

Your Will Be Done

Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from the evil one.

Three big questions from this part of the Lord's Prayer.

Question 1: How does prayer work?

- Jesus shows that God _____ our prayers.

Two basic views are usually offered to try and understand this question. One view emphasizes God's sovereignty, and in its extreme application holds that God will work according to His perfect will regardless of how anyone prays or even whether they pray. Thus prayer is nothing more than tuning in to God's will. At the opposite extreme is the view that maintains God's actions surrounding us are determined by our prayers. Our persistent prayers will make God do for us what He wouldn't otherwise do.

Example 1: 1 Samuel 15 "The Eternal One of Israel does not lie or change his mind, for He is not man who changes His mind"

Example 2: James 4:2 "You do not have because you do not ask"

If God did not act in response to prayer, Jesus' teaching about prayer would be wasted and all commands to pray would be pointless. Our job is not to solve the problem of how God's sovereignty works with human responsibility but to believe and act on what God commands us about prayer.

Question 2: What is God's will, according to the Bible?

- God's will for you is not a _____.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 - It is God's will that you should be sanctified

When Paul writes that “good” acts are the will of God, he is making sure that we do not treat Christianity as a mystical religion with no concrete moral demands. He is saying: there is good and evil in the world. God wills the good. Do good things, and you will be doing the will of God. Don’t just have theoretical beliefs and call yourself a Christian. Ask yourself: What is good? And do that. That is the Christian way of walking in the will of God.

According to the Bible it’s not enough to say “the good” is God’s will. We should say, the good is *defined* by God’s will. In order to be good it has to be pleasing to God.

Strive to know and do the good, namely what is pleasing to God, namely what is perfect. God does not command imperfection. His goal for us is perfection.

Question 3: How do we pray this prayer?

- Asking, “Your will be done on earth,” indicates that God’s will is _____ done on earth.

At Creation (Genesis 1), God essentially says “exist”, and things come into existence. God’s ability to carry out His will is never in question. If there are instances of God’s will not being done, the blame falls to people.

Praying according to God’s will does not mean shrugging one’s shoulders, saying, “Well, whatever God wants.”

Praying Your Will Be Done on Earth means asking God to make us holy and to help us live rightly, and for us to go and participate in both of those things.