

## DOXOLOGY

*"For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen."*

Our Bible concludes the prayer our Lord taught us to pray as we learn it from Matthew with what is known as the "doxology." A doxology is a word of praise giving glory to God. The Gospel of Luke in Luke 11 does not include the doxology. Martin Franzmann said, "The doxology ... is thoroughly in keeping with the spirit of the prayer, which seeks first God's kingdom and His righteousness, makes the petitioner dependent on God's grace, and so gives God the glory" (Concordia Bible with Notes, CPH. 1971, page 26). Our God, the Triune God, alone is the King from Whom we seek help. He alone has the power to grant our petitions. The child of God gladly gives to Him all glory and praise for all His benefits toward us. To this doxology is appended, "Amen."

We conclude all our prayers, our hymns, and the sermon each Sunday with "Amen." We conclude the service with the benediction, followed by "Amen." This is not a meaningless exercise, or sigh of relief that now we can go home. "Amen" means, "It is so." It is a confession in itself that we believe and trust in the Lord God. "Amen" says we subscribe to and confess that which we have just heard or spoken!



"Amen" at the end of the Lord's prayer, expresses our confidence that the Lord Who commands us to pray and Who finds our prayers acceptable in Jesus Christ has heard our prayer and will answer. Martin Luther stated it very simply, "Amen, Amen, that is Yea (Yes), Yea (Yes), it shall be so." To God alone the



glory. Amen!

## THE ADDRESS

*"Our Father who art in heaven"*

Probably more people pray than are able to define prayer, or know for sure to whom it is that they are praying. Probably the best known prayer is what Christians know as the Lord's Prayer.

So what is prayer? The dictionary definition is "the act of asking for a favor with earnestness; a petition." We like to define prayer as "a child of God speaking to His Father." Such speaking includes petition, as well as thanksgiving. Christian prayer is at the same time an "act of worship."

Christian prayer is addressed to the Triune God. In the uniqueness of the Godhead He is the Creator of all that is and the Preserver of what He has created. He is the Redeemer of the world, and the Savior of all who believe in Him. He is the Sanctifier who creates, sustains and nourishes faith through the Word of the Gospel.



The God of heaven has given to His children the right and privilege to call upon Him in prayer. He invites His children to come boldly before the throne of grace to find help in time of need. Since God commands us to pray as well as invites us to do so, and since He has promised to hear those who call upon Him in faith, prayer is more than words flung into the air in the vague hope that they will reach divine ears somewhere in the cosmos. Prayer is the confident expression of the child of God who believes that as he asks things of God that have to do with this life, the Heavenly Father will answer according to His will. Further, prayer is the confident expression of a child of God who trusts that the spiritual blessings necessary for salvation for which he asks come to pass since it is the Father's good pleasure in Christ to give the believer such blessings. For that reason prayer is offered in Christ through the mediatorship of Jesus.

On this earth one can honestly call that one father whose father he is, either by birth or by adoption. So also with respect to the Heavenly Father. We are told in the Gospel of John, chapter 1, "But as many as received Him (Jesus), to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." In Galatians 3 we read, "For you are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." So only they can call the God of heaven "Father" whose Father He is. Jesus amplified this in John 17. "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your Word." In John 8 we are told, "If you continue in my Word, then are you my disciples indeed ..."



When Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer, so called because He taught it, He did not teach it to the world which knows Him not but to the disciples. Scripture is very clear. In Luke 11 we read, "And it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.' So He said to them, 'When you pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven ...'"

As we study the Lord's Prayer which consists of 7 petitions, we shall see that it is the grandest of all prayers not only because it is from the lips of our Lord Himself, but also because it encompasses all things for which a child of God could pray. Martin Luther said, "... for the Lord has composed the Lord's Prayer for us in this compact manner and has included in it every need that may arise in all our trials ..." (What Luther Says, II, page 791: 2459).

