



DOVER DAILY DEVOTIONS

This Sunday I preached on learning to trust what God ordains, using the prayer “Your will be done” as a diagnostic for the heart. We saw that this petition reaches into both what we must obey and what we must endure, so we were praying for consecration to God’s revealed will and surrender to God’s sovereign will. We considered how God’s commands are for our good, yet delighting in obedience does not come naturally to sinners, which is why we must remember that Jesus was not only our Teacher but our Savior, the One who perfectly did the Father’s will in our place and bore the penalty for our rebellion. Then we looked at Gethsemane and learned the difference between trusting surrender and cold fatalism: Jesus wept and trembled, yet still said, “not as I will, but as you will,” and the Father’s will, though costly, brought salvation. Finally, we prayed toward the pattern of heaven where God’s will is done gladly and completely, and we were urged to stop clinging to self-rule, to name specific areas of resistance, and to lean into hard providences with the confidence that the Father who gave us his Son is wise, holy, and for us in Christ.

Monday: The Prayer That Corrects Our Hearts

Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:10

Devotional:

Most of us do not notice how quickly prayer can become a polite way of demanding. We say “Lord,” but we mean “my way.” That is why Jesus put this sentence in our mouths: “Your will be done.” It confronts the quiet assumption that God exists to approve our plans.

This petition does not ask God to rubber-stamp us. It asks God to re-form us. It teaches us to want what is right more than what is easy, and to trust God’s hand more than we trust our preferences. If your prayers have been thin lately, it may be because your will has been loud.

So begin the week with one honest request: “Father, bend me to your will.” If you can pray that sincerely, you are already stepping out of the tiny prison of self-rule and into the wide fields of God’s fatherly care.

Questions for Reflection

1. When I pray, what do my requests reveal about what I most want to control?
2. Where do I resist God's will because I fear what it will cost me?
3. What would change today if I truly meant, "Your will be done"?

Prayer

Father, forgive me for praying as if I were in charge. Teach me to desire what pleases you. Give me a willing heart, and let your will be done in me today, not reluctantly, but truly. In Jesus' name, amen.

Tuesday: God's Commands Are For Our Good

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 6:24

Devotional:

God's commands can feel heavy when our hearts are divided. We think obedience is a loss, as though holiness were a tight room with no windows. But Scripture says something bracing and kind: God commanded these things "for our good always." The problem is not God's path. The problem is our suspicion.

Sin teaches us to treat God like a rival. It whispers that freedom is found by keeping options open and boundaries loose. Yet the Lord's commands are not traps. They are guardrails on a mountain road, not chains in a dungeon.

Ask for a new taste. Not mere compliance, but love. Obedience becomes lighter when we see that God is not trying to ruin our joy, but to rescue it, to train us for a joy that will last.

Questions for Reflection

1. Which command of God do I tend to treat as a burden rather than a gift?
2. What lies do I believe about God when I resist his Word?
3. How has obedience protected or healed me in the past, even when I did not see it at first?

Prayer

Lord, you have only been good to me, and yet I have doubted you. Give me a heart that trusts your commands. Teach me to obey not with clenched teeth, but with steady love. For Jesus' sake, amen.

Wednesday: The Gospel Behind "Your Will Be Done"

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 10:7-10

Devotional:

We do not begin this prayer as spiritual athletes. We begin it as forgiven sinners. The good news is not that we finally mastered obedience, but that Jesus obeyed where we failed and offered himself once for all to cleanse and consecrate us.

That means “Your will be done” is not a ladder we climb to earn God’s favor. It is the language of those who already have God’s favor in Christ. The Father’s will was carried out in the Son’s perfect obedience and atoning death, and by that will we have been sanctified.

So when you feel your weakness, do not pretend. Run to Christ. Say, “Lord, my will is tangled, but yours is straight. My loves are disordered, but yours are pure.” The prayer becomes possible because the Savior has already done the will of God for you, and now he is at work to do the will of God in you.

Questions for Reflection

1. Do I treat “Your will be done” as a way to earn God’s approval or as a response to grace already given?
2. Where do I need to remember that Christ’s obedience counts for me?
3. What would it look like to ask Jesus for a reshaped desire, not just better behavior?

Prayer

Jesus, you came to do the Father’s will, and you did it perfectly. Thank you that my hope rests on your obedience and your sacrifice, not my performance. Work your will in me by your Spirit today. Amen.

Thursday: Honest Anguish, Real Trust

Scripture Reading: Matthew 26:39–42

Devotional:

There is a kind of surrender that is only numbness. It says “fine” but does not mean “Father.” Jesus showed us something better in Gethsemane. He trembled. He asked for the cup to pass. And then he trusted: “not as I will, but as you will.”

That moment teaches us that faith is not the absence of sorrow. Faith is sorrow that still prays. It is grief that does not slam the door on God. If you are in a small Gethsemane, you are not alone, and you are not speaking words your Savior cannot understand.

Do not wait to feel strong before you surrender. A trembling “Your will be done” is still surrender. The Father who did not spare his Son is not careless with your pain, and he is not confused

about the way forward.

Questions for Reflection

1. What burden am I carrying that I have not spoken plainly to the Father about?
2. Where do I confuse trust with emotional detachment?
3. What would it look like to pray honestly and surrender fully, as Jesus did?

Prayer

Father, you know my fears and my sorrows. I bring them to you without disguise. If it be your will, bring relief, and if not, give me grace to trust you and to obey you through tears. Through Jesus, amen.

Friday: Providence and the Gift of the Son

Scripture Reading: Romans 8:32

Devotional:

When life hurts, the mind starts asking, “Is God good?” Providence can feel like a locked door, and we are tempted to interpret God by our circumstances. But Romans 8:32 puts a stake in the ground: the Father has already shown his heart by giving his Son. If God gave Christ for you, he is not your enemy.

This does not make suffering painless. It makes suffering interpretable. The cross teaches us that God can will what is costly and still be infinitely loving. The darkest act in history became the brightest proof of mercy.

So look at the cross when you cannot read your life. When you cannot trace God’s hand, trust his character. The Father’s will is not cruel. In Christ, it is for you.

Questions for Reflection

1. In what situation am I most tempted to interpret God as distant or harsh?
2. How does the cross answer my fear that God might not be good to me?
3. What is one way I can practice trust today, in action, not only in words?

Prayer

Father, when I cannot understand your ways, anchor me in what you have already proven. You did not spare your own Son. Help me trust you in the shadows, and obey you in the waiting. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Saturday: Living With “If the Lord Wills”

Scripture Reading: James 4:15

Devotional:

We make plans because we are human, and we should. But James reminds us that our plans are never ultimate. “If the Lord wills” is not a religious slogan. It is humility in motion, a steady confession that we are not God.

This posture does not paralyze you. It frees you. You can act responsibly without pretending you control outcomes. You can pursue wisdom without treating life like a puzzle you must solve perfectly to be safe.

So as you prepare for Sunday, hold your calendar with an open hand. Ask for wisdom. Seek counsel. Do what is faithful. And rest your heart in this truth: God governs what you cannot govern, and he never slips.

Questions for Reflection

1. Where do I treat my plans as non-negotiable, and why?
2. What decision do I need to place before God with open hands this week?
3. How can “If the Lord wills” shape my speech, my schedule, and my expectations?

Prayer

Lord, my life is not mine to manage as if you were not real. Teach me to plan with humility and to act with faith. Make me content with your will, and courageous to do what you command. Through Christ, amen.