

## What Do We Pray In Times Like This?

So what are you praying for these days? For God to keep you and your loved ones from getting the coronavirus? For God to end the threat of this virus, so people don't get sick or die from it anymore, and so you can stop losing income, so you can pay your bills?

Those prayers are appropriate because God invites us to pray, **"Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver you."** (Psalm 50:15) Jesus himself taught us to pray in the Lord's Prayer, **"Deliver us from evil."** (Matthew 6:13)

But Jesus also taught us to pray in the Lord's Prayer, **"Your will be done."** (Matthew 26:42) You might recall that Jesus himself prayed that prayer during that agonizing night before his death on the cross. The burden of being mankind's only hope for salvation weighed heavily on him. The stress of knowing what kind of suffering was waiting for him was so acute that he experienced hematidrosis- blood mingling with the sweat that drenched him. He did ask his Father to take this cup of suffering from him- if that was possible. But if not, he was willing to endure it...in love for his Father and in love for you, since his suffering would achieve the good of your salvation. So he prayed, **"Your will be done."**

Why would you, like Jesus, pray, **"Your will be done"** in these days when you are stressed about your future or that of those you love? Because God has promised to bring good out of your suffering too. The apostle Paul reminds us of that in Romans 8:28 when he says, **"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."**

What good for you could God bring out of the uncertainty and anxiety caused by this virus? He could be reminding you that you need him, so that you don't blow him off and perish apart from him in hell. That would be good. He could be showing you that things you assume will always be there- your health, your job, your income, your lifestyle- can be gone just like that, so you don't build your lives on such unreliable things but instead on him, your God of reliable love and salvation who will not let you down. That would also be good. He could be helping you rethink your priorities, so you think more about what matters- your relationship with God, being there for your loved ones, helping the needy and hurting. That too would be good too.

Maybe it would be good to pray for God to open your eyes to all the good that he can work through these present hardships and the suffering they may bring you. Because that is his specialty. Through the worst suffering possible- his Son's suffering of hell at the cross for you, he achieved your greatest good- your eternal salvation. So keeping praying, "Deliver us from evil," but also keep praying, "Your will be done," with confidence that he will keep working good for you in these difficult times.