The Lord has given the faith, the privilege, and the prayer. He has promised to hear all who call upon Him in the name of Jesus, the Savior. The Father delights in the prayers of His children. They are blessed who "Ask Him as dear children ask their dear Father."



## **7TH PETITION**

### *"But deliver us from evil"*

The 7th Petition of the Lord's Prayer is one to which every Christian will subscribe, and pray most earnestly. "But deliver us from evil," the Lord taught His disciples. Our Lord knew the power of Satan, not because He was inclined to sin or had sin, but because He was confronted by the deceitfulness of the devil whom He overcame perfectly when He was tempted in the wilderness. Jesus knew that in this world His disciples would have struggles and difficulties, both physical and spiritual. Whereas Jesus had the inherent strength to overcome because He was true God and true Man, we by contrast do not have the strength within ourselves to overcome the deceit of the devil, or bear the burdens of life of ourselves. Because of Whom He was, Jesus was not swayed by the devil in any way. On the other hand, we are easily beset by the devil, the world and our own flesh, because of what we are - mortals, subject to sin and the consequences of it.

By instructing His disciples and preserving that instruction for us in the Bible, our Lord is putting us on alert that He wants to help and is able to help us. Regardless of the evil with which we are confronted, our Father in heaven is willing and able "to deliver us from every evil of body and soul, property and honor," as Martin Luther put it in the catechism.

The Lord delivers us in His own way and in His own time according to His good and gracious will. He delivers us from evil, keeping it from us; He delivers us by helping us to bear it, or by making it work to our ultimate good. The Scriptures abound with historical, real life events of His people that demonstrate His love - Abraham, Joseph, Daniel, Paul and many more. Finally, He brings us the ultimate deliverance, that for which we pray with earnestness. We pray that "when our last hour has come, [He] would grant us a blessed end and graciously take us from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven." Death is the ultimate tragedy and evil for those who reject Christ. For the believer in Christ it is the ultimate victory over evil, and freedom from evil. We express our faith with the apostle who said, "I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ which is far better" (Philippians 1:23).

All the people of the world live in an evil world and are confronted by it regularly. We pray to the living God, the Triune God, the God of strength, of mercy and of love, "Deliver us from evil." To whom do they pray who construct a god of their own imagination?

strengtheners," serving the same purpose as the weights we lift to build up muscle tone, lest we become flabby.

Tests come to God's children in many different forms. Maybe it is through sickness or even death of a loved one. It may come through loss of a job, or difficulty in finding one. It may come through storm and devastation that takes away what we have. Poverty is a test of faith, but so also may be a glut of riches. Persecutions and ridicule for the faith are tests - Satan means them for our harm, but God means them for our good (Genesis 50:20).

Tests serve a good purpose when they remind us of the fleeting nature of life so that we re-focus on eternal things. When we begin to feel quite independent of God, He may send us a test to remind us that without Him we are nothing. His tests serve to bring us back to the Word when we have become indifferent to it. They create within the child of God a yearning for heaven where there is no more testing. Neither is there any more sorrow, tears or death (Revelation 7).

When we pray, "Lead us not into temptation" we are praying that the Lord would guard and keep us so that temptation to evil may not overcome us. We are praying Him for the wisdom to understand the difference between the temptation to evil which is of the devil and the test from God which is for our benefit. We further pray that the Lord would give us the strength to prevail when He tests us so "that we may finally overcome and obtain the victory."

God, who commands us to pray and has promised to hear all who pray in the name of Jesus, gives us promise that He will not send any temptation that we cannot bear, but will Himself help us to endure it (1 Corinthians 10:13). As we look into His Word and stand fast in His Word we have the armor that shields us against Satan's fiery darts. But above all we have the assurance that He, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Who was tempted like unto us in every way, yet without sin "will stablish you and keep you from evil" (2 Thessalonians 3:3).

