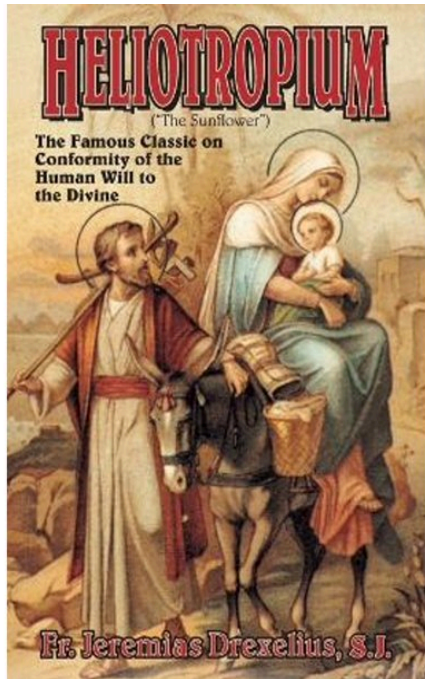


Notes, Quotes and Highlights

"Heliotropium" by Fr. Jeremias Drexelius, S.J.



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Fr. Drexelius was born in Bavaria in the late 16th century. He was raised as a Lutheran but converted to Catholicism in his youth, entering the Jesuit order and becoming a professor of rhetoric and preacher.

Helio = Sun

Tropos = Turn

The heliotrope excellently represents the attitude of the faithful soul toward the Will of God.

Let the Heliotrope be constantly before our eyes! The heliotrope, even on a cloudy day, turns itself around with the sun, through love of it. The will of God is our sun. Let us, like the Heliotrope, turn ourselves round with our sun, the Divine Will, even on cloudy days, so great is our love of that luminary. This sun must ever be gazed upon by us with a fixed eye, in whatever direction its course may bend, and we must ever resolve in our mind: **"As it pleases God, so does it please me also."**

"Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?" - Acts 9:6

The sum of all the doctrine which Christ delivered was that man should absolutely and entirely conform himself to the Divine Will.

The entire measure of our spiritual growth lies in the conformity and agreement of the human will the Divine.

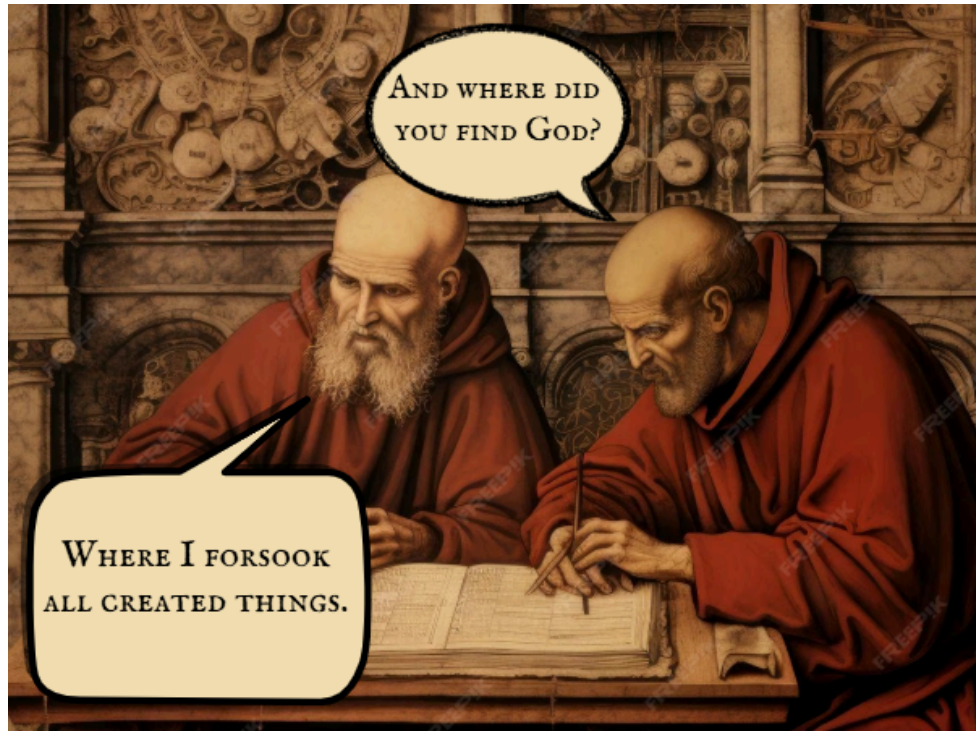
A Christian man's entire perfection consists in **love**, and the **most noble exercise of charity is conformity with the will of God in all things.**

