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Sermon Notes

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The Lord's Model Prayer, Part 2 **Matthew 6:7-15**

I. The Presumption of Preaching on Lord's Prayer

II. Review

A. Chapter Deals With Christian Piety... the positive exercise of religion

1. Almsgiving: charity towards others
2. Prayer: relationship to God
3. Fasting: discipline towards self

B. Christ's General Teachings: Prayer must be...

1. Without hypocrisy
2. Without vain trust in words
3. With a vital trust in God's knowledge & power

C. Christ Takes Time to Instruct Us on Prayer

1. NOT heard for many words... or for ornate ones, we might add!
2. NOT giving God new information, or persuading Him to do something He's unwilling to do
3. ARE coming to a loving Father who knows all our needs before we ask Him

D. Addressing God Properly: **Our Father in heaven**

1. Intimacy... "Our Father"
2. Total reverence... "in heaven"
3. **Result: total confidence in efficacy of prayer...** if God weren't our Father, He wouldn't care about our needs; if God weren't in heaven (i.e. powerful) He couldn't do anything about them

E. The Spiritual Petitions

1. Three petitions of God-centered adoration

Hallowed Be YOUR Name... YOUR Kingdom come... YOUR will be done on earth as it is in heaven

2. Yearning for God to be exalted... HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

- a. the NAME of God sums up all He's revealed to us
- b. prayer for God to be worshipped and revered, not disobeyed and blasphemed

3. Yearning for God's Kingdom to come

- a. day by day advance... missions, evangelism, discipleship
- b. FINAL coming of Kingdom... 2nd Coming of Jesus Christ

4. Burning desire for God to be obeyed ON EARTH AS HE IS IN HEAVEN

- a. HOW obeyed in heaven? Gladly... with joy, with confidence, promptly
- b. "All the way, right away, with a happy spirit"

III. The Lord's Prayer: Some General Thoughts on the Second Division

A. NOTE #1: How all-inclusive these petitions are

1. Focus IS on our needs: "Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him..."
2. All our needs are summed up in these petitions

Basic Physical Needs... "Give us today our daily bread"

Forgiveness for Past Sins... "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors"

Protection From Future Sins: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One."

3. World totally focuses on two things, and does it selfishly:

Basic Physical Needs... "Give me today my daily bread..."

Material Wants/Desires... "Give me today my daily cake..."

B. NOTE #2: Order of petitions in Lord's Prayer

1. FIRST come petitions which exalt God... this is our most basic need—to exalt and praise the living God, and to advance His Kingdom, to do His will

2. THEN we would expect our spiritual need next... BUT Christ starts with our bodies

“Give us today our daily bread...”

3. Without bodies living, we can do nothing

4. THEN comes cleansing from sin & guilt, as well as protection from future sin

C. NOTE #3: Our total dependence on God for everything

1. Physical needs... even our very food must come from Him or we won't have it

2. HOW MUCH MORE our spiritual needs must be met by God, and God alone

3. We pride ourselves on our independence... BUT we are truly spiritual beggars, and without God we can do nothing

Illus. Modern agricultural technology could lead to pride... hybrids of wheat that can grow more heads, etc. YET never one can survive without water and light, and it is God who causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

IV. Petition #4: Basic Daily Needs

“Give us Today Our Daily Bread...”

A. Basic necessity... YET symbolizes all our physical needs

1. Food... vegetables, fruits, four food groups, etc.

Illus. “Limeys” in British navy... scurvy because lack of Vitamin C

2. AS WELL AS water to drink, air to breathe, protection from the elements

God has a remarkable track record for caring for your basic physical needs, doesn't He?

B. NOTE amazing juxtaposition of Lofty Petitions with earthly ones

“Your Kingdom come, AND give us today our daily bread...”

HIS KINGDOM, MY BREAD

1. Eternal and immense God, Creator and Sustainer of the Universe... actually cares whether you get food today
2. Is your God big enough to care about tiny little things?

Some say "God is too busy spinning the planets up there to notice someone like me." As though God were some inefficiently-run government agency that puts your request on some desk somewhere to be dealt with at some point, allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery!! **THIS IS ACTUALLY A LIMIT ON THE POWER OF GOD!!**

Matthew 10:29-31 "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them falls to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not be afraid, you are worth more than many sparrows."

Illus. Dead buzzard on Old Oxford Highway

3. God cares about the smallest details of your life... He welcomes prayers about all things
4. YET He begins the Lord's Prayer by stretching us out of our immediate focus

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, etc."

- a. consistently concerned and focused about temporal needs
- b. Jesus wants proper balance: God's name and purposes FIRST and YET, please come to God for all your needs

John 6:26-27 "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate your loaves and had your fill. Do not work for the food that spoils but for the food that endures to eternal life which the Son of Man will give you."

C. The Corporate Concern

Give US this day OUR daily bread..."

1. It's not just MY bread that I should care about
2. Does my brother or sister in Christ have his needs met?
3. Do my non-Christian neighbors have their needs met?

Galatians 6:10 “Therefore as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially those who belong to the family of believers.”

4. We’ll discuss the problem of world hunger when we get to the end of this chapter, Matthew 6... at least understand now, this prayer is for OUR daily bread

D. “Daily bread...” NOT “Daily Cake...”

1. Bread is a basic necessity... cake is a luxury; LIFE not intended to be a comfort ride

Genesis 3:17 “By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken...”

