

Sent: Saturday, July 26, 2008 8:19 AM
Subject: VBS Rejoicing in Our Faithful God

TO GOD BE THE GLORY GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE IN VBS 2008!!!

Mark is getting ready to drive Gena and the kids to Dallas to catch their flight back to El Paso, but we wanted to take a moment to let you all know how God worked and blessed this week at VBS. Thank you for your work, prayers and support.

We had 84 kids attend Vacation Bible School. This is a big record breaker for Faith.

We had 22 Youth helpers, another big record breaker.

WONDERFUL NEWS: 27 kids accepted Christ as their Savior!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

This is the best record breaker of all!

DONNA'S REFLECTIONS:

One of these that accepted Christ was a youth helper. She wrote a song after she accepted Christ. She was singing it for me as I was cleaning in the Sanctuary the afternoon after she had asked Christ to be her Savior. Following are the words from her song:

I NEVER KNEW

I never knew You were the One to help me thru life.

But now I see you're here for me.

Without You I would never be alive

Out of the mouth of babes,
Donna

MARK'S REFLECTIONS:

A verse I mentioned in my sermon last Sunday was **Mark 10:14** "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." How blessed we were to have 27 children and young people make a decision to ask Jesus into their heart to be their Savior! Each of you were apart of inviting the "little children" to come to Jesus. Through your prayers and support of Faith Community Church, and our ministry to the next generation the invitation was given - and they came and responded.

Another blessing was to see the so many young people singing praises to God during our opening and closing assemblies. "Little worshippers" made a big impression on me this year.

It was also a joy for me to see all of the leaders, workers and helpers from Faith working together as a united team to make the week possible. Faith was functioning as the Body of Christ, each one doing their part. In a good sense I'm so proud of Faith, and I'm sure our Heavenly Faith is too.

Once again, thanks for your prayers and support. It is such a joy to serve our Lord together with you.
Mark

GENA'S REFLECTIONS:

It was great to be back home again with all of you. We had a blast spending time with everyone and helping out with VBS. You guys all have a great year and we will see you again next summer, Lord willing.

gena

STUDY NUMBER FIVE - Matthew 6:1-18

TEXT v. 1 Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you are not having a reward with your Father who is in heaven.

v. 2 Therefore when you are practicing your charitable giving, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the play-actors are doing in the synagogues and in the streets, in order that they may be honored by men. Assuredly, I am saying to you, they are having their reward and the receipt for the same in full.

v. 3 But when you are practicing your charitable giving, do not allow your left hand to know what your right hand is doing,

v. 4 In order that your charitable giving may be in secret; and your Father who is seeing in secret will reward you.

v. 5 And whenever you are praying, you are not to be as the play-actors; because they are loving to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners in order that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I am saying to you, they are having their reward and the receipt for the same in full.

v. 6 But, as for you, whenever you are praying, enter into your secret room, and having closed your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who is seeing in secret will reward you.

v. 7 And when you are praying, do not repeat the same thing over and over as the Gentiles do, for they are thinking that they will be heard for their many words.

v. 8 Therefore do not be like them, for your Father is knowing what you are having need of before you ask Him.

v. 9 Therefore, as for you, in this manner be praying: Our Father who is in heaven, let your name be held in reverence,

v. 10 Let your kingdom come, let your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

v. 11 Give us today our bread for the coming day.

v. 12 And forgive us our moral debts (sins) as we also have forgiven those morally obligated to us.

v. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

v. 14 For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

v. 15 But if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

v. 16 And whenever you are fasting, stop being like the play-actors of a sad and gloomy countenance, for they are masking their faces in order that they may appear to men as those who are fasting. Assuredly I am saying to you, they are having their reward and the receipt for the same in full.

v. 17 But you, when you are fasting, anoint your head, and wash your face.

v. 18 In order that you may not appear to men to be fasting but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who is seeing in secret will repay you.

*X's right.
Self-**

INTRODUCTION:

Bob Richards in his book The Heart of the Champion cites the following story about self-righteousness. "This reminds me of the story of two men talking in a mental institution. One fellow nudged the other and asked, 'What are you in here for?' The other one said, 'Why, I took a gun and shot a hole in my head.' The first one said, 'You did? Why, that's why I'm in here, too. I took a gun and shot two holes in my head.' The other replied, 'That's what I don't like about you, that holier than thou attitude.'" There is a sense in which it's true. We have been so concerned with being holier than somebody else that we're just shooting holes in our heads.

