

“The Lord’s Prayer” Matt 6:9-15, Sermon Notes
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Saving Grace Bible Church
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Morning Worship Service

Text:

⁹ "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ 'Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. *For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*' ¹⁴ "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. (Matthew 6:5-15 NAU)

Title: The Lord’s Prayer

Focal Point: vs 12 “Forgive us our debt as we forgive our debtors.”

Homiletical Keyword: pray

Interrogative: What? (What are we to pray for?)

Teaching Aim: to understand how to pray for God’s help

Introduction

The five aspects of prayer in this section are:

1. Prayer is Intimate Communion with a Holy God
2. Prayer is Aligning Our Will to God’s vs 10
 - a. Two parts same purpose
 - i. Bring your Kingdom
 - ii. Do your will
3. Prayer is Casting Our Burdens Upon God vs 11
4. Prayer is for Reconciliation vs 12
5. Prayer is for Protection 13

We now come to our final look at this wonderful prayer

- Prayer, even for the most seasoned saint, can be challenging
- There may be times in your spiritual walk where you are regularly praying and it seems like your prayers are just bouncing off the ceiling and getting no where
- Clearly God hears, and clearly this is not the case, but we often lose heart in prayer

Here Jesus gives us five categories we can pray for. Five areas we can pray in. Five categories we can fit our petitions in. If our petition does not fit into one of these categories we should then wonder if it should be brought to the Lord

- If we doubt our prayer's effectiveness we need simply to look at how well we are praying according to God's design

First we pray exalting God and extoling His virtues vs 9

- Hallowed be your name
- We draw near to God as our father
- He is close, near, personal, loving, gracious, supportive, caring, merciful, wise, insightful, and purposeful in His dealings with us.
- His name is hallowed and set apart
 - We could spend a whole prayer just extoling the virtues and greatness of God
 - Marveling at His work, patience, His providence
- The key in this prayer is seeing God as set apart and extolled for who He is and what He does

Second, we pray for the will of God to be accomplished vs 10

- As Jesus prayed in the Garden, Father take this cup from me, but not my will but your will be done
- We bring our prayers and burdens to God but first we seek His will to be accomplished
- We seek to align ourselves with His purposes
- We bring ourselves out of our own pursuits and remind ourselves we are children of the Most High God seeking to be servants of Christ
- Your Kingdom come Lord – says we want to get to the eternal Kingdom to see your rule and reign upon this earth
- Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven – sees the realization of our acknowledgement that God's ways are to be practiced by all who call upon His name
- The godly seek to walk like God through which they demonstrate this walk in following the will of God
- So we pray for the will of God to be known and practiced among the people of God

Thirdly we pray – give us this day our daily bread vs 11

- We take our needs and burdens to the Lord
- He cares for us and will provide for our needs
- He wants us to bring our burdens before Him
- And as we do we become aware of all the various ways God provides for His people

Does this mean that God will not allow His people to suffer hunger?

- What about famines?

Remember that God will not tempt us beyond what we are able but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also

- God can use famines and other natural means to move us to an area which would be better for us

- Look, God can use difficult circumstances to bring us low in order to prepare us and build us up

Remember Naomi and Elimelech in the book of Ruth. A famine drove them from Bethlehem to Moab. God used all the difficulties in Moab to prepare Naomi and then deliver her through her daughter-in-law Ruth

- So God can use famine to direct us and still fulfill the promise and hope of this verse – give us this day our daily bread

The scriptures say over and over again God is faithful to care for our needs

- Here the request is made
- In 6:33 Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be provided (food and clothing)
- Heb 13:5 - *Make sure that* your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," (Hebrews 13:5 NAU)

But get this, God does not promise to keep and preserve you and allow you to remain comfortably where you are. There may be time He forces you to move. Leave behind family, friends, and a familiar life for something new and different

- He may dry up your opportunities in one area to open them in another
- This is what happened to Naomi in Ruth, when she heard God was blessing back in Bethlehem so she returned

The point is that God will always care for His people and if His people are not too stubborn to yield to Him they will find the gracious and loving provision He is pouring out. But if they resist and try to hold on to that which they cannot keep they will find their life filled with difficulty

- One of the constants in life is that it changes. It changes all the time
- Kids get older
- We get old
- Economy changes
- Politics change
- We need to be trusting in God who graciously supplies and yield in obedience to His working
- He does not always move us out through drying up our resources but this is a common way through which He works
- So understand God's use of judgment and famine does not work contrary to the principle here. God is trustworthy and the Child of God casts his trust regularly upon God

Fourth, we pray forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors. Vs 12

One of the great lessons we have learned to this point is that God loves us and cares for us. As we are praying to God we know that we can take any care and concern to Him and He cares for us.

We now come to the section on Forgiveness.

¹² "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Look at verses 14, 15

¹⁴ "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."

