Sunday Centerpoint

Key Takeaway:

1. Jesus warns against praying for the approval of others. Our motivation for prayer should be communion with God, not the acknowledgement of people.
2. The phrase "Our Father in heaven" reminds us that God is a perfect Father whose nature should not be reduced to the limitations or failures of our earthly fathers.
3. "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" is a call to participate in restoration, not escape. God is not offering an evacuation plan but a restoration plan.
4. "Give us this day our daily bread" is a call to daily trust. God provides for the day, not the decade.
5. The level of forgiveness we offer others reflects the level of forgiveness we are willing to receive.
6. One of Satan's greatest temptations is to convince us to hold a grudge vs offer forgiveness.

Discussion Questions:

1. The sermon opened with the Mother Teresa story about silence in prayer. What does it feel like to simply be in someone's presence without filling the silence? How does that idea challenge or shape the way you think about prayer?
2. The pastor shared being adopted made it difficult, at times, not to project the fears associated with his biological father onto God. In what ways have your experiences with your earthly father, whether good or bad, shaped how you relate to God as Father?
3. N.T. Wright is quoted as saying: "Jesus' resurrection is the beginning of God's new project, not to snatch people away from earth to heaven, but to colonize earth with the life of heaven." What would it look like for your small group to bring heaven to earth in your specific community?
4. The sermon discussed the Israelites receiving manna in the wilderness, noting that God provided daily rather than all at once to cultivate trust. Where in your life do you find it hardest to trust God one day at a time rather than demanding certainty about the future?
5. The sermon posed this question directly: "If God were to give you the same level of forgiveness that you were willing to offer others, would that be a good thing or a bad thing for you?" Take a moment to sit with that question. What does your honest answer reveal?
6. The pastor pointed out that the phrase "lead us not into temptation" sits right between two sections on forgiveness, suggesting that refusing to forgive is itself one of Satan's greatest temptations. Does that framing change the way you think about holding a grudge?

Practical Applications:

1. Find a quiet place, close the door, and pray through the Lord's Prayer line by line. Do not rush. Mean every word. Journal what surfaces as you pray each section.
2. Identify where you are called to bring heaven to earth (school, workplace, neighborhood, or family). Write down one specific and concrete way you can be an agent of restoration this week.
3. Practice daily dependence. Each morning this week, before checking your phone or beginning your routine, take one minute to ask God to provide what you need for that day. At the end of each day, write down one way He came through.
4. Name the person you need to forgive. You do not have to reach out to them this week if reconciliation is not appropriate or safe. But ask God to help you release the grudge. Pray for that person by name each day this week, and notice what begins to shift in your own heart.