This certainly is true in the passage that comes under consideration.

*ISLAM **

The Pharisees had three characteristic habits:

- 1. Alms
- 2. Prayer
- 3. Fasting



The law didn't demand any of the three. The Lord takes the action and shows the hypocrisy of the way they carried them out. In Chapter 6:1-18, we have three illustrations. In Chapter 6:19-34, we have three prohibitions:

1. Stop treasuring up
2. Stop judging
3. Don't give that which is holy to the dogs

Joseph Parker in Preaching Through the Bible, has the following prayer on Chapter 6:1-18, "Almighty God, we would hide ourselves under the wings of thy mercy. We dare not look at thy law, for we have broken it, nor at thy righteousness for it is now unto us as a two-edged sword; but thou hast permitted us to look at thy mercy. Thine eternal pity, those tears of thine that bid us silent but large welcome to all the love of thine heart. God be merciful unto us sinners. We have done our alms, and men have seen the doing of them; we have prayed, and behold our prayers have fallen back unheard, unanswered. We have fasted that we might draw attention to the dejection of our face. God be merciful unto us sinners. We have done the things we ought not to have done, we have left undone the things that we ought to have done; we pierce ourselves with many accusations,

we cannot spare the infliction of bitter self-reproach, we mourn, we repent, we bow down ourselves before thee in utterest humiliation, no voice have we of self defence. God be merciful unto us sinners. Our standard has been short, our balances have been unequal, our purposes have been double, our words have had one meaning to others and another meaning to ourselves; we have lied without speaking, by smiling, by action, by hint. God be merciful unto us sinners, make us clean of heart, clean in the spirit, right in our motive, holy within; then shall our life be a sacred sacrifice, thou wilt receive it daily in thy heavenly places as a well meaning offering of the soul.

"We bless thee for all thy patient care, thy long-suffering, thy tender mercy. Thou hast taken care of us, as if we were of consequence to thee; thou hast numbered the hairs of our heads, as if thou hadst not to count the innumerable planets, and set the stars in their places. Thou hast hidden us in the hollow of thine hand, and drawn us very near to thine heart, and many a message of tenderest love hast thou addressed to us in our low estate. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gifts. Thou hast given as thine only-begotten Son, Son of Mary, Son of Man, Son of God, Lamb of God, Saviour of the world, whose name gathers unto itself all music, and comes down upon our sin and woe like the very gospel of thine heart. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

"Where great tears of woe are starting from the eyes because of bereavement, bitter disappointment, brokenness of heart because of family trouble, the Lord's own hand touch those tears and dry them, for our hands cannot touch a grief so great and heavy. Wherein our purposes are right, do thou prosper them; wherein they are wrong or mistaken, do thou confound them. We put our life again and again, day by day, with every waking and every sleep, into thine hand: thou didst give it, and it shall all be thine."

Once again, Jesus Christ brings us to the point, "Blessed are the pure in heart." Jesus Christ came to set purity of heart in opposition to the formalism and corruption of his day. He found that evil hands had written lies and blasphemies upon every beam in the temple. He found that the windows that ought to have looked heavenward had been cobwebbed with traditions and curtained and screened, so as to conceal the iniquity which was wrought behind them. So, with glowing ardor, burning like an oven, he cleansed the desecrated house and relighted

its shaded chambers with the very glory of heaven, called back the exiled and dishonored angels of purity, mercy, meekness, peace and he banished the ghouls of selfishness, oppression, cruelty and strife. He lifted, peasant son though he was, an arm of thunder and shattered the vile creations that were set up to mock the holiness of God.

Pink points out, "In the teachings of the Koran, prayer, fasting and alms are the chief duties required from the Mohammedan. Prayer, it is said will carry a man halfway to paradise. Fasting will bring him to the gates and alms will give him entrance." The general principle which is expressed in this warning in vs.1, is enlarged upon in vs. 2-18, being applied to three specific cases:

in alms - manward
in prayer - Godward
in fasting - selfward

John F. Walvoord in his commentary Matthew, Thy Kingdom Come says, "In contrast to Chapter 5, dealing mostly with moral issues, Chapter 6 delineates the life of faith. Important in this life of faith are four main elements:

1. Performing alms in secret and trusting God for open reward. vs. 1-4
2. Praying in secret and trusting God for open reward. vs. 5-18
3. Laying up treasures in heaven, rather than on earth. vs. 19-24
4. Seeking the kingdom of God today and trusting God for his supply tomorrow. vs. 25-34

John Gordon Jameson, in The Gospel of the Kingdom and The Sermon on the Mount says, "The self and God are opposite poles. God is love, selfishness is love's negation. God is light, self is darkness, for nothing blinds like selfishness and self interest. God is beauty and harmony, the self is sordidness, meanness, discordance. God is truth, the self is an illusion for all life flows from God, is dependent on him and in him is one."