**God is**  
*Faithful,*  
**he will not let**  
**YOU** *be*  
*tempted*  
**beyond what**  
**YOU** *can*  
*bear.*  
*1 Corinthians 10:13*

## 1ST PETITION

### *"Hallowed be Thy name"*

The child of God in Christ Jesus can come boldly to the throne of the Heavenly Father in prayer. While Christians pray for one another, they do not pray through one another. We already have an advocate, an intercessor, and an intermediary in the person of Jesus Christ. Further, a prayer of faith in the name of Jesus is just as meaningful and effective spoken by the person in the pew as it is spoken by a pastor or a priest. It is not repetitious words or flowery speech that makes a prayer acceptable to the Father. The Spirit of God interprets even our groans before the Father. It is the prayer of faith which the Father hears. "Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you," are Jesus' words recorded in Matthew 21.

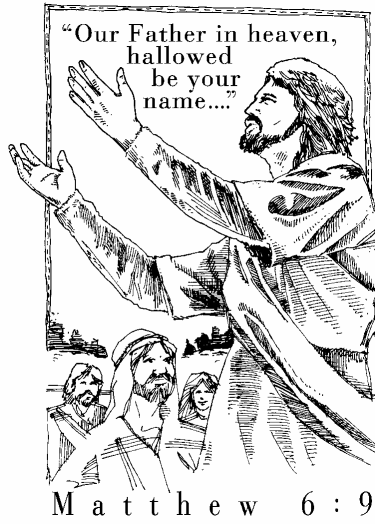
**ASK** & IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU;  
**SEEK** & YOU WILL FIND;  
**KNOCK** & THE DOOR WILL BE OPENED TO YOU.

M A T T H E W 7 : 7

In the Lord's Prayer the child of God addresses the Father petitioning, "Hallowed be Thy name." To hallow means to consecrate, hold as sacred, to keep as holy. Martin Luther captured the essence of this prayer when he wrote, "God's name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be holy among us also." In other words we are praying that God's name, holy in itself, will remain so among us. How? Luther continued, "God's name is hallowed when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead a holy life according to it ... But he that teaches and lives otherwise than God's Word teaches, profanes (makes unholy) the name of God among us."

Sinful man cannot diminish the glory of the Holy God. God is Who He is and He is what He is. But sinful man can rob himself of the blessings of the Holy God by speaking for doctrines the meanderings of his own heart. False teaching is anything that is contrary to God's Word. Hardly does it consecrate the name of God among us to make God a liar, or to twist His Word which is the means by which He makes Himself known to us. But to speak the Word of God faithfully and then to live a life contrary to what one professes is also disrespectful of the holiness of God and shows a lack of appreciation

for the blessings which He gives. It is quite simple to say, "I love God." But Scripture itself defines meaningful love of God. Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). We hallow the name of God when we walk in His way. The practical application finds its significance in these words: "Therefore whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that hears these sayings of mine, and does them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matt 7:24-27). Blessings flow to those who hallow the name of God.



Children of the Father through faith in Jesus in this life still have their flesh. Therefore a child of God will pray daily for forgiveness on one hand, and for strength to confess the Word and build on it on the other. We will still pray from the heart, "Hallowed be Thy name."

## **2ND PETITION**

### ***"Thy kingdom come"***

In the Lord's Prayer we pray, "Thy kingdom come." We are praying that the kingdom of God will come to us, that God will rule in our heart, and also that His kingdom rule will be expanded everywhere. It is the Christian's confidence that one day he will be translated from this earth to the kingdom of heaven. The Christian is confident because the Lord Himself gives promise that all in whose heart He now rules will be with Him in heaven.

