

# Sermons on Matthew

## The Lord's Prayer

Part Five  
Thy Will Be Done  
*Matthew 6:10b*

*With Study Questions*

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Thy Will Be Done

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**In this \_\_ manner, therefore, pray:**

**\_ Our Father in heaven,**

**Hallowed be Your \_ name.**

**<sup>10</sup>□ Your kingdom come.**

**\_ Your will be done**

**On earth \_\_ as *it is* in heaven.**

**<sup>11</sup>□ Give us this day our \_\_ daily bread.**

**<sup>12</sup>□ And \_\_ forgive us our debts,**

**As we forgive our debtors.**

**<sup>13</sup>□ And do not lead us into temptation,**

**But \_\_ deliver us from the evil one.**

**\_ For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory  
forever. Amen. -(Matthew 6:9-13)**

## **Review**

When Jesus was asked to give instruction on prayer, He opted not to discuss body position, passion, or even sincerity (even though these may be legitimate concerns). He gave us a proposition: “Say this,” or “In this manner, pray,” He said.

This archetypal prayer was in the first person plural, “*Our* Father... Give *us*... forgive *us*... as *we* forgive... lead *us*... deliver *us*.” We are to view ourselves as part of a community of saints, the body of Christ. Jesus, the greatest individual in history, viewed Himself as part of the body.

In the invocation, we learn we can enjoy the intimacy of approaching God as a Father. He is not to be viewed as some impersonal higher power, or source of energy. He is a *daddy*. A great price was paid for access to His throne of grace, and we can come to our Father at any time, under any situation. Like the father in the story of the prodigal son, God will always receive us with joy.

Yet at the same time He, though a daddy, loses none of His august transcendence. He is our daddy in *heaven*—indicating His supremacy and reigning authority.

This attribute of God is something He desires to protect; hence, the first petition in the Lord’s Prayer is that His name be *hallowed* or holy. We must pray that God’s name be maintained as holy. Today’s

wholesale efforts at making God culturally, socially, or psychologically meaningful comes dangerously close (if not stepping over the line) to irreverence, even blasphemy.

We are to pray for the *advancement of His kingdom*, both in the hearts of men and throughout the world via His church, where His gospel is preached, sacraments administered, praises sung and victory proclaimed. This brings us to the third petition in the Lord's Prayer.

## What's Happening in Heaven?

### A Culminating Petition

We are to pray that God's "**will be done on earth \_\_as it is in heaven.**" This must not be separated from the prior petitions of God's name being hallowed and of the advancement of God's kingdom—things which are to take place on earth throughout history. This final petition directed toward God's own glory is the culmination of the first two.

Truly, God's name is hallowed in heaven to the highest degree, and God's kingdom/ church triumphant is enjoying its full expression in heaven as well. So the hallowing of God's name and advancement of His kingdom on earth happen when we progress on earth toward that which is already taking place in heaven.

For what then are we praying when we pray for God's will to be done on earth as in heaven? In the broadest sense we are praying for what we see occurring in heaven, that is, the extolling of the Name of God through Christ.

**Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, <sup>-12-</sup> saying with a loud voice: " \_Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing\_!" (Revelation 5:11, 12)**

But of course these are the praises of the host of heaven, including the church triumphant (those who have died in Christ).

But we are still battling as the church militant. We have adversaries who must be overcome in order for us as the church militant—which is the kingdom of God on earth—to move in our thoughts, words, and deeds in the direction of the church triumphant.

This seems to be what we are praying for. We are praying that God's Name be as revered on earth as much as in heaven. We are praying that God's kingdom be as rich and pure on earth as it is in heaven. But can we be more specific? When we pray this prayer, what specific thoughts enter our minds regarding the will of God being done on earth? Before we can be more specific about these prayers, we must define what God's will is.