"To have the same likes and dislikes is firm friendship." - St. Jerome

"Not my will but Thine be done." - Luke 22:42

This is true happiness in this life: to cleave as closely as possible to the Divine Will.
To this I devote myself with all my might: that whatever God wills, I will never refuse to will.

This is my only anxiety: to be as closely united to God as possible.



"I shall hold tightly to God in an embrace that nothing can sever. One arm is the lowliest humility, and the other is the purest charity. These are the two arms of unconquerable strength: oblation of self and love of God."

In Thy will I find answer enough: Thou hast permitted it. Thou hast ordered it.
The will of God alone is to me the rule of life and death.

"Never set up your own will against the Divine, but let your own will ever be most closely united to the Divine." But if this union is real, it is in sincere agreement in all things with the Divine Will.

Thy will, O my God, is my will. Thy heart is my heart. I am entirely devoted to Thy will.

"O my most loving JESUS, Thy will be done." - St. Gertrude.

"He who fixes every look on God and on the will of God is truly wise." - St. Gregory

Why do we, miserable mortals that we are, fight against the Divine Will?
Who am I that I should prefer my own will or judgment to the Divine?

Just as it is usual to regulate all clocks by one main chief clock, so it is fitting that we should regulate our own will according to that Supreme and heavenly Time-piece, that is, to the Divine Will.

Christ was perfectly obedient to His Father in all things, and encouraged us to do the same by His own example. **“I came down from heaven not to my own will but the will of Him that sent me.” (Jn. 6:38)** For THIS, He proclaims, I came down from heaven, that I might submit myself most perfectly to this will of My Father.

For him who has disciplined himself to yield himself to the Divine Will, he is beyond the reach of all fear, except one: his only fear is that he is not united closely enough to the Divine Will, so he never stops saying: “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Strive with all your might to fulfill the Divine Will on earth as the angels do in heaven.

“Christ taught us to pray: Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And this is not that God should do what He wills but that **WE** should do what He wills.” - St. Cyprian

Love is not so much *conformity* but an actual **union** of the human will the the Divine.

Our love cannot be better than by daily being made more conformable to Divine Love.

“Love is nothing else than to desire good for someone.” The more good we desire for anyone, the more we love them. God is the supreme good, so it follows that we cannot love God more than wishing Him all His own good. In this way, the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven.

St. Augustine:

“Adam asks, ‘If the tree is **good**, *why* may I not touch it? But if it is **bad**, what place has it in Paradise?’ And to him God replies, ‘It is in Paradise because it is **good**; but I forbid you to touch it because I desire that you should be **obedient** and not a **rebellious** servant.’ ‘And why is this?’ ‘Because you are a servant and I am the Lord.’”

And here you have the reason: **because God is our Lord and has set before us His Will to be obeyed by us and not to be questioned**; and we are servants. It is most fitting that we should walk in the way which the will of God leads us.

The devil’s crafty question in Paradise was: “**WHY** has God commanded?” He framed his question thus on purpose. When God wills something we must not inquire, “***why is this?***” There is a reason. **The most urgent reason: God wills it.** When Abraham was bidden to slay his son, what excuses might he have made? But he was silent and obeyed. This one reason was enough for him: **God so wills.**

Just as it pleases the Lord, we are ready to go or not go, to do or not to do, to labor or not to labor, according as the Father wills.

