

Sermon for A Year with the Catechism The Third Petition of the Lord's Prayer

Date: January 16, 2021

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church, Austin, MN

Old Testament: Exodus 33:12-23

Epistle Reading: Romans 12:1-10

Gospel Reading: John 17:1-17

Sermon Text: Matthew 6:9-10

Sermon Title: The Lord's Prayer: The Third Petition

Introit: Psalm 27:1a, 4-5, 10, 14; Antiphon: Psalm 27:7



CHRIST DOING THE WILL OF THE
FATHER (MATTHEW 27)

Hymns:

LSB 399 – The Star Proclaims the King is Here

LSB 766 – Our Father, Who From Heaven Above
(v1,3,9)

LSB 397 – As with Gladness Men of Old

LSB 394 – Songs of Thankfulness and Praise

LSB 398 – Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Liturgy:

Divine Service IV, p. 203

Songs:

Heavenly Hosts (For King and Country)

The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns

Sanctus (For King and Country)

Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

What Child Is This - Chris Tomlin

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus -
(Meredith Andrews)

Liturgy:

Creative Worship



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Text: Matthew 6:9-10

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.**

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Pronunciation for difficult words are contained in { }

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Grace to you, and peace, in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Third Petition is:

Thy will be done on earth as it is 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.

This sermon was an intimidating one to write. The topic is, "the will of God." That's a topic that should make you pause. The will of God might conjures up images of great waves crushing the sea shore, tornadoes obliterating a small town, or earthquakes shaking mountains. The will of God is strong and mighty, and you are puny and weak in comparison. You are subject to His whims, whatever they might be.

There is an easy way to talk about the will of God. I could, as the pastor of this congregation, stand here with all my authority, and declare to you what the will of God is. The problem with that is the genuine risk of turning God into some distant thing, scribed in an ancient book, which you must accept because of who I am, and who you are. Many pastors think that way. All of them are wrong.

It would also be easy to take on this topic by giving the stereotypical clichés. We can quote Romans 8 out of context and state with bold confidence, "All things work together for good."¹ We could quote Jeremiah 29, out of context, and state, "I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord."² We can state, out of context, "what God ordains is always good." The problem with these "easy outs" is they don't really deal with the will of God. They simply tell us live with it.

Living like that would make your life horrible because this distant, unreachable, untouchable deity, who is oblivious to your pain and struggles, just wanted it that way. Then faith is just accepting that, and living with it. That nonsense is more in line with the 'Three Fates' of Shakespeare,³ or the 'force' in Star Wars.

1 Romans 8:28

2 Jeremiah 29:11

3 The "Three Fates" or Three Witches" are characters in a play by William Shakespeare called Macbeth.

Since all of that is wrong, what's right? Let's start by changing our view of the world because we've got it all wrong. First we should not live in fear of what will happen tomorrow. We should not fear what tomorrow will bring. We can be confident that tomorrow will be worse than today. What we should fear is that today is the best it is ever going to get. Everything is all downhill from here.

As believers in the one true Christian Faith we always have good science on our side. It is an established law of physics that entropy is inevitable. Meaning we can refer to the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which states that a closed system will eventually rundown, decay and die. It is just a way of stating the obvious: Things don't stay the same, things don't get better, things always get worse.

Think about pouring a bowl of your favorite cereal. When you first pour the milk it is crunchy and scrumptious. Let it sit for an hour and it turns into warm grain slush you can drink through a straw. This truth is not limited to only things in our lives, it is true of all of God's creation.

The Bible says:

“Creation was subjected to frustration
but not by its own choice,
it is a slavery to decay.”⁴

Did you hear that, “a slavery to decay;” not to stay the same, not to get better, but a slavery to decay. So my house, which about a hundred years old is not going to get better on its own, so it must be the will of God that it will eventually fall part. Our last car had one failure after another. Each one cost more than the next to fix. It was just the will of God that we suffer with that. Look at our great nation and all the turmoil and tension it suffers. The news will tell you things don't look like they're getting better. The world our children will live in will not be as affluent, safe or secure as yours was. Just get used to it, it's God's will.

