

MAY YOUR WILL BE KNOWN

Psalm 67

I. INTRODUCTION

II. WHY DO A SERIES ON HOW TO PRAY?

A. TO SERVE GOD MORE EFFECTIVELY

1. FIVE GOALS

- Outreach/evangelize
- Disciple young persons
- City-wide ministry
- Training lab for ministry
- Global church

2. EFFECTIVENESS

- **Ph 4:13**—*I can accomplish all things through Him who strengthens me.*
- **Jas 5:16**—*The effectively powerful praying of a righteous person can accomplish much*

B. FOR OUR BENEFIT

1. To know God better
2. To meet our own needs
3. To help others

C. BEING CHRIST-FOLLOWERS

1. Obeying His command—**Lk 18:1**—we should **always pray**—and never lose heart
2. Becoming like their Master—Christ-like
3. Following His example—He prayed continually

VII. WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT PRAYER

- ❖ **DRAW CLOSE TO GOD—SPECIAL ACCESS—TO “OUR FATHER”**
- ❖ **INTERCEDE URGENTLY FOR AND WITH EVERYONE WE KNOW**
- ❖ **PRAY FOR GOD’S PEACE UPON OUR COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORS**
- ❖ **THAT WE WILL BE INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE AMIDST TURMOIL**
- ❖ **THAT OUR WITNESS WILL BE GODLY AND DIGNIFIED**
- ❖ **THAT WE WILL FAITHFULLY PROCLAIM CHRIST AS THE TRUTH**
- ❖ **THAT WE WILL EFFECTIVELY RECLAIM THE LOST**
- ❖ **THAT THE FATHER WILL SHOW HIMSELF IN A MIGHTY WAY**

- ❖ FOR **HUMILITY**—NOT TO US, O LORD—THAT WE **GLORIFY** HIM ABOVE ALL
- ❖ THAT WE WILL STAND **BOLDLY** FOR HIS SUPERNATURALITY
- ❖ **TESTIFY** TO HIS HOLINESS—**BE HOLY** LIKE HIM—HELP HIM **CLOSE THE GAP**
- ❖ **URGE** OTHERS TO **CALL UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD**—FOR PROVISION—PROTECTION—AND SALVATION
- ❖ PRAY FOR **URGENCY** ABOUT CHRIST’S RETURN—BEING **READY** AND **WORKING**
- ❖ PRAY FOR **BIG VISION** OF HIS UNIVERSAL KINGDOM—NOT PETTY FIEFDOMS

III. TEXT

1 *God be gracious to us and bless us and cause His face to shine upon us.* 2 *That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations.* 3 *Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You.* 4 *Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge the peoples with uprightness and guide the nations on the earth.* 5 *Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You.* 6 *The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us.* 7 *God blesses us, that all the ends of the earth may fear Him.*

IV. WHAT “GOD’S WILL” MEANS

A. CONTEXT

“Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth”

B. DEFINITION

1. NT Greek usage
 - **θέλημα** = wish—choice—purpose—desire—pleasure—**here in Lord’s Prayer**
 - **βουλή** = purpose—counsel—[sometimes meaning ‘will’]
2. OT Hebrew usage—idea conveyed by three words
 - **chephets**—desire—willing—willingness—[**intent**]
 - **abah**—desire—pleasure—delight—[**emotion**]
 - **derek**—way—direction—course—character—[**goal**]
3. Here—in **Psalm 67** = **derek**—‘way’ = *that your goal may be known on earth*

C. SCOPE

1. Everything is created by and for God’s will

- **Rev 4:11**—*Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.*
 - a. Not just made by Him—but also for His purpose—intent—pleasure
 - b. All creation is designed—to glorify and satisfy God
- 2. Ultimately everything works to fulfill God’s will
 - **Rom 8:28**—*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

V. GOD’S BIG PURPOSE—HIS ULTIMATE WILL—ON EARTH

A. THE ‘FULL COUNSEL OF GOD’

Acts 20:27—[Paul to Ephesian elders at Miletus]—*For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel [purpose—βουλή] of God.*

1. Nobody knows the full will of God for all things
 - Arrogance of preaching/teaching ‘the full counsel of God’—as **the** ‘authority’
 - Arrogance of presuming to know God’s will for another person—in particular details
2. Knowing the ‘full counsel of God’—is not being an ‘authority’—not knowing every detail
 - But knowing—and living according—to God’s ultimate plan
 - Paul was speaking about—the redemptive power of Christ’s saving blood

B. What is God’s ultimate purpose?

1. In the Sermon on the Mount
 - a. There were two parts
 - o Thy will be done **on earth**—terrestrial
 - o As it is in **heaven**—celestial
 - b. His terrestrial-temporal plan—being brought in line with—His celestial-eternal purposes
2. His purpose on earth = that all be saved
 - a. Here—**verse 2**—*salvation among all nations*
 - b. New Testament witness
 - o **Mt 18:14**—[about the one lost sheep]—*So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish.*
 - o **Jn 6:39-40**—*This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.*

- **I Tim 2:3-4**—[praying for all persons]—*This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who **wills** all persons to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

VI. GOD'S SPECIFIC PURPOSES FOR US

A. EVERYTHING IS CREATED WITH A PURPOSE—FOR A DESTINY

Eccles 3:1—*There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every purpose under heaven.*

B. EACH OF US WAS CREATED WITH A PREDESTINED PURPOSE

1. Created for redemption and to know the mystery of His will

Eph 1:5,9—*He predestined us to adoption as His children through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His **will** . . . He made known to us the mystery of His **will**, according to His kind intention which he **purposed** in Him*