Let no one think of himself a soldier of Christ, let no one think he is devote to the Divine Will unless **his own will hands entirely on the Divine Will in all things.**

He who truly follows the will of God takes no business in hand without first asking God to be His Helper. We must consult the Lord in all things without exception. God immediately answers those who seek counsel of Him.

Behold! The **most certain evidence** of a human will transfused into the Divine: **it does not refuse to follow even through rough and difficult places.**

I do not “serve” Thee, O God, but I AGREE with Thee.
This is true union between two wills, between two souls.

Either it is good for me that the thing which I seek should be granted, or it is not good, but which of the two it is God knows best. If it is good for me, God will grant it either immediately or at a fitting time; if, however, God refuses me what I have asked, I am perfectly certain my request was not for my good. **In this way alone, and never in any other, does he who has yielded himself absolutely to the Divine Will present His petitions to God.**

**“Desire always and pray that the will of God may be entirely fulfilled in thee.
Behold, such a one enters into the borders of peace and rest.” - Thomas A. Kempis**

Among the things which procure the greatest peace of mind, the first is to aspire in all our desires towards constant obedience to the Divine Will. **He who absolutely conforms himself to the Divine Will lives in a fortress of perfect repose.**

“I accept all things without distinction from the hand of God; I do not desire that what happens should be done according to my own will, but I desire that all things should be done as they are done. And so nothing affects me with pleasure or pain, nothing disturbs me, nor does anything make me happy except one thing: the one and only will of God. **In all my prayers, this is the one thing I ask: that the Divine Will always be most perfectly fulfilled in me, and in all created things.**”

The man who is not inflated by prosperity nor depressed by adversity, but trusts fully in Divine Providence, retains a firmness of soul which is invincible against both conditions and is defended by all the virtues. **This man wills that which God wills.**

Foundation: Nothing is done in the world without the Will of God, sin being the only exception.

- Whatever I suffer is **all** from God, but it is sent upon from God by means of this occasion, this man, or this cause. Here, many come to a standstill, from not having a firm faith in God. They do not feel certain that adverse things and events come from Him just as much as prosperity and success. Do you think you are harassed by any adversity, afflicted with any injury, loss, or grief, unless God especially wills it?

“All this evil is from God. most justly does God chastise me.

It is the Lord, let Him do what is good in His sight.” (1 Kings 3:18)

He who desires to conform himself to the Divine Will is accustomed to never complain.

Epictetus:

“My desire I have yielded to God so as to obey Him. Does He will that I should be afflicted with a fever? I will it myself also.”

It is of the utmost importance to discipline the mind in all things as for it to ascribe every event to Divine Providence. Nothing exists by chance or without the will and foreknowledge of the First Cause. Providence has foreknown all things from eternity: it rules all things as the world rolls on, and directs them towards fixed and certain ends.

The hidden judgments of God are not to be examined by any mortal. We must preserve trust in God and acquiesce to the will of God. God receives laws from no one and renders to no one an account of His actions. **In all circumstances, however perplexing, our own will is to be conformed to the Divine.**

Dost Thou will O Lord, that I should suffer something for a hundred or a thousand years? If Thou willest, I will.

God does not allow one who is dear to Him to remain in the midst of pleasures. He puts him to the trial and makes him endure hardship and thus prepared him for Himself. We grow wiser in adversity. Prosperity takes away our right judgment.

Thou art able, O Lord, to take away sufferings or to leave them, according as Thou willest. Whichever is most agreeable to Thy will, will be most pleasing to me.

God is far nearer by His grace to those who are afflicted in various ways, than to those who enjoy uninterrupted prosperity. Hold your peace and commend yourself absolutely to the Divine Will.

St. Augustine:

“Whatever has befallen you, which is really for your advantage, know that God has caused it, as being the Creator of all good.”