## **6TH PETITION**

### ***"And lead us not into temptation"***

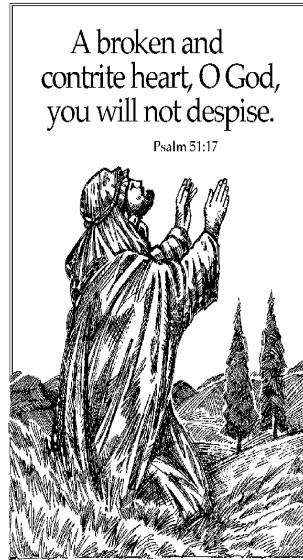
When we read the Bible we frequently run into the word "temptation." The root word in the original means to "try" or "test." Temptation is a trying, a proving or a testing. The word "temptation" may refer to an act of testing or an enticement to evil.

When it is said that the devil tempts us, the sense is that it is a temptation to sin. Scripture tells us that Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Matthew 4). The obvious intent of the devil was to try to make Jesus sin. Satan failed! The devil, world and our own sinful flesh is daily and strenuously seeking to tempt us to evil. These unholy three come with all kinds of allurements to lead us away from the Lord, and away from His Word. They present their allurements (temptations) in fine sounding words to which they add deceitful promises; they offer them in tempting fashion (fool's gold) to ensnare us, always with the intent to bring us into spiritual ruin. Their intent is to deceive us and seduce us "into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice." Soberness and vigilance is called for in order to be alert to and in order to fight the evil foe (1 Peter 5:8,9).

In the 6th petition of the Lord's prayer we pray, "Lead us not into temptation." Obviously we are addressing the Lord. But does the Lord tempt us to sin for which reason we ask Him not to? No way! Scripture says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempts He any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed" (James 1:13,14). It is one of the contradictions of life that after we have prayed the Lord to keep us from temptation, we often turn right around and seek it out or walk where it is.

When it is said that God tempts us, it is always a "test" for our good. God tempted (tested) Abraham by telling him to offer his only son Isaac. As Abraham was about to do so, the Lord stopped him saying, "Now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me" (Genesis 22: 12). By this test Abraham's faith was shown to be more than mere words. Temptations or the tests that God sends us are meant to be "faith -

Our thanks for forgiveness is given in words, but also shown in our actions. We cannot earn forgiveness of sins, but we can lose that gift if we find ourselves unwilling or unable to forgive our neighbor. Take your Bible and read Matthew 18:22-35 as well as Mark 11:25,26. Now think about what you are praying. "Forgive us our trespasses AS we forgive those who trespass against us." Have we ever said or thought, "I can (will) never forgive him (her) for what was done to me." Then ask yourself a question: "Do I really want God to forgive me as I forgive my neighbor?" This in turn will lead the honest heart to confess, "Lord, I have sinned. Forgive me for Jesus' sake, and help me, O Lord, to forgive my neighbor, to put behind me all grudges." Remember, forgiveness is not approval.

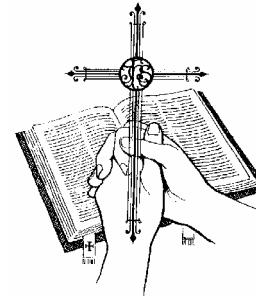


Jesus forgave us our sin; He did not approve of our sin. Jesus died for us. He has forgiven us at great cost to Himself. He did not complain or murmur. For those who crucified Him, and ultimately for us, He prayed to His Father, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). If our God has forgiven us and continues to forgive a mountain of sin daily, even those sins which we do not know (Psalm 19:12), can we not find it in our heart to forgive our neighbor who has not sinned against us in the same magnitude as our sin against God?



Even as we continue to sin in weakness and by reason of our flesh, the Father is strong in grace to forgive. As we contemplate that and rejoice in that forgiveness, "We will also heartily forgive and readily do good to those who sin against us." The fact that we fail is certainly no reason to quit trying, and is good reason to daily pray, "Forgive us our trespasses ..." The Lord will give the strength for the next day and the new desire to forgive as we have been forgiven.

