

May 5. Doing the Will of God

J.R. Miller:

"May Your will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven." Matthew 6:10

Many people always quote this petition as if it meant only submission to some painful providence. They suppose it refers only to losing friends or money, or being sick or in trouble – but this is only a little part of its meaning. It is for the doing of God's will – not the suffering of it, that we here pray.

It is a good deal easier to make prayers like this for others, than for ourselves. We all think other people ought to do God's will, and we do not find it a difficult prayer to make that they may do so. But what about ourselves? There is no other person in the world for whose life we are really and finally responsible, but ourselves. This prayer, then, if we offer it sincerely, is that we may do God's will as it is done in Heaven. We can pray it, therefore, only when we are ready for implicit, unquestioning obedience to the divine will – the moment we know what that will is.

Then some times it is a passive doing which is required. God asks of us something that costs pain or sacrifice or earthly loss; when this is true, our prayer may cut deeply into our own hearts. It may mean . . .
a giving up of some sweet joy,
a losing of some precious friend,
the sacrifice of some dear possession,
the going in some way of thorns and tears.

We should learn always to say the prayer, and then to hold our lives close to the line of the divine will, never rebelling nor murmuring – but sweetly doing whatever God gives us to do.