2. He promises to accomplish this—from His foreknowledge → to → our glorification

Rom 8:29-30—*For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.*

C. EVERYTHING HAS A PURPOSE—WHICH BEST FULFILLS WHAT IT IS MADE TO BE

1. **Examples of designed purpose**—both **things** and **events**

a. Things

- **Commemorative plate**—for decoration and memorialization—not for eating!
- **Thornton Hall**—reclaiming it for worship/teaching—not storage!

b. Events

- **School graduation**—preparation for life—not just a ceremony and recognition
- **Lord's Supper**—fellowship, commitment, spiritual unity—not a 'meal'

2. **Biblical word pictures**—of specific—unique—purpose

a. The potter

1. Each of us shaped by God—as He desires

- **Is 64:8**—He is the potter, we are the clay
- **Rom 9:21**—He can [and does] make us for any purpose He wishes
- **Jer 18:4-6**—He can do with us as He wishes—because He made us to start with

2. Celebrate this—you have a *divine* and *eternal* purpose—unique—and great value

- b. **Living stones**—**I Pe 2:4-5**—designed to fit a unique place in foundation of God's kingdom
- c. **Priesthood of believers**—**I Pe 2:9**—each believer a priest—serving God and humankind
- d. **Spiritual gifts**—**I Cor 12**—each believer makes unique contribution to the bod

VII. HOW GOD'S WILL IS REVEALED

A. OLD COVENANT

1. Indirect means

- **Urim and Thummim**—stones in Aaron's ephod—Ex 28:30—Num 27:21
- **Casting lots**—I Sam 10:22—I Sam 14:41
- **Gideon's fleece**
- **Visions and dreams**

2. Direct means

- **Personal revelation**—fiery bush—still small voice
- **Scripture**

B. NEW COVENANT

1. Christ's example

a. His main goal—was to do the Father's will

- **Jn 4:34**—*My food is to the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.*
- **Jn 5:30**—*I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*
- **Jn 6:38**—*For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*
- **Mk 14:36**—*Abba, Father, everything is possible for You. Take this cup from me. Yet, not what I will, but what you will.*

b. So—to follow Christ—is to do the Father's will

Jn 14:6—*I am the way and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.*

1. He is the Way—who shows the way
2. To follow His Way—is to do the Father's will!

First—follow Christ daily—as He is revealed in His word

2. The Holy Spirit replaced all other *indirect* means of discovering God's will

- a. The Promise
 - o **Jn 14:17**—He is the ‘Spirit of truth’
 - o **Jn 14:26**—He teaches and reminds us of all Jesus taught
- b. Three ways the Holy Spirit reveals God’s will
 - o Authoring God’s word—His **inspiration**
 - o Helping us to interpret God’s word—His **illumination**
 - o Directly communicating—God’s Spirit to our spirit—**spiritual enlightenment**

Second—be filled with the Holy Spirit daily

VIII. OBSERVATIONS

A. GOD DOES NOT USUALLY REVEAL HIS WILL THESE WAYS

1. ALL AT ONCE
 - Usually gives us general direction—specific steps one at a time
 - Even Jesus prayed for specific guidance in the Garden—**Mk 14**
2. WHEN WE ARE NOT LISTENING AND WATCHING
 - He might speak and show the way—but we don’t hear or see His will
 - Jesus asked—*Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear?*—**Mk 8**
3. WHEN WE ARE NOT WILLING TO OBEY
 - a. We must have a ‘willing’ mind

I Chr 28:9—[David to Solomon]—*As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of you father, and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.*
 - b. Knowing God’s will—includes **willingness** to do it
 1. We must make His will our priority
 2. **Sermon on Mount**—*but seek first His kingdom and His righteousness*—**Mt 6:33**
 - c. Not enough to know His will—but we must do it
 - o **Mt 7:21**—*Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’, will enter the kingdom of God, but only He who does the will of my Father in heaven.*
 - o **Mk3:35**—*Whoever does God’s will is my brother, and sister, and mother.*

B. HUMILITY IS A KEY—NOT STRIDENCE

1. None of us knows God's will thoroughly
2. It is enough 'to will' [wish]—to know God's will

Jn 7:17—*If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God*

3. **B.H. Carroll's observation**—God honors the **intent** of our heart—and answers!

C. THE FATHER'S WILL IS BEST FOR US

1. He made us—and loves us—He knows us better than we know ourselves
2. He made us for a purpose—He knows what will give us most fulfillment
3. Doing His will—gives us greatest happiness—because we fulfill what we were created for

D. DOING THE FATHER'S WILL IS AN INTERACTIVE PROCESS

1. God has ultimate and specific purposes for us to fulfill
2. We must stay within certain **boundaries** and directions
 - Obey commandments and guidance of His word—the **Bible**
 - Follow the example of His living Word—**Christ's example**
 - Respond to direction by the **Holy Spirit**
3. But the Father is not a tyrant or a legalist
 - He gives us **free choice**
 - Often allows us **options** that are pleasing to Him—and that still accomplish His purpose!
4. Key—continuously pray—talk with the Father—so see what is *most* pleasing to Him

E. TWO GOALS

1. Our personal transformation—becoming who God created us to be
2. The privilege of bearing witness that God's will is good and perfect

Rom 12:2—*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

VI. INVITATION

WE WALK BY FAITH

We walk by faith and not by sight
No gracious words we hear
From Him who spoke as none e'er spoke
But we believe Him near

We walk by faith and not by sight,
Led by God's pure and holy Light
Prepare us for the journey Lord
And may we know your power and might
As we walk by faith and not by sight

We may not touch His hands and side
Nor follow where He trod
But in His promise we rejoice
And cry 'My Lord and God'

And when our life of faith is done
In realms of clearer light
We may behold You as You are
With full and endless sight