YET God is faithful to provide for all your needs!!!

2. God knows what you NEED before you ask Him
3. Americans have trouble telling the difference between needs and wants
4. Basic lack of contentment... Going from one WANT to the next

1 Timothy 6:8 “If we have food and clothing we will be content with that.”

Philippians 4:12 “I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well-fed or hungry, living in plenty or in want.”

V. Petition #5: Forgiveness for Present Sins

“Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors”

A. Tremendous need: forgiveness from God

1. Guilt a very real & very powerful force in our lives

Why do people feel guilty? Because they ARE guilty!!!

2. Like anxiety, guilt is a cancer that destroys life from within
3. SO ALSO is bitterness toward others & unforgiveness toward them
4. Christ alone can cleanse us from guilt and command us out of unforgiveness

B. Two main difficulties here

1. Why should I confess my sins if I'm already forgiven?... Two groups

- a. those who focus on **justification by faith alone**... "If all my sins, past present and future have been forgiven, why do I need to ask God for forgiveness now?"
- b. those who believe in sinless perfection here on earth

Illus. John Wesley, founder of Methodism... "Sinless Perfection"

2. Is God's forgiveness of me dependent on my forgiveness of others?

6:14-15 "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."

- a. seems like God's forgiveness of us is **CONDITIONAL**
- b. **SALVATION BY WORKS???**

C. Answering the difficulties

1. Christ is addressing disciples... who can call God "Our Father in heaven..."; evidently He felt it necessary for disciples to ask for forgiveness

2. Confession verse in 1 John

1 John 1:8-10 "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar, and his word has no place in our lives."

- a. verses obviously written to Christians... those who have the truth in them, and who have found a place for the Word in their lives
- b. NOTE "If we confess our sins..." Confess = agree with God about our sin... we sin, God's Holy Spirit convicts us of the sin, and we speak it back to God... "Father, I just sinned by responding in a prideful, unloving way to him... please forgive me, Lord."
- c. If we confess, he is **FAITHFUL AND JUST** to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness..."

Faithful = God keeps His promises; JUST = God does what is right and proper and lawful... how is it "just" for God to forgive a Christian his sins? Because of the covenant the Father made with the Son... if you die for them, I will forgive them."

3. Peter at the footwashing

John 13:8-10 "Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.' 'Then, Lord,' Simon Peter answered, 'not just my feet, but my hands and my head as well!' Jesus answered, 'A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean...'"

Christians a clean through faith in the blood of Christ, but we still need our feet washed as we walk along through life... we must confess our sins daily, as often as the Holy Spirit convicts us

4. On the relationship between our forgiveness of other and God's of us:

All truly forgiven people are truly forgiven people

- a. we do not pray "Forgive us our debts BECAUSE we have forgiven our debtors..."
- b. BUT everyone who has been forgiven by God WILL automatically be compelled to forgive other people

Matthew 18... 10,000 talents... God FORCES us to forgive others and to settle matters with them; so anyone who lives a life of unforgiveness is not a Christian

- c. when we realize what we were before the judgment seat of God, and how much He has forgiven us, we CAN'T hold onto bitterness toward another
- d. BEATITUDES... Blessed are the merciful, for they and they only will be shown mercy

D. NOTE: all true forgiveness in this world flows from the Cross of Jesus Christ

- 1. a sinner comes to God broken and in need of salvation
- 2. they find it in Jesus alone, in His blood alone, by faith alone
- 3. the forgiveness is comprehensive and total... for all sins, past present and future
- 4. because of it, a heart of grace and forgiveness is given to the sinner to be merciful to other sinners too

5. THIS IS SO IMPORTANT THAT CHRIST REPEATS IT IN VS. 14-15
6. All true forgiveness in this world flows from the Cross to the needy
7. anyone who will not forgive, even when understanding this, is simply not a Christian

VI. Petition #6: Protection from Future Sins

“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One”

A. Our dangerous world, our dangerous foe

Illus. Normal Schwarzkopf in Viet Nam... surrounded by land mines

Not deliverance from evil generally, but from THE EVIL ONE... that is, the devil

1. Intelligent powerful adversary who has your destruction in his heart

1 Peter 5:8 “Be self-controlled and alert; YOUR enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith...”

Ephesians 6:12 “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

2. Jesus already stood against Him in the desert, using the Word of God as His sword

3. Prayer to God for protection against our spiritual foe who studies us and hates us

B. Not presumption to ask this of God

1. God knows what trials and tests to bring our way

2. God does TEST His children, but he never tempts them

James 1:13 “When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he himself tempt anyone.”

3. Simply a request to be kept in holy fellowship with God

C. The filter of God... 1 Cor. 10:13

Illus. House filter... filters out particles from our well water

1 Corinthians 10:13 “***No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.***”

VII. A Final Doxology??: “For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

- A. Not found in all the oldest manuscripts
- B. KJV used newer Greek mss. And thus included it
- C. Can’t know for certain whether it was really there originally or not.
- D. BUT a good way to end the Lord’s prayer... a doxology which restores focus to God’s glory and Kingdom

“For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

IX. Application

- A. Plan your prayer life

Illus. Would you go on vacation without a plan??

- B. Pause before God’s throne
- C. Pray the Lord’s prayer... sometimes in your own words
- D. Order prayers by GOD’S priorities:
His glory, your needs