Importance of the discussion

- Forgiveness is crucial to preserving relationships and your own personal sanity
- Unforgiveness eats away at a person and forms bitterness in them
 - They stew over the details of how they were sinned against
 - They imagine ways the transgressor will be paid back for their wrong
 - They imagine ways they will bring full and total retribution to the transgressor and how the transgressor will rue the day he ever committed the transgression

I read a story of a young man who left a party drunk and drove home. While driving home he crashed into a car of a young 18 year old girl killing her. The young man was arrested and charged with vehicle manslaughter

- While in court the parents of the young girl settled with the young man
- Included in the settlement the young man had to write a \$1 check every Friday for 18 years. The total number of years she was alive and with them. The total was \$936 but was to be paid 1 dollar a week made out to the name of the young woman he killed.
- Initially each week the checks came
- After a couple of months the man came to the parents with every check already written asking them to take them all at once – they refused
 - The reason why is that they wanted him to remember her and not forget
- Frustrated by the demand the young man would skip payments and the parents would take him to court
- While in court he recounted the grief and the guilt was too much for him to bear

Now isn't it gracious of God to not deal with us in this way?

- God does not remind us every day or every hour of the sins we committed in the past and want us to recount for Him how much we needed to be saved
- When we are forgiven from our sins they are removed as far as the east is from the west (Psa 103:12)

As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. (Psalm 103:12 NAS)

- The debt is paid
- The guilt is gone
- We are set totally free

This agreement between the parents had to be difficult for both parties

- Clearly the young man was racked with guilt
- But the parents for 18 years would not be allowed to move on
 - They did not see that for 18 years they would be reminded every week that their daughter had been killed and her murderer was sending them \$1 check to make restitution
 - Cheap restitution at that
- The only thing driving them to keep at this is their desire to keep him remembering the girl he killed

Bitterness towards this young man and the consequences of his actions will fill their heart for at least the next 18 years if not longer

This is not forgiveness

- It is vengeance
- It is retribution

The Christian life can be hard, and some of the hardest moments in the Christian life come when we need to forgive like God has forgiven us

- Look let's be honest it is really easy to hold a grudge
- It takes no effort at all
- The flesh is ready to let someone have it and have it good
- They made me suffer so I am going to make sure they get it
- We can imagine scenarios where we come out victors, where we get our payment in full plus interest, and where we totally humiliate the transgressor
- The flesh needs no encouragement to dwell on these hurts – they are easy and natural to fall into

What is not easy to do is to forgive as God has forgiven us. This is unnatural to us. This is foreign to our way of thinking

We are tempted to think:

- If I forgive they are going to get away with this
- If I forgive they are going to harm me again
- If I forgive I will have lost
- If I forgive I will have been mistreated for nothing

Paul Tripp in His book entitled "What did you expect?" states the common reason why we do not offer forgiveness

- 1) **Debt is power** – We can hold something over the other person's head
- 2) **Debt is identity** – This allows us to be self-righteous and exalt ourselves over others by identifying them with the sin
- 3) **Debt is entitlement** – They owe me because of the great sin they have sinned against me

- 4) **Debt is weaponry** – we use their fault to jab and stick at them like a knife we keep digging in. Tripp says we use it like a loaded gun
- 5) **Debt puts us in God's position** – We judge and deal out consequences

We are not the ultimate judge, we are not jury and executioner, we are not entitled to certain rights when someone sins against us, nor are we live keeping track of the ways people have sinned against us

- We are also, most importantly, NOT GOD
- We forgive because God forgave us but in no way does our forgiveness release anyone from their obligations to God
- BTW – all sin is against God
 - This is because all sin ultimately violates His will and design
 - So all sin even against others has to be addressed before God, ultimately
 - Ps 51:4 Against you and you alone have I sinned
- While we forgive as God forgave us we are not forgiving in place of God
 - We should not for one moment think that our forgiveness Judicially sets someone free
 - We do not have that kind of power
- Our forgiveness at best says, as far as it depends upon me, I am not going to hold this debt over you
 - Also, If you are willing to repent I will show you this forgiveness in our restoration
- Now informally I am releasing you and with your repentance I will formally release you and seek to be restored to you

This issue of forgiveness is very critical for us to understand and I want to make clear up front exactly what this verse teaches and what is the primary emphasis of the New Testament and it is this: “We, as God’s children, are to be a people who freely forgive others.”

- We are to overlook their transgressions
- We are to release them of personal debts to ourselves
- We are not to take into accounts wrongs suffered us
- And we should most certainly let go when our brother has sought our forgiveness

To be more clear, the clear teaching of the New Testament is not in how we forgive but in what forgiveness is

- God is more concerned that we are forgiving people than He is concerned about the particular steps taken which lead to forgiveness
 - What our forgiveness is and what it looks like is more important than how we go about granting forgiveness

So what is Jesus concerned about here? Is His chief concern that we do not forget to ask God on a regular basis for forgiveness? Is He teaching here that we should be regularly seeking God for forgiveness?

Are we to be seeking God regularly for forgiveness?

Yes

- Prayer for regular forgiveness should be part of our everyday practice. Lord forgive us as we forgive others
- Our model of forgiveness is measured by our everyday practice not by the historical event of Christ's death
- Indeed the seeking of forgiveness is part of the everyday pursuit of the Christian life
- 1 John 1:9 teaches us that by the present tense verb if we confess
- But here the emphasis is not on our regular asking

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT?