OPIC	REF #	TEXT
Giving	678-11	<p>Charitable giving also alleviates emotional distress and fear of judgment. Muhammad confirmed, "Those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness, and establish regular prayers and give Zakat, will have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve" (surah 2:277).</p> <p>The key word in the above verse is "and." Notice all of the stipulations required of the believer in Allah. Notice how <i>zakat</i> is central to the theme of salvation, mingled in the midst of other good actions. One recites the creed, offers prayers, and does good, but to neglect charitable giving nullifies salvation. It is integral to earning the mercy of Allah. The Hadith illustrates the consequences of withholding one's required giving!...</p> <p>p. 126</p>
Islam	678-12	<p>On that basis, and in compliance with Allah's order, we issue the following fatwa to all Muslims</p> <p><i>The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies—civilians and military—is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim. This is in accordance with the words of Almighty Allah, "and fight the pagans all together as they fight you all together," and "fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah."</i></p> <p><i>16:12</i></p> <p>p. 183</p>

The main subject of Chapter 6 is purity of heart. In it Jesus selects as typical forms of self interest, which divert our eyes and divide our hearts, the love of applause, the love of worldly possessions, and anxiety about material things. The chapter also includes a discourse on the proper approach to God in prayer, with an object lesson in pure hearted prayer, which is known to fame as The Lord's Prayer.

Youngling points out, "The governing principle for every act or thought of a disciple is that everything should be done to the glory and honor of his heavenly father."

B. A. Carson points out, "The thrust of Matthew 6:1-18 is humbling. Matthew 5's demand for righteousness is now complemented by the insistence that such righteousness must never become confused with pious ostentation, with play acting piety. The question is raised in its most practical form. 'Who am I trying to please by my religious practices?' Honest reflection on that question can produce most disquieting results. If it does, then a large part of the solution is to start practicing piety in the secret intimacy of the Lord's presence.

*Andrewes: "Acknowledge in Me That is Thine, And Take Away From Me That is Me."

John R. W. Stott in his book Christian Counterculture says, "So we must choose God for our audience. As Jesus watched the people putting their gifts into the temple treasury, so God watches us as we give, as we pray and fast secretly. He is there in the secret place. God hates hypocrisy, but loves reality. That is why it is only when we are aware of his presence that our giving, praying and fasting will be real."

Looking over these verses it is evident that throughout, Jesus has been contrasting two alternative kinds of piety, Pharisaic and Christian. Pharisaic piety is ostentatious, motivated by vanity and rewarded by men. Christian piety is secret, motivated by humility and rewarded by God. In order to grasp the alternative even more clearly, it may be helpful to look at the cause and effect of both forms. First, the effect, hypocritical religion is perverse because it is destruction. We have seen that praying, giving and fasting are all authentic activities in their own right. To pray is to seek God, to give is to serve others, to fast is to discipline one's self, but the effect of hypocrisy is to destroy the integrity of these practices by turning each of them into an occasion for self display.

SELF-
Right.
Christ's
Right.

v.1 Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you are not having a reward with your Father who is in heaven.

The key word is the word "righteousness". This has also occurred back in Chapter 5, verse 6, "Blessed are those who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness," and in verse 10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted on account of righteousness" and in verse 20 "I am saying unto you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." Now, here there is a warning, a warning of practicing our righteousness before men, to be noticed by them. Otherwise, you are not having a reward with your Father who is in heaven.

* Joseph Parker points out, "Right things may be done in a wrong way and so may lose their value. It is right to give, right to pray and right to fast, but they may all be done in a wrong way."

