

Prayer, From the Westminster Larger Catechism, part 6

Q192: What do we pray for in the third petition?

A192: In the third petition (which is, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven), acknowledging, that by nature we and all men are not only utterly unable and unwilling to know and do the will of God, but prone to rebel against his Word, to repine and murmur against his providence, and wholly inclined to do the will of the flesh, and of the devil: we pray, that God would by his Spirit take away from ourselves and others all blindness, weakness, indisposedness, and perverseness of heart; and by his grace make us able and willing to know, do, and submit to his will in all things, with the like humility, cheerfulness, faithfulness, diligence, zeal, sincerity, and constancy, as the angels do in heaven.

Born again Christians come to a fair understanding of God's will. We learn his commands and desires, and to an extent, his mind. But the struggle to *do* His will is forever baffling and heartbreaking.

In Romans 7, Paul wrestles with the conundrum of knowing what to do, wanting to do it, but being completely incapable of doing it! Verse 21b-25a: ...When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through **Jesus Christ our Lord!**

Thanks be to God, indeed! Once again, God himself, in the person of Jesus Christ, is our only, yet unquestionable assurance for our hopeless condition. Once again, we are reminded that reliance on our performance before God is pointless. Our inability to do what we know to do and what we want to do, places us in a very weak position before God. Who can stand in the presence of the Holy God with nothing but filthy rags as an offering? Only the child who has been washed and made clean by the blood of his savior, Jesus Christ.

My great and merciful Father! You are my rock, my strength and power, my high tower, my refuge, my deliverer, my friend, my all in all! I give you praise and glory for ever and ever, for I am nothing without you!

I was your enemy, dead in sin, even though you blessed me lavishly. I ignored you entirely, and had only disdain for you, yet you called me by your Spirit and showed compassion to me, a vile creature. You lifted me out of the grave I had gladly arranged for myself, into the exceeding light of your glory. You roused me from death, brought me to my senses, and showed me my depravity and my need of you. You showed me that I am no better than *anyone* deserving eternal torment in hell. The only difference between me and worst of the worst, is that your grace prevented me from committing abominations of which I was fully capable. You washed me clean and made me new. You gave me new ears to hear your Word, new eyes to see your glory, a new mind to learn your ways, and a new heart to love you, trust you and obey you.

You have done everything! I only ignored and disdained you. Father, all this shows me that for me to truly believe, trust and obey you, you must do it for me! I pray that you will continue to do the work you have begun in me, and give me the grace in order to be faithful, obedient and humble before you.

I still live in this body of flesh, which is weak, rebellious and proud, but thanks be to God--I am rescued from the body of death--through Jesus Christ my Lord! Amen!