Look at the text, look at Jesus commentary on what he means in verses 14 and 15

"For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵"But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." (Matthew 6:14-15 NAU)

- The whole emphasis is what we are to be as God's people.
- We are to be forgiving
- This is the NT emphasis 5 to 1 in favor of freely forgiving with no respect to how you got to the point of forgiving. The emphasis in the NT is on the lavish and free gifting rather than the process

The key to understand is this, when the Bible speaks of forgiveness it is more concerned about the attitude you demonstrate and not the steps you took to get there

It does not matter the steps of how you got there, what matters is that you are forgiving others of their sin against you just as God has forgiven you of your sin against Him

- There may be times we go
- There may be times where the brother comes to us
- There may be times where we overlook and let love cover
- There may be times when we are forgiving people who think they are totally in the right but we are feeling the sting of loss
- There may be times we forgive people who do not think they need our forgiveness
- There may be times where we forgive those who are begging for our forgiveness
- There may be times we forgive people who do not want our forgiveness

The point of the NT teaching is that we are to be regularly forgiving others

- If we do not then God will not forgive us

Let us suppose for a moment then that we are only forgiven by God when we ask for it. Let us suppose that is what this verse implies

- Since we have forgiven others, Lord you then forgive us

What happens to those sins we do not ask about? Those sins of omission?

- Should we be like the Catholics fearing that we have sinned a mortal sin condemning us to purgatory for an extended time?
- Do we assume that God only forgives us for the sins that we asked to be covered?

No matter what you must practice this, forgive us as we are forgiving others

- Now suppose this for a second
- Suppose for 1 min that you take the view of forgiveness which says “forgiveness only occurs when someone repents of their sin so we cannot forgive until there is repentance.”
- Suppose the person says I did not sin so I am not repenting so you hold on to the sin
- Let me ask you Christian, do you want God to treat you the same way?

You know I want God to forgive me even when I do not know I sinned

- I want God to forgive me even when I sinned in ignorance
- I want God to forgive me even when I am hard in heart

Not only that I want God to pursue me to repentance so that I will not want to seek this sin and cause further divide in our relationship

- Transactional forgiveness or conditional forgiveness really does not model their forgiveness after God because they do not want God to treat them in the way they are treating others

Forgive us our debt as we forgive others

- Regularly
- Freely
- Fully
- Graciously
- Entirely

We all naturally live under the realization that God forgives us of every debt. Past, present, Future sins and sins of commission and omission

- Let me say it a little different, if God only forgives us when we ask then I doubt we spend as much time in prayer as we ought

I know one might say yeah that is why we should be praying

- If that is the way God wanted us to live – always living in prayer seeking forgiveness - then why did He not say so? Why is that not His emphasis?
- Isn't God good enough to tell us the truth about what He wants?
- Because God's concern is that we be like Him. When we are forgiving others, are lavishing grace and mercy on others, we are overlooking transgressions and walking in love we are like God in that moment

This is the NT emphasis. We are to be like God. One of the ways we do that is forgive as God forgives. That forgiveness may be manifested in many contexts but it must be evident in our attitude – the free and full releasing of others of personal debts to yourself

So as you pray, then pray in this way, God deliver me from the destructive intentions of the evil one who is seeking to harm me

- Deliver me from the one who would like to destroy my faith
- Deliver me from the one who would like to discredit your work in my life or in the message I proclaim
- Deliver me from the destructive purposes of the evil one who will glory in destroying my faith

At the same time we can pray for the positive side of the trial as well

- Help us to understand the ways we can grow in faith
- Help us to understand how be what you have called us to be
- Help us to see your work in us and through us in the midst of this difficult circumstance

So we do not pray take us out of this situation. We pray teach us and protect us through these circumstances so that we can come through them for your glory

- God's work is to take us through the difficulties to make us better
- Satan's work is to bring difficulties to destroy God's work in us
- Satan can also be used by God to reveal where unbelief is at work

The next time you are facing a difficulty and you want a way of escape, turn to God and ask for His protection

- It may be that God removes the difficult circumstances all together
- On the other hand you may be forced to go through them. At this point you know that God is using this for your good and that He will be faithful to deliver you

Conclusion

'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. *For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen .*' (Matthew 6:13 NAU)

- Notice the last part of the verse
- Some translations have it in brackets
- Some translations have it in italics
- The reason is because this phrase or part of the verse is not in the earliest manuscripts

Basically what this means is that we have a lot of copies of the scriptures and in the oldest versions this does not exist so it is likely this was added by a well-meaning scribe

- I have no problem with the insertion since it does not change the meaning of the text
- If it is your favorite verse I am happy for you
- If you want my commentary on the verse it is this "Amen"

The verse reflects the early teaching of God's name being hallowed in verse 9 and His will being honored in verse 10. There is nothing new in these words but appear to be a doxological outburst which is always thrilling to see in prayer

We can always rightly say

Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen

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