Lange's Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew says, "Having exposed the corruptions of doctrine, our Lord exhibits those of religious life under three examples which present the three great forms in which the self-righteousness and hypocrisy of the Pharisees and scribes manifested itself. They were alms giving, prayer and fasting. These were the three principle manifestations of practical piety among the Jews, and were abused by the Pharisees to exhibit their superior piety. The Pharisees imagined that they had reached the highest imminence in these three phases of spiritual life, which mark a right relationship toward our neighbor, in alms giving; toward God in prayer; and toward ourselves in fasting; while their spirit of bondage and hypocrisy entirely destroyed the spiritual character of these works and morally placed them on a level with the saddest and most sinful perversions of the heathen.

B. A. Carson points out, "We human beings are a strange lot. We hear high moral injunctions and glimpse just a little of the genuine beauty of perfect holiness and then prostitute the vision by dreaming about the way others would hold us in high esteem if we were like that. The demand for genuine perfection loses itself in the lesser goal of external piety. The goal of pleasing the Father is traded for its pygmy cousin, the goal of pleasing men. It almost seems as if the greater the demand for holiness, the greater the opportunity for hypocrisy."

John R. W. Stott, in his book, Christian Counterculture, says, "The clue lies in the fact that Jesus is speaking against different sins. It is our human cowardice which made him say, 'Let your light shine before men,' and our human vanity which made him tell us to beware of practicing our piety before men." A. B. Bruce sums it up well when he writes that we are to "show, when tempted to hide; and hide, when tempted to show". Our good works must be public so that our lights shine. Our religious devotions must be secret lest we boast about them.

John McArthur in his book Jesus Patterned Prayer, points out, "In Matthew 5, Jesus said their theology was not adequate. Later in Chapter 6, he would say their view of the material world was not adequate. Here, he zeroes in on their religious activities. He told them that even their religious life fell short and he focused on three areas; their giving, their praying and their fasting. Of the three, the greatest emphasis is on praying, because prayer is more important. To give properly, you must give only when your heart is filled with gratitude from the vitality of personal communion with God, and fasting is meaningless apart from prayer."

Joe Aldrich, in his book Secrets to Inner Beauty, says, "The leaven of the Pharisees is religious externalism or hypocrisy. It's ritual without reality, form without function, motions without meaning. When hypocrisy is the lifestyle of the church, significant relationships become nearly impossible to cultivate. This is true because the lifestyle of the hypocrite is the lifestyle of the fugitive. It encourages people to parade perfection rather than progress, in spite of the specific admonitions to let our progress be made known to all men. The Greek actor was called a hypocrite because he spoke from under a mask. We cannot afford that luxury, because the mask mentality encourages us to remain in protracted infancy. God calls us to speak the truth in love, so that we may grow up in all respects into Christ. Love without truth is mushy sentimentality. Truth without love is brutality. Hypocrisy expresses itself in many ways. Here are a few symptoms:

1. A judgmental, critical attitude toward others
2. An attempt to be something which I know I am not
3. A lifestyle in which I cover and hide rather than share my life with others
4. A false piety based on self determined standards which make me look good
5. Judging others on external appearance
6. Self righteous, self justifying attitude in which I refuse to accept responsibility for my errors or neglects"

Creath Davis in his book Beyond This God Cannot Give says, "I misunderstood conversion. I thought of conversion as a cure-all, which it seemed to be for a while. Most of us live, maybe six months or a year on the enthusiasm generated by our initial encounter with God. The initial stage of our blast off with God seems to carry us along with almost no effort on our part. This is a part of God's care in protecting us, like a tender plant. The day comes for most of us, however, when we wake up with many of the same old problems and a whole batch of new ones. A feeling of defeat comes, because we have misunderstood, but we feel we had better fake it anyway, so fake it we do. The moment we start falsifying our faith is the moment we lose our sense of excitement about God's person. The Biblical word for this fraudulence is hypocrisy. The tragic aspect of hypocrisy is that it short-circuits our relationship with God and with each other and keeps us from being real."



Someone has said the devil rejoices more over one hypocrite than over ninety-nine real sinners.

There are three areas that the Lord Jesus is going to deal with now that are areas of spiritual discipline:

1. Giving
2. Praying
3. Fasting

vs.2

Therefore when you are practicing your charitable giving, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the play-actors are doing in the synagogues and in the streets, in order that they may be honored by men. Assuredly, I am saying to you, they are having their reward and the receipt for the same in full.



