

Biblical Topics

Lord's Prayer – Third Petition

Your will be done on earth as in heaven.

What does this mean?

The good and gracious will of God is done even without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.

How is God's will done?

God's will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die. This is His good and gracious will.

The good and gracious will of God is that we hallow His name and that His kingdom will come. This good and gracious will of God includes:

- A. Everything that He wants to do for us according to His promise. This includes that all people might be saved in eternity.
 - 1 Timothy 2:3-4: ³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.
- B. Everything that God wants us to do and to avoid according to His will. This means that we live our life in a more God-pleasing manner.
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:3: It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; ⁴ that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable.
- C. Everything that God wants us to suffer patiently according to His good pleasure.
 - Acts 14:22: Strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.
 - Matthew 16:24: Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

The counsel and will of the devil, the world, and our flesh are opposed to the will of God. The *devil* was the first to fall away from God. He was there to tempt Adam and Eve at the beginning of the world. He continues to tempt us and his efforts will only intensify as we draw closer to the end of time. The *world* is made up of all the wicked people and things in the world. Our flesh is our own sinful nature that has been with us from birth.

- 1 Peter 5:8: Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.
- 1 John 2:15-17: ¹⁵ Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what

he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

- Romans 7:18: I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

In this petition we ask that God would:

- A. Break and hinder the evil counsel and the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh. Evil counsel is the subtle plot underlying the efforts of the three above named enemies. The evil will is the wicked intention and purpose they have in mind.
 - Romans 16:20: The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.
- B. Strengthen and preserve us steadfast in His Word and faith unto our end, so that we may at all times do His will as gladly as the angels who are in heaven.
 - 1 Peter 1:5: who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.
 - Psalm 119:35: Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.
- C. In all suffering keep us faithful to our end. This means that whatever our heavenly Father sees fit to lay upon us, He will be with us and will support us to the very end of our lives.
 - 2 Corinthians 12:9: But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.
 - Romans 8:28: And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.
 - Matthew 28:20: And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

The above information is taken from: "Luther's Small Catechism" annotated by Edward W. A. Koehler.