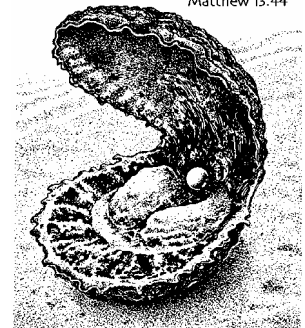
To "hold an office" does not mean to sit in a room behind a desk. To hold an office implies activity! Similarly, when we speak of the kingdom of God in the second petition, we are speaking first of all of the activity of the King. What is the King's activity? He rules. Where does He rule? In that He is Creator and Lord He rules over all things in heaven and on earth. The earth is His footstool. But most specifically, He rules on this earth in a special way in the heart of each believer in Christ. With what does He rule? He rules with His Word. For what purpose does He rule? He rules to save. So the Kingdom of God is "God's gracious rule to save."



The kingdom of God comes without our asking, but we pray that it may come to us. Martin Luther summed it up very succinctly. "The Kingdom of God comes to us when our Heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit so that by His grace we believe His holy Word ..." The King does not set up His throne in one's heart by threat or by intimidation. He does not use force of arms to bring us into His kingdom. He does not use political pressure and deceit as in our political society. He establishes His rule through the preaching of the Gospel. The Gospel is the message of salvation. It creates faith. It makes of those who were not subjects of the King, subjects. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation for all those who believe. Furthermore, we are told in 1 Peter 1:5 "Ye are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." The royal rule of Christ within the heart of His children is preserved by the same means through which it was established! They who have been brought into the kingdom of God pray that they might be preserved unto salvation and as well that through His holy Word they may "lead a godly life, here in time and hereafter in eternity."

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden.

Matthew 13:44



We also speak of the second petition as the "mission petition," because it is our prayer that the gracious rule of the Lord to save will also be extended to others. We pray that the Spirit will through the Gospel bring others to the knowledge and confidence of salvation.

We who pray this petition also are called to speak the Word of God. The Lord has commissioned those in whose heart He rules to share the blessed word of salvation. He has told them to go into the world and preach the Gospel. So when we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we are praying that it might prevail in and among us to whom it has come, and that it will come to others. To remain in this kingdom is the first priority of those who are under His rule. Lest we forget we are reminded in Matthew 6, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." "Lord, let Thy kingdom come, and preserve us under its rule until the day of Thy heavenly kingdom!"

### **3RD PETITION**

*"Thy will be done on earth as it is heaven"*

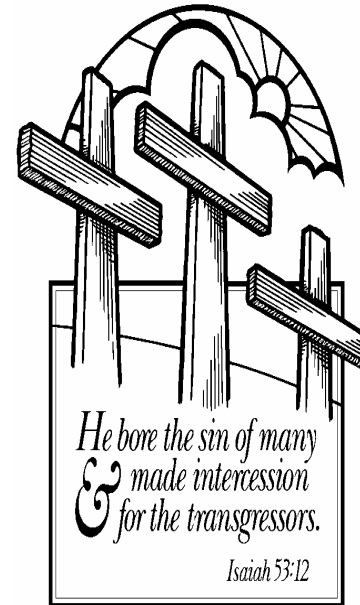
In one of the hymns that appears in our hymnal (The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, Hymn 458) we sing, "Curb flesh and blood and every ill, that sets itself against Thy will." What is the will of God? In the first petition we have prayed that the name of God be kept holy among us. That is done when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity and we as the children of God lead a godly life according to it. In the second petition we have prayed that the kingdom of God would come, that is that His gracious saving rule will envelop our heart. That is God's will for us.



