



Honest to God

A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

Session 6 – Your Will Be Done

Jim Elliot was not well known during his lifetime. He grew up in Portland, Oregon, the son of a Plymouth Brethren evangelist. At Wheaton College, he courted and married a missionary's daughter named Elisabeth. His passion to preach the gospel and see people saved is what led him to Ecuador. *"Lord, fill preachers and preaching with Thy power,"* he wrote in his journal. God answered Jim Elliot's prayer. Martyred by a handful of people he hoped to reach in life, he touched millions with the gospel, including his martyrs, in death. Jim Elliot didn't seek fame, he simply chose to serve the Lord with the grain of wheat he'd been given (John 12:24).

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

Goals for this Session:

- Discover the secret of a satisfied life.
- Consider how praying God's will affects your outlook.
- Examine the connection between prayer and praise.
- Pray honest prayers that lead to surrender and transformation.

Ice Breaker

By nature, are you are more of a leader? Or a follower? How so?

Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Proverbs 3:5–6**, **Romans 12:1–2**, and **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18** to get the overall idea. Follow the text closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God's ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

Day Two – Trust and Obey

Read Proverbs 3:5–6 and Psalm 37:1–11.

1. Are we honestly prepared to pray “*Your will be done*” without tacking on a conditional clause here or there? God knows what is best for us and we are usually inclined to agree. Except, of course, when we have a different idea.

- a. **trust** (verb) 1. to believe in the honesty and integrity of; 2. to rely or depend on; 3. to follow without fear of the outcome.

Have you ever trusted God and regretted it? Why or why not?

Have you ever failed to trust God and regretted it? Why or why not?

- b. **acknowledge** (verb) 1. to recognize the authority or claims of; 2. to confess to be true; 3. to express thanks for.

In keeping with each of the three definitions, what will you acknowledge about God’s care and concern for you today?

2. **“I trust God, but sometimes I just can’t figure Him out.”** If we haven’t actually said it, we’ve thought it! David felt the same way when he prayed, “How long, Lord?” (Psalm 13:2). *How long must I wrestle my own thoughts and walk around with a knot in my stomach? What am I missing here, God?* David learned to pray his troubles and leave them with God.

David had a habit of preaching to himself, and we should too. It’s easy to get caught in the crossfire of methods the world offers to get what you want, and lose sight of what God knows is best. Give some thought to David’s advice in Psalm 37:1–11. Put it in practical terms that you can apply to your life.

- a. Trust and do good – verse 3:
- b. Dwell and feed – verse 3:
- c. Delight and He will give – verse 4:
- d. Commit and He will do – verse 5:

- e. Rest and wait patiently – verse 7:
 - f. Do not fret – verse 8:
 - g. Cease from anger, forsake wrath – verse 8:
 - h. Wicked living won't prevail – verse 10. We use *wicked* to describe very bad people, but the biblical definition is *guilty*. It describes anyone who lives as though God does not matter.
 - i. Humble strength succeeds in the long run – verse 11:
3. Has praying for God's will to be done ever changed your outlook on circumstances or your attitude toward another person? In what way?
 4. God has a unique plan for each of us but certain things are God's will for *all* of us. What can you confidently know is part of God's will for you as you pray and cooperate with His leading?

Romans 5:3–5

Colossians 4:2, 5–6

James 1:5

1 John 5:14–15

Memory Verse

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
1 Thessalonians 5:18 NKJV

Think it over . . .

When and what was the last thing you specifically thanked God for?

Day Three – I Surrender All

Read Romans 12:1–2.

Christians are different—*peculiar*, as an old Bible translation puts it. Our neighbors might agree. There are things about the way we live that don't make sense except in terms of eternity.