## God's Will

### Decree

The will of God can be understood two ways: His decree and His command. God's will is that which He ordains to happen. This is seen in Revelation where we read,

**You *are* worthy, *O* Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; *for* You created all things, and by *Your will* they *exist* and were created. (Revelation 4:11—italics mine)**

### Command

God's will is also that which He commands. It is the person who desires to do God's will, in this respect, that marks him out as one of God's children. Jesus taught,

**For whoever does the *will* of God is My brother and My sister and mother. (Mark 3:35—italics mine)**

### Praying for Decree

When we pray this petition, to which type of *will* are we referring? I think the answer is say both! We should continually pray that God's will be done in the sense that it is His history and He decrees that which is best—even in the face of our own discomfort. It was this type of will which Jesus was praying about when contemplating the cross:

**\_Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless \_not My will, but Yours, be done. (Luke 22:42).**

It is the will of God, in this respect, that we read of in James when he teaches us that we

**...ought to say, \_“\_If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.\_” (James 4:15).**

It is in the course of human events that we are to pray for, and content ourselves in, God's righteous decrees and judgments.

**\_Woe to him who strives with \_\_his Maker! *Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth!* \_Shall the clay say to him who forms it, ‘\_What are you making?’ \_Or shall your handiwork say, ‘\_He has no hands?’ <sup>10</sup>Woe to him who says to *his* father, ‘\_What are you begetting?’ \_Or to the woman, ‘\_What have you brought forth\_’? (Isaiah 45:9-10)**

We are to always willingly subjugate our wills to God's will. Our prayer should always be “Thy will,” and not “my will,” be done.

### **Will in Prescription**

In prescription it is God's will for us to do what God commands. This should be viewed as wonderful counsel.

**-\_For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And \_\_His commandments are not burdensome. (1 John 5:3)**

Jesus considered doing the will of His Father as food.

**Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.” (John 4:34)**

So what is God’s will for my life? God’s will is that I continually quell my will and desires to His and seek to obey His commands and decrees to the advancement of His kingdom and glory.

### **Will in Scope**

In a macrocosmic (big picture) sense, praying the will of God be done on earth also has a scope to it—all the earth.

**None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. (Hebrews 8:11)**

The pictures given by God regarding the scope of His redemptive work are things like a stone which crushes earthly kingdoms, then becomes a mountain which covers the earth. Or, a stream which starts small, then becomes an impassable deluge. Or, a sprout, or a mustard seed, which starts small then grows huge. Or leaven which then permeates the whole loaf... and so on.

When we pray **“Thy will be done on earth...”** our prayer should be for the whole earth.

### **Will in Depth**

The scope should not be like some light varnish merely touching the surface. Praying the will of God be done on earth also has a *depth* to it. This is to say that that nothing is independent of it; kings and queens, presidents and senators, fathers and mothers, deans of universities and kindergarten teachers should all be prayed for in such a way that the will of God would work itself out in their lives and that they would seek to do the will of the most holy and wise God in heaven.

This includes philosophies, political systems, and civil judgments. This includes the conclusions we draw regarding the raising of children, work ethics, hobbies and recreations, the arts, leisure—you name it. There is simply nothing that should fall outside the pale of God's will being done on earth and throughout the earth.

### **Will in Heart**

And at the most intimate and heartfelt level, praying the will of God be done means lovingly receiving His providence in our lives, and seeking to obey His commands in every aspect of our personal lives. We are not to get lost in the big picture. My priority is not the agenda of my denomination, or global outreach. My priority is loving my own wife and children. My priority is loving my neighbor and seeking to do God's will in the intimacy of my private life and friendships.

The advancement of God's kingdom and the hallowing of His Name, although initiated by the love and grace of God, progresses from the small to the large; it is a 'bottom up' progression. It doesn't start at the global or national level but at the individual level in the hearts of individuals. When a great man is voted into office, people become excited and encouraged because of all the wonderful things they believe he will accomplish for righteousness' sake. But what is more exciting is when the individuals in a nation possess the kind of heart that results in a good decision. And hearts are changed by the gospel of Christ, which is our only hope.

### Questions for Study

1. When Jesus was asked for instruction on prayer, how did He respond (page 2)?
2. Briefly review the invocation and first two petitions of the Lord's Prayer (pages 2, 3)?

3. How is the third petition related to the first two petitions (page 3)?
4. What is happening in heaven (pages 3, 4)?
5. What are we praying will happen on earth (page 4)?
6. How do you define the will of God (pages 4-6)?
7. How do we pray God's will be done in scope, depth and heart (pages 6, 7)?