But there is another will, one that is all that God's will is not; it is a will that seeks our harm. It is the will of the devil. The will of the devil is directly opposed to God and His will. The devil, the fallen angel who out of pride and envy rebelled against God as we read in the Scriptures, is ably assisted by our own sinful flesh as well as the world with all its allurements. This "unholy trinity," the devil, the world, and our flesh, seeks in many ways to lure the Christian into a snare. The enemy of our souls suggests that truth is relative and that one can never know for sure what is truth. He suggests that right is wrong and wrong is right. He suggests that flirting with sin, walking on the edge, engaging in the questionable activities offered by the world is an acceptable way to walk. His suggestion is that God would not

*"And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us"*

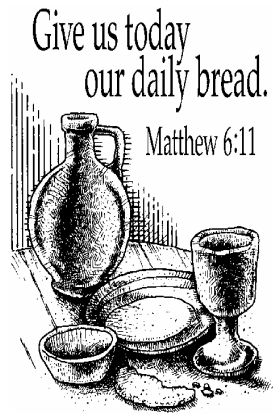
So often we find ourselves mouthing words in worship and in prayer without thinking about what we are saying. We pray the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us our inattentiveness and our empty words. We further implore Him to direct our thoughts and our words so that we always speak what we mean and mean what we speak when we address Him in worship and prayer. We praise our Lord for His patience with us and for His grace toward us in that He forgives us over and over again instead of treating us as we deserve. For surely it is true as we confess in the 5th petition of the Lord's Prayer as taught by Dr. Luther, "We daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment."



In this petition, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," we ask that our Heavenly Father would not look upon our sins, but graciously, for Jesus' sake, forgive them. We have the wonderful assurance from the Scriptures that the Father is pleased to forgive us our sins, yes, even the dullness of our devotion, for Jesus' sake. For this cause Jesus came into the world. His perfection covers our imperfections; His holiness covers our sins. His death has paid our penalty and His resurrection has put an exclamation mark to His Word from the cross: "It is finished" (John 19:30). By virtue of His finished work our sins have been forgiven.

The forgiveness of sins is a gift in which to delight and for which to thank our God. Forgiveness of sins is not license to live a life of sin or to think of sin lightly. It is the power to fight against sin. Daily the Christian will lament his sin and be thankful to God for His grace.

abundance, yet we are unable to retain any of them or to enjoy them in safety and happiness unless He gives us stable and peaceful government. For where dissension, strife and war prevail, there our daily bread is wholly lacking or constantly reduced" (Large Catechism, 1935, APH, page 147)



It is not greedy to pray for things for this life while we await deliverance to the better life in heaven. It is appropriate to pray and then to leave it to the will of God as to how much and what He is inclined to give us. Surely this prayer is also a prayer that is directed against the devil who inspires greed. "Give us this day our daily bread." Each day we pray that the Lord will give us what we need for that day. Where that is the attitude of prayer, we find nevertheless that the Lord so often provides more than we need.

For all of which we want to give thanks. Generally we are not bashful to ask, but less mindful to give thanks. We know that we can never repay the Lord for all that He has given us for body and soul. But a word of thanks is pleasing to the Heavenly Father. In keeping with a word of thanks is an expression of thanks in action. One way that the Lord provides for us is through each other. In sharing with others who are in need the abundance of things which the Lord has given to us, we are putting thanks into action, as well as expressing confidence and trust in the Lord to answer our prayer as we pray again, "Give us this day our daily bread."



May the Lord give us thankful, trusting hearts.

## **5TH PETITION**

expect us to deprive ourselves of those things which make us happy through gratification of our flesh.

He does not want Christians to be under the rule of Christ, but under his rule. While the devil might not necessarily suggest that we should throw Christ and the will of God overboard and out of our life - he is too subtle for that - he would suggest that we make room in our heart for himself. In other words, in spite of the fact that our Lord says that we cannot serve two masters, the devil suggests that it is the way to go. In summary, the devil has very carefully and cunningly planned our overthrow.