These two points must be mastered:

1. **Whatever happens is done by Divine Providence.**
2. **Ascribe all things with complete confidence to Divine Providence.**

Proverbs 12:21:

“Whatsoever shall befall the just man, it shall not make him sad.”

The ONLY evil which makes a man anxious is **voluntary** evil, such as sin. But 'freaks of fortune' such as loss of wealth or honor, failure of health, death of loved ones, these are not evils, but come from God as an exercise of patience. They should not afflict or torment an upright man and he should give thanks to God for them. **For an upright man, every calamity is an occasion of virtue.**

Our tears pour out, I deny it not, and this is not pleasure. But our tears pour out to God, and this is solid joy. It is more blessed to be smitten by the hand of God than caressed by any other. The hand of the Lord works a thorough cure by touch alone. When it smites, it brings life. **Be assured there is a reason for what He has done, even if you have no evidence.**

Do not say the hand of God is too strong; it is you who are too delicate to endure punishment. ← ouch

TRUE JOY:

Joy which springs from the deep: Let the soul carry itself high over all difficulties, to God. Rest on the Divine Will in such a way that whatever happens does not elevate or crush it. The soul is unfettered, fearless and firm. Such a soul as this shall not be made sad. When it is firmly fixed, there is perpetual cheerfulness, and a joy which is deep.

All other kinds of joy are insecure and superficial.

→ **Virtue alone bestows a perpetual and unshaken joy.**

The soul which is constantly fixed on the Divine Will is tranquil. In its calm retreat, it remains composed and nothing saddens it. This peace is an internal repose.

The wicked are fools. Their lusts rage within them and their souls are filled with foul and bitter thoughts.

The just man *feels* afflictions, but he is not conquered by them. He looks down upon his sorrows from a lofty height. The violent assault of adversity does not affect the mind of a brave man. He raises himself up to calmly and quietly meet difficulties. He regards adverse things as discipline.

"The just are as bold as lions." - Prov. 18:1

Alphonsus, King of Naples:

"I judge that man, to be perfectly happy in this life, commits himself with entire devotion and affection to the Lord His God, and approves and receives whatever befalls him in no other way than as what is done by God."

“The most acceptable sacrifice to God is the offering of one’s own will. He who has offered himself to God has given all.”

“My son, give Me thy Heart.” - Prov. 23:26

When you have given your heart, you will have given everything. But in order to make this offering, it is necessary to be in a state of grace.

“Be a child of God before you offer those things which are pleasing to God.” -Psalm 28:1

“Believe in God firmly, and trust your entire self to Him as much as you can. Refrain from wishing to be your own and under your own power, but profess yourself to be the servant of that most merciful and beneficent Lord.” - St. Augustine.

“We can offer nothing more acceptable to Him than that we should say with Isaiah: ‘Lord, possess us.’” - St. Augustine

Some offer oil or wax for lamps in church. These votive offerings cost much money, but they are not the best or perfect. Others vow abstinence from wine, or give large alms, yet it is not the best. If this were the best of all offerings, then what could a poor man do? God does not ask your oil or wax; He asks for that which He redeemed – ***your soul***.

How? By holy manners, by pure thoughts, by fruitful works.

→ We must not inquire of **what value** things may be, but with what sort of **intention** they are given, and with what **readiness of will**.

The man who daily transfuses himself and his will into the Divine will ***gives everything***.

The **agreement** of the human will with the Divine is, of all things which can be offered, the **most acceptable sacrifice** and holocaust. For in all other things a man offers his goods, but in this **he gives his entire self**.

