joy and peace as I have chosen to follow God throughout the ups and downs of life. He is perfect, and as we choose to follow Him in this life, we will become just like Him.