



*Lord's Prayer: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever. Amen*

### **Monday: Three Types of God's Will:**

Over the years, I've been asked many questions about the Bible, about theology, and about Christian living. But the question I probably have been asked more than any other is this one: how can I know the will of God for my life? This means different things to different people. Over the next few days, we will talk a lot about different aspects of God's will.

In his book, *The Prayer of the Lord*, RC Sproul lays out three different types of God's will. The first is what we call the sovereign, efficacious will of God. When the Bible speaks of the will of God in this sense, it is describing the will that causes whatever He decrees to come to pass. The sovereign, efficacious will of God is the will that brings to pass whatsoever He decrees. Second, the Bible speaks of the will of God with respect to what we call His preceptive will. The preceptive will has to do with His law and commandments, the precepts He issues to regulate the behavior of His creation. Please note that the preceptive will of God can be violated and is violated every day. Being sinners, we disobey the will of God. Third, the Bible speaks of the will of God in terms of His basic disposition or inclination. In this sense, God's will has to do with what is pleasing or displeasing to Him.

**Which type of will do you think we are praying for in this prayer? Why?**

If God his sovereign, it means that he is control of everything. The reality is this is something that always happens. The Bible also teaches us that God is the same yesterday and today. This means that his basic disposition or inclination never changes. This means that we must be praying primarily for the second type of will in this prayer. We are praying that God would help us and others to live out what Sproul calls the preceptive will -the way he has created us to live. Note the close connection to last week's petition. One of the best ways God's Kingdom is displayed is when we live out this type of will of God and show the world this new better way of living.

**What are some specific ways that God's will could be come more present in your life today? What are some areas that you could submit to his will more (your pursuits, your pleasures, your priorities, things your relationships, etc.). Pray for these things.**

## **Tuesday: God's Will:**

In what specific ways is God calling us to pray for his will to be done? First, we must submit to God's will for our salvation. To pray, "Your will be done," is to admit that we need to be saved and have faith in Christ. This is submitting to God's plan of salvation for the world and us particularly.

However, submitting to God's will for our salvation is only the beginning. When we pray, "Your will be done," we are committing ourselves to God's will for every aspect of life and death. We are adopting God's agenda and throwing away our own. We all have our own plans for our lives. We have a plan for our relationships, our jobs and our children. The reality is things don't always go the way we want them to.

When this happens, we are faced with a dilemma.

Do we trust God and his plan or do we trust our own plans better?

**What things or situations have made you doubt God's will the most?**

When we pray thy will be done, we are praying that we might do diligently all God commands and submit patiently that all he inflicts. This isn't easy to do. It often requires a great amount of patience. It may even force us to change our priorities and desires. The Bible is loaded with stories of people whose lives did not go as they planned. Yet, they found that God's plan was better. Here is one powerful statement of the power of God's will from Joseph, who endured many trials because of others' mistreatment of him. His brother's sold him into slavery, which was the first domino in the downward spiral of his life. When his father died, the brothers were afraid. Yet this is what Joseph says to them in Genesis 50:19-21. *"Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. <sup>21</sup> So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.*

**What difference would it make if you approached tough situations with the belief that God could use even the most difficult situations for your ultimate benefit (This is different than not comfort)?**

**We all have people in our life who do not know Jesus as their Savior. They are not currently part of God's kingdom. Who are some people that are going through some difficult times? Spend some time praying for them that God would help them to submit to his will!**

## **Wednesday: God's Will Is Better Than Ours.**

God's Will Is Better than Ours This may seem way too obvious. When we pray Your Will Be Done on Earth as It is In Heaven, we need to fully embrace this statement if we are ever going to have a chance to live out this request consistently.

## **Heidelberg Catechism Q & A 124**

**Q. What does the third petition mean?**

A. "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" means:

Help us and all people to reject our own wills and to obey your will without any back talk.

