

# 'THY WILL BE DONE'

Flashbacks to the horrors of Sept. 11, 2001, when terrorists attacked the United States, along with ceremonies honoring the men and women whose lives were lost in that tragedy, were plentiful in news media coverage marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary over the weekend.

The question raised often in days and weeks following 9/11, and even to today, is: Why would God allow such a tragedy to happen?

Carl Mays of Gatlinburg, Tenn., a motivational speaker appearing at several Life Care events, addressed that question in a column. It is one of the best treatises on the subject that I have seen. He refers to English clergyman Dr. Leslie Weatherhead's categorization of the three "wills" of God:

1. **God's *intentional will*.** "It refers to what God 'intends' to happen ... how He wants people to think, talk, act and react as we use the power of choice He has given to us," Mays said. "People are encouraged in Matthew 6:9 to pray, 'Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' In heaven, God's '*intentional will*' is accomplished. On earth, people don't always do as God intends. God did not create people as puppets on a string. Since He allows us to choose, our choices are often made contrary to what God wants us to do. Such contrary choices lead to jealousy, envy, hate, lying, robberies, rapes, murders."
2. **God's *circumstantial will*.** "In so many words, God says to us, 'This is not what I intended to happen, but under the circumstances, let's work through this to bring something positive from the ashes.' Individually and together, following God's leadership, we can build on the tragedy of Sept. 11," Mays said. "Humans can grow closer to God and closer to one another. National patriotism and world unity can be greatly enhanced. It is not easy and it is not simple. More suffering may precede ultimate blessings. But together, we can rise above the ashes of heartbreak, insecurity and devastation. This, essentially, is the meaning of Romans 8:28, 'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.' This portion of scripture is not a spiritual bandage. It does not indicate that everything that happens is good. Its message is that with faith in God and in one another, we can take a terrible situation and build on it in a positive way."



(more)

3. **God's perfect will or eventual will.** "This refers to God's plan that 'will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' Someday – eventually – the earth as we know it will be over. All evil will have been defeated. There will be no jealousy, envy, hate, lying, robberies, rapes, murders.

Mays concludes: "Meanwhile, we are imperfect people living in an imperfect world. We are a part of one another, affecting and influencing one another. That is why it is vital for us to realize that everything we do affects other people. We either have positive



influences or negative influences. That is why it is vital for us to seek to know and to do God's will as best we can and to encourage others to engage in the same search and work."

Mays' treatment of the question about the will of God is an encouragement to me as I consider not only the devastation created by the 9/11 attacks, but other events and circumstances of my life – and I hope it is for you. We are involved in a profession in which we have daily contact with, and close-up observations of, the lives of people entrusted to us, and we are naturally prone to wonder about what they are going through and why.

Maybe this helps.

– Beecher Hunter