The whole sum of sanctity:

**Refer the cause of all things, great and small, to God alone,
and most readily submit oneself in everything to the Divine Will.**

And so, let everyone prepare himself, so that whatever hardships he may experience, he may still repeat without ceasing: **“I am a Christian, may the Will of God be done in me. These things seem exceedingly hard and grievous to bear, but the will of God be done in me! I was not expecting such a sad event, but the will of God be done! This man behaved most unjustly toward me, but may the will of God be done in me!”**

How much labor and weariness is there among Christians? They are hot, then cold. They run and struggle. Yet, true devotion to the Divine Will is lacking. Rarely and only coldly do we pray *'Thy will be done.'* And so often we cry aloud and sacrifice but to no purpose, because we do not sacrifice the most noble of all: ***the oblation of our own will.***

The best thing we can give to God is our will.

Resignation

Resignation places a man in the Hand of God in such a way that he no longer desires to be his own, but God's, and to do everything for God's sake. God loves and delights in this virtue.

Let the will of man emulate the sunflower and constantly regard the Divine Will as its sun, even on a cloudy day and in troubled times.

"The sum of a Christian life and the compendium of all virtues is to conform oneself in all things to the Will of God, so as to will the same, and to not will the same."

St. Bernard:

"The sum of humility consists in our will being brought into subjection to the Divine Will."

All things are subject to God because God created all things. But man is endowed with reason, so his subjection is voluntary. We approach closest to God when we bind our will to His. Yield yourself to the Divine Will, and cease to be your own, that you may become God's. The union of the human will with the Divine will is the supreme good in life.

My whole will I deliver to Thee, O Lord.

All creation is made that it might minister to your salvation. Your life was given to you that you may devote it to the will of God. All things are for your advancement in virtue, good or bad. Even death is your door to pass into Paradise.

"Not what I feel, but what Thou wills, I regard. And because You permit these things, I have no desire to open my mouth against them. Whatever pleases you, pleases me. I am fully prepared to obey every indication of Your will." → A man who prays such as this, not even a perfect army of misfortune is able to vanquish. This man flourishes both in summer and winter, in adversity as well as prosperity.

The very first step to a saintly life is to surrender oneself absolutely to the Divine Will.

Those who have attained union of their own will with the Divine are unchangeable - whatever sorrow befalls them, they restrain by the empire of reason. All their delight is the good-pleasure

of God, and so anxiety departs and their will is lulled into a sweet repose by the will of God, since they see that all things proceed from Him.

Whatsoever shall befall the just man, it shall not make him sad. - Prov. 12:21

Those who surrender themselves entirely to the Divine Will know how to stand fearless in the midst of whirlwinds and erect among ruins; and to look down on all human things as beneath their feet.

Day and night, do nothing and care for nothing else than that your will should in all things transfuse itself into the Divine Will. It is the worthiest of tasks for you to strain every nerve that you may only will or not will that which God wills or wills not. This is heaven before heaven.

“O my Lord, this only I desire of Thee in all of my prayers: that you would not regard my own will, but your own.”

I do not choose; I am ready to receive whatever you decide. It belongs to the Lord to decide.

“Whosoever desires to be often visited by me, let him offer to me the key of his will and never ask it back from me.” - Jesus to St. Gertrude.

What helps us conform to God’s will?

“I called and you refused.” - Prov 1:24

1. Detachment. Let the man who is devoted to the Divine Will offer the loss of all things.
(Think of the pearl of great price)
2. Contempt of self (humility)
3. Indifference
4. Be ready to die
5. Endure all things (patience)

“I will drain, O good Jesus, the cup you shall present to me, however bitter it may be.”

“It avails more to thank God once in times of tribulation than six thousand times in prosperity.”
- St. John of the Cross.

Force should be applied to the will that it should be indifferent to good or bad health, and to be prepared for either.

To live and to die must both be embraced and received according to the Divine Will. Does He will that we should be alive? Then live! Does He will us to die? Then meet death with a soul thoroughly prepared for it!

Saint Bernard:

“Let there be an end of your own will and there will be no such thing as hell.”

It is man's own will that drives him to destruction.

→ “The heart of a man who wishes nothing contrary to what God wishes can be called straight.” If something happens contrary to his own will, he submits himself to the will of God and does not resist the Great Will. And in all things they find Him good, whether chastening, or consoling, or exercising, or crowning, or cleansing, or enlightening.