Our Lord tells us in His Word, "As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezekiel 33). Through the pen of Paul the Spirit wrote, "God our Savior ... will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2). Again, "The Lord is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3). The Heavenly Father desires our eternal salvation. He wants us to live in heaven with Him. But it is more than a desire, it is His good and gracious will. To accomplish His will He sent the Lord Jesus Christ into the world to take upon Himself the sins of the world. The Lord Jesus by his perfect atonement has reconciled us unto God. But still more! The Heavenly Father sends the Holy Spirit who works through the Gospel and Who creates faith in the heart of the sinner so that by His influence we who were at one time lost but now are saved say, "I believe in Jesus Christ."



The child of God recognizes the saving work of Jesus as an expression of the gracious will of the Father. But he also recognizes the power of the devil, the temptations of the world about us, and the weakness of his own flesh. So he prays in the third petition, "Lord, THY WILL BE DONE." Therein we are asking that God "would break and hinder every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow the name of God nor let His kingdom come." We are asking him to break and hinder the "will of the devil, the world, and our flesh." He who was manifested that He should destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3) and Who said, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16), will also fulfill for His children this request and

prayer. Further, we pray that the Lord would "strengthen and preserve us steadfast in His Word and faith unto our end." All this happens without our prayer of itself, for it is the gracious good will of God. God is God. But the third petition is an expression of the individual Christian's recognition of his personal need, as well as the prayer that in his personal life God's name be hallowed and His kingdom come.



God works through His Word. Since the Word itself is our sword and shield (Ephesians 6), may we hear His Word lest by a life of indifference and neglect we rob ourselves of the experience of having the will of God done in our life. God is faithful! Surely it is not too much to ask that God's children who enjoy His blessing submit to His good and gracious will for them in any and everything He asks of us. For just as surely, it is inconsistent and manifests a lack of thanks to ask that the Lord's will be done among us, while we make the conscious choice to walk according to our own.

## **4TH PETITION**

*"Give us this day our daily bread"*



Scripture tells us in Romans that the Heavenly Father, "did not spare His only Son but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32). Jesus died for all people. He died for all because the Father's desire is that all be saved. The passage continues, "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" When we think of the things that the Father gives us in Christ our thoughts appropriately turn first of all to the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of eternal life that comes to all who believe in the Lord Jesus. But shall we not also think of the privilege that is ours in Christ to be called the children of God? If the Triune God did nothing else for us we would have reason to speak thanks without end.

But there is more. In the "all things" of Romans 8, we include even those things which for the sake of Jesus the Father is pleased to give us for our physical welfare. So the Christian is not bashful to approach the Father in prayer and say, "Give us this day our daily bread." We know as Martin Luther says that "God gives daily bread even without our prayer, even to all the wicked." The truth is that if God gave us what we need only when we ask we would have precious little. Too often we forget to ask, and even more do we forget to give thanks! Our Lord provides the rain that waters the earth, and the sun that gives warmth to the earth - essentials to producing food. All people profit, and even the animals of the field and the birds of the air profit. How richly the Lord provides.



Look at the birds of the air.  
They do not sow or reap or store away  
in barns, and yet your heavenly  
Father feeds them. Are you not much  
more valuable than they?

Recently we were told that one reason for the difficult economic situation on farms is that prices are too low. And why? Because farmers are producing too much. We will not speak to the economics; we surely will not blame God or the farmer for the economic condition. The point we make is that even in flood or drought the Lord gives the farmer the knowledge and Himself provides the necessities to produce food. We knew of a farm family in the same condition as all other farmers but whose confidence on one hand and trust on the other, was maddening to the neighbors. This family in Minnesota just believed that there was no reason to worry themselves into a frenzy, whatever the circumstances, because they believed that God would provide in the amount He wills. And that is the way it works!

In the 4th petition of the Lord's Prayer we approach the Lord for physical needs, everything that belongs to the support and wants of the body. But life here includes many needs if we are to enjoy the blessings of the earth. So we pray for "house, home, field, cattle, money, goods, a pious spouse, pious children, pious servants, pious and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline (education), honor, good friends, faithful neighbors and the like." Luther said, "Although we receive from God all good things in