

MATTHEW SIX, ELEVEN THROUGH THIRTEEN
(The Lord's Prayer - Part II)

Intro: Last week we considered the first two verses in this prayer; tonight we want to look at the last three.

This prayer, which is found in Luke 11:1-4 as well as here in Matthew, was given to teach us how to pray. It is not to be prayed as such, but to serve as a pattern. We know that our Lord did not need to pray it, and there is no evidence in the NT that the early Christians used it as a prayer. But it does contain the main things in prayer which we need to be concerned with.

One significant difference between the two verses we had last week, and the three verses we have this week, is that the first two are concerned with "the Father"; the last three are concerned with "us." (Note the change from "thy" to "us" and "our.")

The whole prayer expresses dependence upon God. In fact, from the prayer, you would not think that man was to work, or to avoid temptation--so completely does the Lord expect us to trust Him! There are things for us to do, of course, but anything that we do is meaningless unless the Lord is working through us and for us and in us to meet our needs.

The prayer began with WORSHIP and with A CONCERN FOR THE PURPOSES OF GOD IN THE EARTH.

Now it turns to our needs.

One thing that continues to impress us is the simplicity of what we find here. Let us note in particular

I. THE THREE PETITIONS (Matt. 6:11-13a).

A. "Give us this day our daily bread."

Note the "us," and see that it is not just "me." The Lord would always keep us from centering our attention just on our own needs.

The petition means, Give us this day our bread for the day, or, Give us today our bread for tomorrow.

This is not thanking Him for what we have, but trusting Him for what we do not have--down to a loaf of bread! And this is even before the promises contained in Matt. 6:25-34.

We are not to worry about tomorrow, but we are certainly to pray. Cf. Prov. 27:1; Jas. 1:17.

- B. "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

God is not teaching us to bargain with Him.

Nor is He teaching us that we are forgiven as we forgive.

But He is teaching us several other things:

- 1) That a child of God can still sin.
- 2) That sin creates a debt which we cannot pay. This was true before we were saved; it continues to be true after we are saved.
- 3) That sin must be forgiven. Every sin constitutes a fresh reason why we should be cast away from God.
- 4) That only God can forgive sin. The Church cannot. We cannot earn our own forgiveness. Cf. 1 John 1:9. Sin can only be forgiven on the basis of the work of Christ for us at the Cross. See also Heb. 7:25.
- 5) That since we have been saved, and have known the grace of God in forgiveness, it has made us more forgiving of those who have sinned against us and who have no way of making it right. We can never have as much to forgive others for as God has had to forgive us. He has paid the debt Himself through His Son, and then forgiven us all. Cf. Eph. 4:32, "And be ye kind.."

- C. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

This is really two in one, although we have the negative and positive sides of the future with respect to sin. The preceding petition looked at the past; this to the future.

The word temptation has two possible meanings:

- 1) A trial, or a testing.
- 2) A temptation to sin.

We know from the Word that trials and testings will come. In fact, James 1:2 admonishes us to "Count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, knowing . . ." Therefore, the Lord would not teach us to pray against that which is inevitable, and that which is for our good.

But we also have a problem with this request if it refers to sin because of the promise we have in James 1:13-15. If God cannot tempt me, why pray this prayer?

Obviously, the thought in the verse is this: DO NOT LET US BE LED INTO TEMPTATION. And this is proven by the next petition which is a part of this: "BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL."

And to add to the significance of this request, we can translate, "from evil," as, from the Evil One.

Do we know our tendency to sin? Do we realize how the Enemy is seeking constantly to cause us to sin, how he sets things up so that this will be the result?

For Satan, or the Devil, to be called the Evil One means that he is not only evil himself, but also that he is not content unless he is defiling someone else.

We cannot keep ourselves. God must do this. Cf. Jude 24, 25. "Deliver" has the wonderful thought of rescuing us by drawing us to Himself! Cf. Prov. 18:10,

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower;
the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

Solomon described Satan and every wicked man when he wrote,

"For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall."

Do we realize this? Have you prayed about this today? How does the Lord deliver? Cf. Eph. 6:16,

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (one).

And then follows vv. 17, 18. "Praying always with all prayer." And not just for yourself, but "for all saints."

The last part of v. 13 is not in the best MSS. But it is found in some. It seems to have a place here. Let us consider it as

II. THE CONCLUDING DOXOLOGY: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

This is certainly in accord with what is taught else-

where in Scripture. What does it mean?

- A. "The kingdom." The work is His. It originated in His heart. It will be His when it is completed. Remember: "Thy kingdom come."
- B. "The power." Everything about the Lord's work is dependent upon Him. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24).

And the word, "power," indicates that He has the power to complete the work without any help from us! Let us never forget it.

- C. "The glory." Paul wrote to the Colossians, "All things were created by him, and for him." Cf. Col. 1:16b.

In Eph. 1:12 we read, "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."

Cf. Heb. 13:21,

"Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

It sounds like the close of the Lord's model prayer, doesn't it? And so does Eph. 3:21,

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

When John looked into heaven in Rev. 5 he heard a multitude of creatures, human and angelic, saying

"with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

And then he adds,

"And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (vv. 12, 13).

Concl: Can you add your "Amen" to that? You can if you can enter into the petitions which precede it.

Without the Lord we can do nothing. We are hopeless and helpless and defiled without Him. May the Lord teach us that simple faith which even looks to Him for a loaf of bread!