

The Second Sunday in Lent  
“God’s fervent desire...for you!”

Luke 13:34  
March 16, 2025  
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Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent is from our Gospel reading, Luke 13:34

**“34 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!”**

So far the text...

Have you used the phrase “God willing”, or “if God wills”, or “Lord willing”?

We all like to do some planning ahead. We fill in the dates of our planners. And as we do so, the Christian offers up a prayer, “God willing”. For we humble ourselves before God and trust that His will is always best in our lives. Paul said this to the believers in Ephesus when he wrote in Acts 18.

**““I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing.” And he sailed from Ephesus.**

In Spanish, there is a saying, “El hombre propone. Dios dispone.” This basically means that a man can plan, but the ultimate results are in God’s hands.

So, we hear this truth directly from Scripture in James 4. :

**“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you...Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”**

As we heard last week in the temptations of Jesus, He submitted Himself to His Father and used the Word of God alone “mono” to defend Himself against the devil. And the Jesus was lifted up and strengthened by the angels after 40 days of fasting and resisting

the devil! Jesus' submitted His will to His Father in order to save us and offer Himself as a perfect sacrifice on the cross for us.

We too, now made holy by the sacrifice of Jesus, are given a new will through faith in Jesus. This new will desires to follow our Savior and humble ourselves before Him and He promises to lift us up with His great fervent love for us, showing us mercy and forgiving our sins daily.

All that God wills for us in our lives leads us to humble ourselves, acknowledging our sinfulness, but then joyfully receiving again and again His grace and mercy.

With this in mind, James then writes in chapter 4.

**“Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.”**

Last week we focused on the word “alone”, “mono”. Today, we focus on the word “will”. If you want to know the exact Greek word, it’s “thelo”. This word means to be resolved or determined, purposed, in your desire. We first look at man’s will and then God’s will.

Man’s will is of course tainted with evil. Quoting Psalm 34, Peter says in chapter 3 of his first epistle:

**“He who would love life and see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. 11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it.”**

He who would desire life...must resolve to turn away from what is part of our nature...evil. Our natural sinful desire is speak evil of others, speak deceit, instead of good. The 8<sup>th</sup> commandment commands us to not bear false witness against our neighbor but put the best construction on his or her actions and speak well of him or her. That requires an act of the will, led by the Holy Spirit.

What do we see in our Gospel reading that describes the evil desires of man?

**“some Pharisees came, saying to Him, “Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You.”**

Herod desires “thelo” to kill You. He was an enemy and persecutor of the Truth. And the Pharisees, it seemed were glad to get Jesus out of this territory also.

What was Jesus answer? “Tell that fox”, that is tell the deceptive, cunning, greedy leader this:

**‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.’ 33 Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.”**

Jesus tells Herod that He is going to continue doing His good will of driving out evil demons, curing people, and finally He will accomplish the ultimate healing of our souls by His death and resurrection in Jerusalem. This is Jesus’ will in which He is resolved to do. He cannot and will not be deterred by the devil or any evil of man.

What does Jesus then say of the unbelieving Jews? **“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!**

As Hebrews 11:37 tells us: **“7 They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword.”**

You were willing!

The evil will of man. Paul puts it very clearly like this in Romans 7:

**“21 So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; 23 but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?**

That describes the struggle for each of us, doesn't it? And how does Paul answer his question? Who will rescue him? Who will rescue us because our evil will has subjected us to death?

**“25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!”**

Yes, thanks be to God, to Him alone, Solus Christus, Christ alone, grace alone, through faith alone, we are rescued!

So we hear of God's saving will for all people in Romans 9:

**“24 even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?**

**25 As he says in Hosea:**

**“I will call them ‘my people’ who are not my people;  
and I will call her ‘my loved one’ who is not my loved one,”**

**26 and,**

**“In the very place where it was said to them,  
‘You are not my people,’  
there they will be called ‘children of the living God.’”**

It is God's good and gracious will that He has made you His child through baptism. He has called you in to the faith through Jesus and washed your sins away.

For Jesus' will was perfect. How He desires and longs that all people would be saved! How Jesus wanted to gather them all under His wings of mercy, but they wouldn't.

How Jesus wants to gather all of us under His wings so much that He offers His very body and blood for our forgiveness. This is His good will for you – your salvation!

As we know so well from 1 Timothy 2:4:

**“This is good, and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all people.”**

Jesus did His Father's will out of fervent love for you and me!

**“he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”**

He endured the suffering and torment. He endured the people's evil will when they chose to let Barrabas free.

**“21 “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” asked the governor. “Barabbas,” they answered.**

**22 “What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” Pilate asked. They all answered, “Crucify him!”**

**23 “Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”**

That is God's good will to allow His own Son to be crucified for us to free us from all sin.

And then according to His good will He now places you into His church for a good purpose to serve Him with the gifts that He has especially given you!

**“18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.” 1 Corinthians 12:18**

Yes, we live our lives in service to Him, as the Lord wills! For His will is always good for you through Jesus your Savior. And as we heard in our epistle reading from Philippians 3, His good will for you brings you at last to your heavenly home, your heavenly citizenship.

**“20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”**

Amen

**And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**