

Sermon Notes

Dr. David A. Renwick, March 20, 2011

First Presbyterian Church, Spartanburg, SC, 29302

“*Lord’s Prayer: Praying for Heaven! (Thy Kingdom Come)*”

Micah 4:1-7; Revelation 18:1-2, 9-13, 17-20

1. Praying for . . . the Centrality of Christ

May the Kingdom that comes be YOURS!

May the will that I do be YOURS

a. Who is ‘the Drama of Life’ About?

“A Contemporary Psalm,” by William Aber,
retired PCUSA minister, Albuquerque, NM

O God,

You are the Author and Creator of the drama of life.

We, your seemingly miscast actors, offer you praise.

But our alleluias are halting and faint,

For we have focused too much on our

own individual performances

while ignoring your script.

We revel in the applause of others.

We strut onstage, thinking –

like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern –

that the play is about us, when, in truth,

the stage directions call for different emphases.

O God, Upstage us by your grace,

Peel off our stage makeup

Until, finally we reveal your image

Alone in the floodlights of your love.

b. Focusing on Something/one Beyond Ourselves

“The New Science of Thank You.” by Deborah Norville, Readers
Digest, October 2007.

[http://www.psy.miami.edu/faculty/mmcullough/Media%20Coverage/
The%20New%20Science%20of%20Thank%20You.pdf](http://www.psy.miami.edu/faculty/mmcullough/Media%20Coverage/The%20New%20Science%20of%20Thank%20You.pdf)

David Patrick Columbia was having one of those days. New to New York City, he was worn down by the hustle and bustle, no longer excited and proud about relocating to Manhattan, as he had been weeks earlier.

He’d imagined himself a hot young talent taking the magazine world by storm, only to end up doing grunt work as a low-level assistant

on a barely-making-it salary. He couldn't afford his own place and felt uncomfortable sponging off a friend.

"I was rethinking everything—my ability as a writer, my career choice," he recalls. That Saturday morning, he wanted to stay in bed. But no, he had to fetch a photo for work.

It was cold, gray and damp when David headed across town. "I don't know what possessed me, **but I decided to start counting things along the way that made me happy,**" he says. **"I just wanted to see how many pleasing things I came across."**

By the time he picked up that photo, he was feeling thankful he'd made the move to the Big Apple. "I was reminded that I lived in an exciting, interesting and invigorating place," he says.

"Whenever I'm feeling down, I do this. It makes me feel better."

It's been more than 20 years since David took his "walk of thanks" across Manhattan. Now he's a successful entrepreneur in the media business and says his gratitude stroll helps him stay focused to this day.

2. Praying for . . . a Community in which God is clearly King

"Thy Kingdom come"

a. Shaped more by groups, organizations and communities

– more than we often realize:

Family? Think, e.g., of the 'Godfather' Corleone family?

Nation?

Business Corporation?

Church?

OR. . . Kingdom of God??

b. What Community inspires and lasts for ever?

. . . Micah 4

c. What Communities seem to, but don't last for ever?

. . . Revelation 18

3. Praying for ... God's Control

"Thy Will be done"

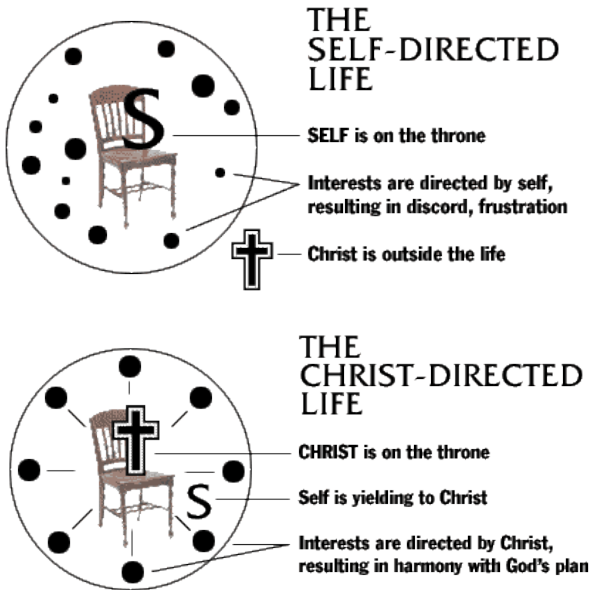
a. Knowing God's Will ... e.g.,

1. Ten Commandments (Exodus 20)
2. Jesus' Two Commandments: Love God and Neighbor
3. Jesus' Great Commission: Go! Be my Witnesses! (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19-20)

b. Power to 'will' God's Will

i. Jesus facing suffering: 'Not my will be done but thine' (Matthew 26:39)

ii. Which of the two circles below better represents your life?



iii.. Letting Go . . . Letting God Control

“A CHANGING VIEW” . . . (author unknown)

At first I saw God as my observer, my judge, keeping track of the things I did wrong, so as to know whether I merited heaven or hell when I die.

He was out there sort of like a president.

I recognized His picture when I saw it, *but I really didn't know him.*
But later on when I met Christ, it seemed as though life were rather like a bike ride,
but it was a tandem bike,
and I noticed that Christ was in the back helping me pedal.

I don't know just when it was that He suggested we change places,
but life has not been the same since.

When I had control, I knew the way. It was rather boring, but predictable. . . It was the shortest distance between two points.

But when He took the lead, it was all I could do to hang on!
Even though it looked like madness, He said, “Pedal!”

I worried and was anxious and asked, “Where are you taking me?”
He laughed and didn't answer. I did not trust Him, at first, in control of my life. I thought He'd wreck it. But He knows bike secrets . . .

And I am learning to shut up and pedal in the strangest places,
And when I'm sure I just can't do anymore, He just smiles and says .
. . . “Pedal.”

4. Praying for . . . Heaven to invade Earth

“On earth as it is in heaven”

Heaven is any place where . . .

God is Central

God's Community thrives

God is clearly in Control