

GOSPEL: Matthew 4:12-23

Now when Jesus heard John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. 13 He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

15 “Lord of Zenulun, land of Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles---
16 the people who sat in the darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the region and
shadow of death
light has dawned.”

17 From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

18 As he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea---for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.” 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 As they went from there, they saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN ?

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.

John xv. 16.

This cuts off and condemns at a stroke all the presumptions of spurious saints, who want to do and deserve so much, even to reconciling God and making Him their friend. For what do they do but make the choice and seek to be first, in that their merits precede and God’s grace toddles on behind? It is not He who chooses us, but we seek Him and make Him our friend, that we may glory in that He has received much good from us. That is what all the world does in seeking to merit God’s grace by previous works. But the Gospel says, ‘Ye have not chosen Me’. That is, you are My friends not because of what you do, but because of what I do. If it were because of what you do, I should have to regard your merit, but it is because of Me and through Me, because I draw you to Me and give you all that I possess, so that your glory is in nothing but My grace and love, and not your own nor all the world’s work or merit. For I have not let Myself be found by you; rather have I had to seek you and bring you to Myself, when you were afar off, without knowledge of God, and were held in the grip of error and condemnation like the rest. But now I am come, and I have called you out of the darkness, before you prayed or did anything about it. Thus you are My friends in that you have received all good from Me, and know that you have received it all for nothing and out of sheer grace.

Exposition of John xv.

W.A. 45. 697 f.

Taken from the book:

Day by Day We Magnify Thee by Martin Luther

FROM LUTHER'S PRAYERS:

Give us true obedience and perfect resignation in all things temporal and eternal. Preserve us from the cruel voice of slandering, defaming, judging and condemning others.

O that the great misery and harm caused by such tongues were far from us! When we see or hear anything of others that seems blamable and disagreeable to us teach us to cover it up, and to keep silent about it. Help us to complain to you alone and leave all to your will, and so gladly to forgive all our debtors and sympathize with them. Amen.

FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM:

The Lord's Prayer:

The Third Petition

Your will be done, on earth as is heaven.

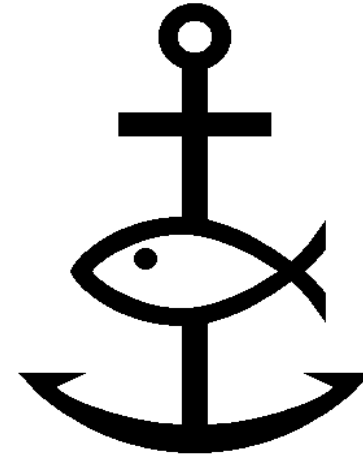
What is this?

In fact, God's good and gracious will comes about without our prayer, but we ask in this prayer that it may also come about in and among us.

How does this come about?

Whenever God breaks and hinders every evil scheme and will of the devil, the world, and our flesh that would not allow us to hallow God's name and would prevent the coming of his kingdom. And God's will comes about whenever God strengthens us and keeps us steadfast in his Word and in faith until the end of our lives. This is God's gracious and good will.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY



Almighty God, you sent your Son to proclaim your kingdom and to teach with authority. Anoint us with the power of your Spirit, that we, too, may bring good news to the afflicted, bind up the brokenhearted, and proclaim liberty to the captive; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.