

The Last Three Petitions

Introduction

- A. There is only one instance where the disciples specifically asked Jesus to do something (Luke 11:1-4). What followed is what we know as the Lord's Prayer and the expanded version of it is in Matthew 6:9-13.
- B. Praying is the most essential activity of our Christian life and at times the most discouraging.
- C. Hopefully, these studies are helping us to not only want to pray but to feel more effective in our prayers.
- D. Jesus gave us two instructions before He gave the Lord's Prayer.
 1. Do not pray like the hypocrites!
 2. Do not pray like the pagans!
- E. This prayer is inclusive in two ways.
 1. It contains all we can reasonably ask.
 2. It contains all we should reasonably desire.
- F. Jesus said when we pray, we should begin by saying "Our Father." That tells us who He is and how we should approach Him and gives us confidence that we will be heard.

Father, forgive our sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us.

The importance of this statement is emphasized by the fact that it is the only statement that Jesus comments on. ***"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."*** (Matthew 6:14-15)

- A. Daily forgiveness? Notice the word "and" links the request for daily bread with the request for forgiveness. In that way when we ask for "daily bread" we also think of our need for forgiveness.
- B. A prayer for forgiveness.
 1. Nothing but sin can hinder the bounty of God from flowing upon us.
 2. When all hinderances are removed, we can more clearly trust in the God of love for every need.
 3. Matthew and Luke uses two different words which have the same meaning,
 - Matthew uses "opheilema" which means "what is owed."
 - Luke uses "hamartia" which means "falling short."
 - We are asking God to let us off the hook and to overlook our debt. We simply want Him to wipe away our debts.
- C. Because we are saved does not mean that we have no further need for forgiveness.
 1. ***"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sin He is faithful and just to forgive our sin and cleanses us from all unrighteousness."*** (1 John 1:8-9)
 2. This echoes David prayer in Psalm 51, where he says, ***"Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin...create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me...the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart – these, O God, you will not despise."***

- D. I am not teaching sinless perfection. The point is Jesus knew we would sin, and we would need to pray this prayer.
- E. There are two assumptions in this prayer.
 1. We need to be forgiven.
 2. People hurt us.
- F. "As we forgive them that trespass against us."
 1. This clearly tells us on what condition and in what degree, we may look to be forgiven of God.
 2. God forgives us if we forgive. God forgives us as we forgive.
- G. There are three basic attitudes we need to consider.
 1. "I can't"
 2. "I won't"
 3. "I am willing"

And lead us not into temptation

- A. "Peirasmon" is the Greek used for temptation. It is translated two different ways – to test and to tempt – and only the context can make its meaning clear.
 1. In the test, the tester hopes you will pass.
 2. In the tempt, the tempter hopes you will fail.
 3. Basically, we need to know that God will test us, but He will never tempt us.
- B. The source of temptation.
 1. James 1:13 says, "**Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither does He tempt any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust.**"
 2. Yet in Matthew 4:1 we read, "**Then was Jesus led of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.**"
- C. Clearing it up.
 1. Temptation has two parts.
 2. First, there is the circumstance which may or may not lead to sin.
 3. Second, there is desire within us, which can be aroused by the circumstances.
 4. There must be tinder as well as spark to kindle a flame.
 5. God allows testing in our lives to prove the profession of our faith in Jesus Christ and to discipline our Christian character by teaching us to rely on God for power.
 6. 1 Corinthians 10:13 "**There is no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man, and God will with every temptation make a way to escape.**"
- D. The strength of temptation
- E. Where does Jesus fit in?
 1. 2 Peter 2:9 "**The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation.**"
 2. This is why James says, "**Count it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, when you fall into divers' temptation.**" (1:2)

Deliver me from the evil one

- A. This prayer recognizes evil as a deadly fact.

- B. It is important that we know the nature of the warfare that Satan wages against us because that we will make us stronger when we face him.

Conclusion

“The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore.” (Psalm 121:7-8)