Your will alone is good.<sup>1</sup>

Help us one and all to carry out the work we are called to,<sup>2</sup>

as willingly and faithfully as the angels in heaven.<sup>3</sup>

1 [Matt. 7:21](#); [16:24-26](#); [Luke 22:42](#); [Rom. 12:1-2](#); [Tit. 2:11-12](#)

2 [1 Cor. 7:17-24](#); [Eph. 6:5-9](#)

3 [Ps. 103:20-21](#)

The problem is that we too often think our plan is so much better than God's. However, we aren't really in touch with our needs as much as we think. Helmut Thielick put it this way.

*In the last analysis we know very little about our real needs, about what we lack and what we need. So we often pray for foolish things, when what we need is something totally different. We are naked, and instead of praying for clothing we pray for bonbons. We are imprisoned by certain passions . . . instead of praying for freedom we pray for a Persian rug for our cell. So often we pray for senseless things that have no relationship to our needs. And the reason is that we do not know the deepest wants and the necessities of our life at all.*

This is why we need so desperately that God's will in be done on earth in our lives as it is in heaven. He has the best vantage point. He knows what we truly need and what we don't. This is why we need to pray "O Father, you do know. Your will be done!"

**Have you ever gone through a difficult situation and seen how God's plan was better than yours?**

**What are some specific ways that CrossWay Church could display God's Will more clearly today? Spend some time praying for that God would use our church to reveal God's Will to the people in our communities and draw people into his kingdom through us.**

### **Thursday: The Will of God For You**

When we think of submitting to God's will, we often only think of it in terms of events in our life. However, if God is the Creator of the Universe and the Creator of you, submitting to God's will also means accepting the way God made us, with all our strengths and weaknesses, and thus embracing who we are in Christ.

**What aspects do you like about yourself? What aspects are not proud of?**

**Does it matter to you that God created you this way? What responsibility do you have from knowing that God gave you the particular gifts and talents you have?**

**What freedoms do you have from trying to be like someone else if God did not you create you like them?**

Similarly, the Bible often makes it seem that God's will is less about what we do and more about who we are and why we do what we do. There certainly are specific actions He wants us to take or not take, but there's more stated about inward traits He wants us to develop (such as the beatitudes in Matthew 5 or the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5) as well as outward specifics of our behavior.

**What are some specific ways that God's Will could be come more present in your relationships today? What are some areas that you could demonstrate the love that Christ showed you to others today?**

### **Friday: Our attitude in response to God's Will**

Regrettably, many of us pray *Your Will Be Done on Earth as it is in Heaven* drearily. Some pray the petition with gritted teeth: "Okay, have it your way." Others pray the petition in resignation: "I guess I really do not have any other choice, do I?" Still other pray the petition in resentment: "I do not like this at all, but your will be done?"

**Which way of praying resonates with most with your life right now?**

Jesus had a different perspective. He realized that God's will wasn't always easy, but it was good and it shaped his prayers. Even though he asks God repeatedly to not make him endure the cross and all it would entail in the Garden Of Gethsemane, Jesus realized that it ultimately God's will. His plan was the best option available. He trusted and willingly submitted to it.

The Father in Heaven, the Father of Jesus, the Father Jesus knows and loves and trusts, has a will for his children, a good and perfect will for you and for me and for all the world. We need the power and grace of God to endure the challenges in our lives with the grace and attitude of Christ! John Calvin writes that this is a petition, that God may remove all the obstinacy of men, which rises in unceasing rebellion against him, and may render them gentle and submissive, that they may not wish or desire any thing but what pleases him, and meets his warm approval.

**Pray that God's would equip you and others to endure the challenges in your life with the strength and grace and attitude that Christ displayed.**

#### **What is the Heidelberg Catechism?**

This document was written in 1563. It's name is derived from the city in which it was written. It is a remarkably warm-hearted and personalized confession of faith that was created to teach the basic truths of the Christian faith through a series of Questions and Answers. It is a document that is still used by Reformed churches to the present day.

#### **Why is it included in the prayer guide?**

The catechism saw value in teaching the Lord's prayer to new Christians and explain its content further. We include it in this prayer guide to give us a wider historical perspective. We also think that its answers are still applicable and challenging today.