1. When we pray, “Your will be done” we are aligning our will with God’s. In this phrase, we anticipate the day when earth’s business will be carried out the same way it is right this moment in Heaven—obedience to God every time, all the time. In this phrase, we also pray *and let it begin, here and now, with me.*

a. **“It’s a good thing God doesn’t give me everything I ask for.”** Most of us will gratefully admit we don’t always know what’s best for us. We pray with limited knowledge and at times in our own self-interest. But our Father in Heaven knows best. When has a “no” or “not yet” answer to prayer stretched your faith? In what way?

b. **“It’s a good thing to give God everything that *He* asks for.”** This goes right to the heart of what Romans 12:1–2 is about. To live for God, we surrender our entire self to Him—all that we are and all that we have to offer.

By the mercies of God – If we skim over this phrase without letting it sink in, we are likely to be overwhelmed. Why is God’s mercy the key element of being able to align our will with God’s?

**“The real secret
of an unsatisfied life
lies too often
in an
unsurrendered will.”**

Hudson Taylor

Don’t be conformed...be transformed – Surrender can be passive, or it can be active. Passive surrender lets the world squeeze us into its mold. Active surrender chooses to obey God’s Word and cooperate with God’s Spirit to change the way we think and live our lives. Which do you choose?

Refusing to conform to the world’s script for living comes with assurances that God will support your decision. What can you be certain of?

John 14:16–17

2 Corinthians 4:7–10

2 Corinthians 4:17–18

Hebrews 13:20–21

2. God has a plan and always finishes what He begins (Philippians 1:6). But He does not force us to submit our will to Him. Where is the motivation to pray, “I surrender all” to be found? Consider what happened to the only man who ever totally surrendered to God’s will.

- a. What was Jesus’ attitude toward doing the Father’s will?

John 4:34

John 6:38

John 8:29

Philippians 2:5–8

- b. We may say that a child who resists their parent has a strong will. The question is, what kind? Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane took the greatest strength of will there could ever be. From what you read in the text, describe the emotional anguish Jesus endured and His resolve in praying, “*Your will be done.*” What is most striking to you?

Matthew 26:36–46

Hebrews 5:7–9

3. Every one of us is born a rebel. We deserve to have our prayers go unanswered. But Jesus illustrated why we can be confident that God will hear our prayers (Luke 11:11–13). What father, if his son asks for a fish, would give him a snake instead? If he asked for an egg, would his father give him a scorpion? If an earthly father wants nothing but the best for his child, how much more does our Father in Heaven?

Put another way, “We know God will answer us when we call because one terrible day He did *not* answer Jesus when *He* called” (Matthew 27:46).¹

When we struggle with surrendering our will on any point, a fresh reminder of the gospel can give us the necessary change of heart. Is there something in your life that you want, but don’t have? Something you have, but don’t want? God has a purpose for allowing—or *not* allowing it at this time.

When you take inventory of what is most precious to you, what does surrendering it back to the Lord look like?

¹ Timothy Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*, pg. 237

Memory Verse

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 NKJV

Think it over . . .

Are you more likely to express your thanks with words or with actions?

Day Four – The Connection Between Prayer and Praise

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18.

We have said it before and it bears repeating. Troubles, prayed through honestly and with praise, will change your outlook.

In context, these verses are included in a list of instructions given to the church to be applied individually and during public worship. The last phrase* applies to all three commands.

Prayer and praise is not just to make us feel better—though it does! Prayer and praise is giving God the glory, honor, and worship that is due to Him for who He is. Give some thought to what that looks like. Give a personal example. Then explain why, and in what way, we practice this together in worship as the body of Christ.

1. **Rejoice always.** Circumstances and emotions change but joy remains.
2. **Pray without ceasing.** Mindful of God’s continuous presence and our ongoing dependence.
3. **In everything give thanks;** *for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.**

Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

Memory Verse

“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
1 Thessalonians 5:18 NKJV

And When You Pray . . .

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

“Prayer is not just getting God to move. It’s the process through which God moves and changes us. Prayer will not only transform what you pray about; it will transform you.”

Greg Laurie

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests
