

SCRIPTURE READING: Romans 12

EXTRA READINGS: Nicene Creed and Canons, III/IV, art

SINGING: 395:1-4 – 126:1-5 – 201:1, 2, 6, 7 – 100:1-4

Opening observations

- How hard it is to ‘be still’ when all is raging within!

- Struggles with God’s providence and will have Bible companions!

CHRIST’S COMMAND HIS DISCIPLES IN THE THIRD PETITION

I. not to wrestle in seeking a change of His Divine will

II. but to wrestle for the full surrendering to His Divine will

I. IN PRAYER WE ARE NOT TO SEEK A CHANGE OF HIS DIVINE WILL

A. God’s will is *eternal – sovereign – unchangeable – wise – irresistible*

1. Every event takes place because God willed it: Is. 46:10; Eph 1:11

2. Even the most awful or evil events this world has witnessed, took place because God willed it: Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; 21:11-14

- Augustine: *God’s work is so great that in wonderful and unspeakable manner even what happens against His revealed will (sin) does not occur without His will!*

- Berkhof: *The problem of God’s relation to sin remains a mystery for us, which we cannot solve simply by trying to construct theological schemes that narrow God’s power over heaven and earth*

- Bavinck: *Sin is the greatest contradiction tolerated by God in His creation, yet used by Him in the way of justice and righteousness as His instrument for His glory.*

4. Above means that every event in our life He willed: Belgic: art 13

B. What influence should this doctrine have on our daily prayer life?

1. Will arguing our case before His throne change God’s eternal will or decree? (Job 13:3; 23:1-5)

2. May we beg God to change circumstances He obviously permitted?
a. consider Is. 38:2-5; 2 Cor. 12:8-10

3. If our prayers for a change of circumstances is answered, was that the result of a change in God’s will or decree? (Gen. 22:1-14)

II. Christ's teaches us that we wrestle for a full surrender to His will

A. This petition focuses on *our responsibility* to the will of God

1. God's will is made known in His *Word* and to a certain extent through His *Providence*

2. Our responsibility to renounce our own will and without murmuring obey His good and perfect will revealed in His Word
 - a. this petition applies to God's will in *providence*

 - b. it also applies to *every detail of His revealed will for our life/faith*

B. Jesus points to angel's readiness to do His will as additional argument

1. Thy will ... as it is in heaven (Ps. 103:20)
 - a. How do the angels carry out God's will? (Gen. 28:12; Heb. 1:14)
 - their ministry is far more extensive than we will ever know

 - not all of them are sent on pleasant tasks

 - yet each rejoices to do the will of the LORD

C. Nothing reveals our fallen human natures more than *call to submit*

1. How easy to we find it to give or miss out an underserved mercy?

2. Yet God's grace is more than sufficient to make us submit!
 - a. fear not to hide your struggles – bring them before Him!

FINAL APPEAL ...

A. You are either a *submitter to* or *rebel against* God's will!

1. What is God's clearest will for each of you/me?

2. Heed His clear warnings ...
 - *And that servant, which knew His lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes! (Luke 12:47)*

 - *He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy (Prov. 29:1)*

 - *Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. (Heb. 3:15)*