

Lent Midweek 3—February 28, 2024  
Text: The Lord's Prayer  
Theme: The Windows of the Nave – 3<sup>rd</sup> Petition



**We continue our midweek series looking at the Lord's Prayer and particularly the windows on the south side of the Nave that celebrate the highest of all prayers. Last week we looked at "Thy Kingdom Come," and this week, we look at "Thy Will Be Done on Earth as it is in Heaven." Open your hymnals to page 324 and read with me at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Petition of the Lord's Prayer.**

**"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.”**

**Think of all the prayers we have prayed together over the past year. We prayed that God would provide what we need to do the ministry we have here at Trinity and He not only provided but threw in an extra \$22,000. We prayed that Paul Golz would recover from his illness but God received him into paradise instead. We prayed for violence and war to end throughout the world, and some has and some has not. The answers to our prayers are not always our answers. Sometimes, in fact, they are exactly opposite of that for which we ask. Sometimes we get what we want and sometimes God’s answer is in a completely different direction than we thought we were going. Sometimes we never know all the good our prayers achieve. If we ever begin to think that we can control God through prayer, we are worshipping the wrong god at the wrong altar. Our God cannot be controlled or manipulated. That’s why we get angry with Him from time to time. There are times we cannot see His will for us and we cannot understand where He is taking us.**

**Having said that, we know that God's will is always to do what is best for us and that is exactly what he will do for us every time. The 4th window on the south side of the sanctuary, which is also pictured on your bulletin, shows an angel praying in heaven. Angels pray. That is to say that they communicate with God on a regular basis. We have no illusion that angels can somehow change God's direction but somehow, many of us have that illusion about ourselves. I have heard people say, when something went differently from the way they wanted it to go, maybe I didn't pray hard enough. Angels pray to God, and theirs is a model for us to follow. They pray and devotedly await His will, knowing that His will is always the best.**

**In this petition, we are asking God to make us more like the angels. It is always hard for us to put our will aside and embrace God's will. Our sinful human nature whispers in our ear that we cannot trust God. We must take care of "it" ourselves, whatever "it" may be. Maybe God will not do what we ask. But that is good, because while we are not omniscient, He is. He knows what we need and He has promised to provide it for us when we need it.**

**Jesus knelt in the Garden of Gethsemane and prayed that God would accomplish our salvation in some way other than condemning Christ to Hell. However, that was not God's will. Christ knew that**

**God's will was best even if it meant Him suffering the terrors of Hell. This petition reminds us that God's will is always best even though we cannot clearly see the outcome. We pray that He would empower us to be more like Christ, more like the angels. We pray that He would empower us to look only to His will no matter what. We pray that we would look to God as the angels look to God knowing that whatever we endure may not be pleasant, but it will be good. Good not in the sense that we use it but in the sense that God uses it. Good is whatever flows from faith and glorifies God. That might be pleasant but, in this broken world, it might not be. It might be fun, or it might be really hard work. We can rejoice in His will because we know that whether it is pleasant or not, fun or work, God is breaking and hindering the plans of Satan all around us. When His will is done, it undoes Satan.**

**When we pray, "Thy will be done," we are really only asking God to continue doing what is best for us no matter what we think we want or think we need. We know, like the angel in the window knows, that God is always carrying us in the palm of His hand and will always do that which helps us and glorifies Him. Can we always see it or understand it? No, not in this life, but we have only to read the Bible to know that it is absolutely true.**