Those **not** conformed to God's will complain all the time about everything, this is a **crooked heart**.

Saint Augustine:

“Who are the **clean of heart**? They who do not censure God; they who direct their own will by the will of God and do not try to bend the will of God into conformity with their own will. **Do you wish to have a straight heart? It is a short commandment: do what God wills and do not wish to do that which God does not will.**”

Those with a crooked heart are perpetually making excuses and are constantly full of complaints. They disapprove of everything that God does. → All this evil springs from a single root: one's own will. Man's will is a poisonous viper, able to destroy the life of our soul.

- The will of an angel nor the will of man can be good unless it is in union with the Divine Will.
- The greater the harmony between man's will and the Divine Will, the more perfect it will be. The less in harmony, the more miserable.
- The will of God is the measure and rule of all wills in heaven and on earth. No will can be called right unless it conforms to this standard.
- There is nothing that enables a soul to endure calamities of any kind other than the union of the human will with the Divine.

We can affect **nothing** so long as we have not entirely subdued our own will. **As long as our will is opposing the Divine Will, then our gifts, vows, prayers and sacrifices are not acceptable to God.** Fasting, giving alms, and prayers are only pleasing to God if it is in harmony with His will. When we bring our own will into these things, it defiles and destroys them.

 **This is the misery of those in hell: for all eternity their perverse will will never be in harmony with the Divine Will. They will be incapable of having a good will.**

The Divine Will stands, and will stand forever, as an immovable rock.

“May God be gracious to you and give you a heart to worship Him, and a willing mind to do His will with all of your heart.” - 2 Mach 2:3

Nothing else in Creation is as free as man. Man alone possesses the freedom to say “no” to God. And this is the source of all sin. If there was no impious obstinate “I WILL” then there would be no sin.

A will which truly yields itself to God esteems all things as nothing in comparison to God and cheerfully embraces what is bitter and what is pleasant, according to what is pleasing to the Supreme Will.

The single study of all Christians should be: what God wills.

Do away with hesitation! Say to your soul: “whenever and however it seems good to God, so let it be done!”

St. Bonaventure:

“It is a sign of greater perfection to endure adversity with patience, than to devote ourselves zealously to good works, since God stands not in need of our works.”

St. Thomas More:

“Nothing can happen which God does not will. Moreover what He wills, however much it may appear to us to be evil, is in reality the best thing that can happen.”

St. Augustine:

“Whatever happens to us here, contrary to our will, you must understand that it does not happen except by the will of God, by His Providence, His ordinance, His good-pleasure and His Laws. It is not done without cause.”

Confidence in God

“Have confidence in the Lord with all Thy heart.” - Prov 3:5

Rouse yourself to fresh Trust and Hope.
None ever trusted in the Lord and was confounded.

“Never was a man forsaken who had recourse to Thee.” - Psalm 9.

“What need have I of anything but Thyself to bring me confidence?” - Psalm 4

The origin of all sin is the obstinacy of man's will. "I willed," says God, "but you willed not."

Our own will is an iron wall shutting us out and separating us from God.

Augustine:

"I sighed being bound, not by the iron of others, but with my own iron will. My 'to will' was holding me like an enemy, and had forged a chain for me and had bound me."

What strengthens our will against God?

1. **Evil customs.** When faults and sins became habits. "That is not trifling which has become a habit," (Plato); "There is nothing so firmly established among human things as the tyranny of an inveterate habit." (Chrysostom).
2. **Lack of patience** (impatience, sorrow, anger, frustration)
3. **Perpetual fickleness** (constantly changing, blowing about with any wind)

One of the most common characteristics of following our own will is that we refuse to be bound to the firm pillar of the Divine Will and instead surrender to vain and transitory things.

God's will is a firm pillar.

Man's own will is instability.

St. Bernard:

"Our will will not be perfect until it is brought into entire subjection to its Creator."

