

Your Will or God's

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Matthew 6:10

*And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, **your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**" Matthew 6:7-10*

The phrase that we are focusing our attention on the morning is, "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." We have already looked at the foundational awareness that we are to have when we approach God in prayer – He is our Father. This means that in Christ He has an infinite love, care, and concern for you. Where is our Father? He is in heaven. Does that mean that God is contained somewhere? No! The phrase "in heaven" reminds us that God transcends the world in which we live. He is High and exalted. He doesn't only inhabit heaven; He inhabits eternity! Isaiah reminds us, "For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite'" Isaiah 57:15. Likewise, Jeremiah writes, "Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God far away? Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD" Jeremiah 23:23-24. (Cf. Psalm 139:7-10)

We approach God in prayer as our Father who is high and exalted, but we also pray with an awareness of His holiness. Matthew writes, "Hallowed be your name." What does that word "hallowed" mean? It's the Greek word *hagiazō* from *hagios* meaning set apart, pure, consecrated, sanctified, or most clearly - holy. This means two things: First, in Christ we have the confidence to approach the throne of Grace with confidence, but we must never forget, and our prayers should reflect, that God is other than us; He is holy. Therefore we come to Him in humility and contrition with a reverent heart (Cf. Isaiah 66:2). Secondly, our prayer should reflect that we want His character, nature, and attributes to be recognized by all men as worthy of praise.

We spent the last three weeks of our study looking at the phrase, "Your Kingdom come." The kingdom or reign of God encompasses the past, the present, and the future. David reminds us in Psalm 24:1, "The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." God is the King of His kingdom. In this present age His authority is contested, but there is an age to come in which God will rule and reign without opposition. Ever since the fall God has

been summing all things up in Christ (Ephesians 1:9-10). The consummation of all things will reflect God's original creation blueprint! The kingdom of darkness will be done away with and the redeemed of the Lord will dwell with Him in the Kingdom of light for all eternity (Cf. Colossians 1:13-14). And to that we say, "Come Lord Jesus Come!"

Now, it is against the backdrop of the return of Christ and the future Kingdom that Jesus prayed, "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Think about this for a second: Is God's will always done? Well, yes and no. God's decretive will is inflexible and always accomplished. That which God has sovereignly decreed or purposed to do will come to pass. In Ephesians 1:11 Paul said, "In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will" Ephesians 1:11. Likewise, Isaiah writes, "The LORD of hosts has sworn: "As I have planned, so shall it be, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand... for the LORD of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back" Isaiah 14:24,27? God says this about Himself, "For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose" Isaiah 46:9-10. God's decretive will is always accomplished.

Jesus isn't talking about the inflexible, decretive will of God here in verse 10. He is talking about the perceptive or revealed will of God. The will of God as revealed in Scripture concerning what God wants us to do. How many wills were there before the fall? There was only one – God's will. Ever since sin was introduced into the world the number of wills has multiplied. The introduction of multiple wills really predates the fall. The first opposing will was seen in Lucifer. Turn back to Isaiah 14 for a moment:

How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High. Isaiah 14:12-14

Five times in this short passage Satan says, "I will..."

"I will" ascend to heaven...

"I will" set my throne on high...

"I will" sit on the mount of assembly...

"I will" ascend above the heights of the clouds...

"I will" make myself like the Most High...

James Montgomery Boice says:

When Satan rebelled, the cohesion of the universe was broken. First there were two wills, one perfect and one corrupt. Then there were four wills, one perfect and three corrupt. This was followed by eight wills, one perfect and seven corrupt. And the multiplication went on until today there are billions of wills – including yours and mine – and everyone but God's is corrupt and the source of unending sins and rebellions. Rebellion against God's will leads not to joy and happiness but to misery. It proves that there is no life, joy, peace, happiness, or any other good thing apart from a complete dependence upon God and a willing submission to Him¹

JESUS AND THE WILL OF GOD

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. John 4:34

Helmut Thielicke says:

Just as I live by my daily bread, just as my heart and my eyes and my whole body are driven toward food by the spontaneous urge of hunger, so I live by the will of the Father, so I am driven to Him and linked to Him with every fiber of my being.

I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. John 5:30

For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. John 6:38

And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." Mark 14:36

THE WILL OF GOD FOR UNBELIEVERS

For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day." John 6:40

[God] desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Timothy 2:4

¹ James Montgomery Boice, *The Sermon on the Mount*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1972), 185.

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. 2 Peter 3:9

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. Matthew 7:21–23

THE WILL OF GOD FOR BELIEVERS

- Praying that God's will be done on earth is a prayer for my *submission* and *obedience* to him!
- This is a prayer for individual obedience and universal obedience.
- In order to know the *will* of God, we must know the *Word* of God!
- We can trust God's will for our lives. Just as the will of earthly fathers is for their children's ultimate good, so also, and infinitely more, the will of God is the ultimate good of His Children!
- Where would you go in God's Word to find His will?

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. James 1:5; Romans 12:1–2

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; 1 Thessalonians 4:3

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. 1 Peter 2:15

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. James 1:5

And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. 1 John 2:17

THE WILL OF GOD AND PRAYER

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him. 1 John 5:14–15

THE WILL OF GOD IN HEAVEN

Do you ever wonder what the will of God in heaven looks like? Take a peek at Psalm 103:19-22!

The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will! Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!