Charles Hadden Spurgeon says, "To stand with a penny in one hand and a trumpet in the other is the posture of hypocrisy."

J. Vernon McGee points out, "May I say to you that giving is between you and God and the very minute you get a third party involved, you don't get any credit in heaven."

Philippians 4:10-19 "I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me, indeed you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. (I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.) Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only. For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. I have received full payment and even more. I am amply supplied now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering and acceptable sacrifice pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

Galatians 6:6-10 "Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. Do not be deceived, God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature from that nature will reap destruction. The one who sows to please the spirit, from the spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest, if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

II Corinthians 8:1-5 "Now brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will."

*Tithe
is
in
the
Storehouse*

II Corinthians 8:9,11 "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich...Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means."

II Corinthians 9:7,8 "Every man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."

"I Have A Stewardship" by Ralph S. Cushman

"Ah, when I look up at that cross,
Where God's great steward suffered loss
Yea, loss of life and blood for me,
A trifling thing it seems to be,
To pay the tithe, dear Lord, to Thee.
Of time or talent, wealth or store,
Full well I know I owe Thee more.
A million times I owe Thee more.
But that is just the reason why,
I lift my heart to God on high,
And pledge Thee by this portion small
My life, my love, my all in all.
This holy token at Thy cross
I know is gold, must seem but dross.
But in my heart, Lord, Thou dost see,
How it has pledged my all to Thee,
That I, a steward true may be.

A. T. Pierson, in his book Godly Self Control says, "If there be any pleasure that is greater than unselfish giving , it has never yet been discovered. No form of indulgence which ends upon self, can compare with the gratification which is found in ministering to the wants and woes of others." John Howard never missed a chance to make others happier, and his yearning for this kind of pleasure promoted what Burke called "his circumnavigation of charity". The Arab proverb reads, "The water you pour on the roots of the coconut tree comes back to you sweetened in milk of the nut, which drops from the branches."

This verb is common in the papyri for receiving a receipt. They have their receipt in full, all the reward that they will get, this public notoriety. They can sign the receipt of their reward.

V. 3 But when you are practicing your charitable giving do not allow your left hand to know what your right hand is doing,

Harry Ironside in his commentary on Matthew says, "Thy Father which sees in secret"--for God's eye is upon all of His children and He will value aright all that is done for His glory. To do good secretly, knowing that one has the Lord's approval and that He is imparting happiness to others in their distress, should be reward enough to the true child of God. But He who takes note of all done in His name will not fail to recognize it when we see Him as He is."

* II Chronicles 16:9 "For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him."

* Matt. 10:42 "And if anyone gives a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

* Mark 9:41 "I tell you the truth: Anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name, because you belong to Christ, will certainly not lose his reward."

F. B. Meyer in The Directory of the Devout Life says, "We may in our heart of hearts be laying aside this and the other weight but we know there is no merit in it. We only desire to lessen the influence of the flesh, that we may promote the vigilance and clear vision of the spirit. It is entirely a matter between God and us, of which we breathe no word to others. And when we meet our fellow men, there is a gladness on our face and a ringing joy note in our voice that greatly commend the Gospel of our Lord. Is there enough of this anointed head and the face from which all marks of tears have been removed in our modern Christian life? How often we make no effort to be happy and make the best of things. We've had a bad night and have no scruple about imposing

our miseries on a whole breakfast table. We have a great anxiety gnawing at our heart and we affect the appearance of bearing a heavy burden. I suppose there is in all of us the longing to be the object of our friends' solicitude, and there are times when we may freely unburden ourselves to get advice and sympathy. But we have no right to add unduly to the sorrows and anxieties of others or to the travail of the world. The life which is hid with Christ in God is a very radiant one because it hands over all its burdens and anxieties to the Father in secret and leaves them with Him. Thus, it is at leisure from itself to enter into the anxiety of others. What the future rewards may be of that inner life I do not care to speculate. And what the present rewards are words fail to tell. The reward of the hypocrite is the gaping wonder of spectators who smile, criticize and forget. The reward of the soul that lives with God in secret consists not in thrones or crowns of gold but in a growing sense of nearness, of affinity and of mutual understanding which issue also in a growing likeness, though the saint knows not that his face shines."

John R. W. Stott says, "Christian giving is to be marked by self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness, not by self-congratulation."