The Christian Church is past the point where where we will ever come together; where we will ever, as the Bible says:

...be like minded, having the same love, being one in spirit
and in purpose...⁵

In fact there may not even be a reason for a synod in a few years according to many studies. Just get used to it, it's God's will.

To us pastor's we have to deal with congregations that are ever, and continually, less knowledgeable in the Words of Scripture, and Scripture's promises, but that's just the will of God. There's nothing we can do about it. In fact even when it comes to sin, we all sin,

4 Romans 8:20
5 Philippians 2:2

we can't stop. God won't make it stop, so it doesn't really matter if we sin or not, it's just the will of God.

... I hope you think that I'm going a bit too far. I am, but Christians have often thought and taught these very things.⁶

Even more insidious is that those who think this way suggest accepting these things represents strong faith in God. To understand that He is supreme, come what may 'His will be done,' and real faith is getting to the place where you just have to accept it.

Simply accepting such things is not praying, "Thy⁷ will be done." God's will being done is not giving up on any hope for the future in this life. Praying "Thy will be done" is not mustering our courage to face the oncoming onslaught of attacks, destruction, and decay. Praying, "Thy will be done" is not giving up, and allowing evil to persist in our lives. That is not praying, "Thy will be done."

So what is, "Thy will be done" praying? Look at Romans 12:

Don't become like the people of this world. Instead, change the way you think. Then you will always be able to determine what the will of God really is—what is good, pleasing, and perfect.⁸

You see all of that inevitable decay is true, but only in a "closed system." Only in a place where nothing from the outside comes in, but we do not live in a closed system. The "system" has been broken into. The "system" has been invaded by the very Son of God Himself.

Jesus took on our nature. He walked among the decaying "system." A "system" decaying because of what we had done to it. Remember He had made it all perfect, in the beginning.⁹ He walked here, He endured the affect of sin on this world. He even endured the ultimate affect of sin: death, but like I said, this is not a closed system. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, shattered the system of decay and death, when He rose from the dead, defeating Death forever.

We now taunt and tease death with the words of St. Paul:

"Death, where is your victory?
Death, where is your sting?¹⁰"

So now decay and death are no longer inevitable. We don't have to just accept it. We don't have to accept it because One has come.¹¹ One promised from long ago.¹² One who

6 Romans 6:15-16

7 'Thy' is an old English word that means: 'Your.'

8 Romans 12:2 (*Paraphrased*)

9 Genesis 1:31

10 1 Corinthians 15:55

11 John 1:29

12 Genesis 3:15

made this place better than the way He found it. One who left this place better than the way He found it when He arrived. When Jesus Christ physically rose He gave new life, He is life. He is the way the truth and the life.¹³

How do we access this life giving change? How do we get some of this energizing elixir of eternity? In the simplest way. In the most profound a miraculous way. Through the exorcism of your evil spirit, and through the possession by the Holy Spirit who takes up residence, not just with you, but within you. The very event that took place at your Baptism.

You now walk in newness of life.¹⁴ It continues to happen when you read God's Holy Word. Which is why we want you to read and study God's Word, always. Because God works through His Word.¹⁵ Through these things God touches you and He personally changes you from the decaying rotting filth you were when you were born. In Holy Baptism He called you His own.¹⁶

Lastly in the Sacred Supper of Jesus precious Body and Blood. Here what passes your lips is not a snack. It is the very presence of Jesus your Savior. Jesus said:

Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

It is in these things we find that elixir of eternity. It is in these things we find the perfection we lost. That perfecting work of God will be completed on that day we call the Last Day. That day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.¹⁷ The unbelievers will bow in humility and sorrow eternal. The faithful will bow in praise and glory unending. All this because God answers our prayer, "Thy will be done." God's will is to save us, and He has.

May God come quickly, in Jesus' name.

Amen.

**Proclaim God's Word,
Encourage one another in faith,
Witness to God's love and
Serve all people**



¹³ John 14:6

¹⁴ Romans 6:4

¹⁵ Isaiah 55:10-11

¹⁶ 1 John 3:1

¹⁷ Philippians 2:10-11