Almost all punishment afflicted on man is from their own will; if they were ordered and conformed to God's Will, it would be free from punishment.

No assault of troubles will overthrow the man who really trusts in God and desires to be obedient to the Divine Will in all things.

Trust in God is a helmet which can be cleft by no stroke, a breastplate which can be pierced by no weapon, an anchor which is liable to no shipwreck.

Hebrews 6:19:

"The Hope we have is an anchor of the soul, sure and firm."

Hebrews 10:35:

"Patience is necessary for you, that doing the will of God, you may receive the promise."

Romans 5:5:

"Hope confounds not."

Ecclu 2:11:

"No one has hoped in the Lord and has been confounded"

Divine Providence

God will provide.

When difficulties arise and we find no way of escape, constantly repeat in your mind this single sentence: "God will provide."

He made the little and the great, and he hath equal care of all (Wis 6:8).

Nothing anywhere in the whole world is done by chance or accident. God from all eternity has ordered all things in measure and number and weight. He fitly and harmoniously governs all things. "And in this way, let all things be referred to the guidance of Divine Providence." - St. Augustine.

→ "Many are the afflictions of the just; but out of them all will the Lord deliver them. The Lord keeps all their bones, not one of them shall be broken." - Psalm 33

→ When a man conforms himself to the will of God, God occupies that man's soul as His throne and reigns there as king.

God is the storekeeper and dispenser of all things; whatever is needful for the support of life must be sought from Him. He gave us life and body, He will no doubt provide what we need to sustain life and body: food and clothing.

But he will not give us while we are **IDLE** because he did not create us to be idle. He gives when we are free from anxious care because ***He wills that we cast all our cares on Him.***

"Who by anxious thought can add stature to his cubit?" None, instead they diminish it by anxiety.

Empty and fruitless are all your labors unless God prospers it.

God will nourish and sustain you without the assistance of your anxiety.

St. Jerome:

"All things are governed by the Providence of God, and oftentimes that which is thought to be punishment is only medicine."

Epictetus:

"Do not ask that whatever happens should happen according to your own will; but if you are really wise, desire that all things should happen as they do happen."

St. Augustine:

"Constantly believe in God and commit yourself entirely to Him with all your power; and so He will not cease to lift you up to Himself and will permit nothing to befall you but that which will be for your profit, even though you know it not."

Prayer:

Thou, O my God, hast done this. Thy Providence, will, and permission have sent this upon me. Since Thou hast done all this, I should be impious if I were to murmur against Thee; I yield myself then to Thy will, and whatever proceeds from it, I endure.

^-- This daily meditation on the Divine Will produces the deepest peace in the soul, entirely subjecting the will of man to the Divine in a delightful way.

Whoever yields himself absolutely to the guidance of the Divine Providence is free from troubles: he dwells “in the **beauty of peace** and in the **tabernacles of confidence**, and in **wealthy rest**.” (Is. 32:18)

There was nothing which our Lord more frequently and more sharply rebuked in His disciples than ***lack of trust***.

Because the sound man trusts in his health, the strong man trusts in his strength, the rich man trusts in his gold, the learned in his learning, the wise in his wisdom, and even the poor man puts his hope in the rich man to support him and a weak man puts his hope in a strong man - therefore God, in his perfect wisdom, frequently removes these things, so that having their props removed, ***man learns to lean on God alone***.

We must rely on the power of God and not of man. Why? Because in men there is no salvation. Trust in man is a fleeting, inconstant, and deceptive shadow.

1. Recognize God’s Providence → 2. Trust in God → 3. Conform to God’s Will.

Knowledge of Providence produces trust in God, and trust makes it easy to rest our will on the Divine will. This was the absorbing study of all the saints: to know Divine Providence; to rise up from this knowledge to trust; and from trust to pass into sweet union with the Divine Will.

“This one thing I ask: that God’s will may be done. My sole pleasure is the will of God.”

-St. Aldegundis