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones says, "In other words, having done it in secret, you do not take your little book and put down, 'Well, I have done that.' Of course, I haven't told anybody else that I have done it but you put an extra mark in a special column where exceptional merit is recorded. In effect, our Lord said, Don't keep these books at all. Don't keep spiritual ledgers. Don't keep profit and loss accounts in your life. Don't write a diary in this sense. Just forget all about it. Do things as you are moved by God and led by the Holy Spirit, and then forget all about them. How is this to be done? There is only one answer; and that is, that we should have such a love for God that we have no time to think about ourselves. We should never get rid of self by concentrating on self. The only hope is to be so consumed by love that we have no time to think about ourselves. In other words, if we want to implement this teaching, we must look at Christ dying on Calvary's hill and think of His life and all He endured and suffered. And as we look at Him, realize what He has done for us."

v. 4

"in order that your charitable giving may be in secret; and your Father who is seeing in secret will reward you."

Here is a statement of the purpose for the previous command about 'not allowing your left hand to know what your right hand is doing.' The purpose is 'your charitable giving may be in secret; and your Father who is seeing in secret will reward you.'

We now turn to the next section, in verses 5-15, dealing with the subject of PRAYER.

v. 5

And whenever you are praying, you are not to be as the play-actors; because they are loving to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners in order that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I am saying to you, they are having their reward and the receipt for the same in full.

In the book The Kneeling Christian we read, "We must rest, fully assured of this, a man's influence in the world can be gauged not by his eloquence or his zeal or his orthodoxy or his energy, but by his prayers. Yes, and we will go farther and maintain that no man can live aright who does not pray aright."

E. M. Bounds in his book Purpose in Prayer, says "Thus in every circumstance of life, prayer is the most natural outpouring of the soul, the unhindered turning to God for communion and direction. Whether in sorrow or in joy, in defeat or in victory, in health or in weakness, in calamity or in success, the heart leaps to meet God, just as a child runs to his mother's arms, ever sure that with her is the sympathy that meets every need."

Do you realize that there is nothing the devil dreads so much as prayer? His great concern is to keep us from praying. He loves to see us up to our eyes in work, provided we do not pray. He does not fear because we are eager and earnest Bible students, provided we are little in prayer. Someone has wisely said, "Satan laughs at our toiling, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray." All this is so familiar to us, but do we really pray? If not, then failure must dog our footsteps, whatever signs of apparent success there may be.

Richard J. Foster in his book Celebration of Discipline says, "I am the ground of thy beseeching. First it is my will, thou shalt have it. After I make thee to will it, and after I make thee to beseech it; and thou beseechest it, how should it then be that thou shouldst not have thy beseeching?" ---Juliana of Norwich

Prayer catapults us onto the frontier of the spiritual life. It is original research in unexplored territory. Meditation introduces us to the inner life. Fasting is an accompanying means. But it is the discipline of prayer itself that brings us into the deepest and highest work of the human spirit. Real prayer is life-creating and life-changing. 'Prayer, secret, fervent, believing prayer lies at the root of all personal godliness,' writes William Carey. To pray is to change. Prayer is the central avenue God uses to transform us. If we are unwilling to change, we will abandon prayer as a noticeable characteristic of our lives. The closer we come to the heartbeat of God, the more we see our need and the more we desire to be conformed to Christ. William Blake tells us that our task in life is to learn to bear God's beams of love. How often we fashion cloaks of evasion, beam-proof shelters in order to elude our eternal Lover. But when we pray, God slowly and graciously reveals to us our hiding places and sets us free from them."

Joseph Parker says, "It is like a prayer that paints itself on the ceiling, not like a living bird, loosened from the secret heart, and sent out to find its invisible nest in heaven."

Acts 19:34 "But when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours, 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!'

William Barclay points out, "When a man begins to think more of how he is praying than of what he is praying, his prayer dies upon his lips. The real fault of the people whom Jesus was criticizing was they were praying to men and not to God. A certain great preacher once described an ornate and elaborate prayer offered in a Boston church as the most eloquent ever offered to a Boston audience. The preacher was more concerned with impressing the congregation than with making contact with God. Whether in public or in private prayer, a man should have no thought in his mind and no desire in his heart but God."

v. 6

But as for you, whenever you are praying, enter into your secret room, and having closed your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who is seeing in secret will reward you.

Again, this isn't literal. The idea is to pray when you are alone primarily, and not out in public. Don't catch up on your praying in public.

A life of prayer is to be personal, short in public and long in private. What you are in private will be manifest in public. Public business is to preach the word of God. You can't exalt Him unless you are living with Him. Praying audibly in private can be helpful to keep your mind on track.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon points out, "If it be indeed to God that we pray, there can be no need for anyone else to be present; for it would hinder rather than help devotion to have a third person for a witness of the heart's private intercourse with the Lord."

v. 7

And when you are praying, do not repeat the same thing over and over as the Gentiles do, for they are thinking that they will be heard for their many words.

Our Lord doesn't forbid repetition but He does forbid lengthy, vain repetition. An illustration of this is Elijah on Mount Carmel. The priests say, "Baal, hear us" over and over again. Elijah repeated but it wasn't in vain.

Batta-Batta- Praying in Tongues...

Jamieson Fausset and Brown point up, "The God we pray to is our Father. Children do not make long speeches to their parents when they want something. They need not say many words. They are taught by the spirit of adoption to say that one aright, Abba, Father. He is a Father that knows our case and knows our wants better than we do ourselves. He knows what things we have need of. He often gives before we call and more than we ask for. We need not be long nor use many words in representing our case."

"He's Your father ASK Him something
+ then sit down & Shut up.

children
& their Parents

Psalm 37:3-5 "Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him; and He will do this."

William Hendriksen points out, "Many of the most striking and fervent prayers recorded in Scripture are brief and pithy."

Moses - Exodus 32:31,32

"So Moses went back to the Lord and said, 'O what a great sin these people have committed. They have made themselves gods of gold. (But now, please forgive their sin; but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.)'

Solomon - I Kings 3:6-9

"You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day. Now, O Lord, my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father, David, but I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people too numerous to count or number. (So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people, and to distinguish between right and wrong; for who is able to govern this great people of yours?)"

Elijah - I Kings 18:36 & 37

"At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed, 'O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel; let it be known today that you are God in Israel; and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, (O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord are God; and that you are turning their hearts back again.)'

I Chronicles 4:10

"Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, 'O that you would bless me and enlarge my territory. Let your hand be with me and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.' And God granted his request."

Job - Job 1:20 & 21

"At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said, 'Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. May the name of the Lord be praised.'"

Samuel - I Samuel 3:10

"'Speak, for your servant is listening.'"

Agur - Proverbs 30:7-9

"Two things I ask of you, O Lord; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread; otherwise, I may have too much and disown you, and say, 'Who is the Lord?' or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God."

Jeremiah - Jeremiah 1:6

"'Ah, sovereign Lord, I said I do not know how to speak; I am only a child.'"

The Publican - Luke 18:13

"But the tax collector stood at a distance; he would not even look up to heaven; but beat his breast and said, 'God have mercy on me, a sinner.'"

Peter - Matthew 14:30

"And when he saw the wind, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me.'"

The Dying Thief - Luke 23:42

"Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.'"

Stephen - Acts 7:60

"Then he fell on his knees and cried out, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.'"

Jesus

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing."

My God!
My God!

"Father, into your hands, I commend my spirit."

Nehemiah 6:9

"They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, 'Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed.' But I prayed, 'Now strengthen my hands.'

v. 8 Therefore do not be like them, for your Father is knowing what you are having need of before you ask Him.

One day a lady was giving her little nephew a lesson. He was usually attentive, but on this day couldn't put his mind on his work. Suddenly he asked, "Aunt Lillie, can I ask God to help me find my marble?" She consented and he knelt by his chair and prayed. Then he went on with his lesson contentedly. The next day the aunt asked, "Well, have you found your marble?" "No", came the reply, "but God has made me not want to." God does not always answer our prayers in the way we wish or expect, but he takes from us the desire for what is contrary to His holy will.

A key phrase in v. 8 is "what you are having need of".

The Lord has promised to supply all of our needs, but not all of our wants.

Philippians 4:19 "And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

James 4:3 "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."

S. Craig Glickman in his book Knowing Christ says, "In this attitude he once again left us an example to follow. Had he chosen to pray for angels to save him, He would have ended His prayer with, 'If it be Thy will'; for He recognized that prayer is a request;

and like all requests, it may be either granted or denied. But, had He leaped from the temple, He would not have requested, but demanded that the angels save Him; and He refused to put to the test the Lord His God. If He were to ask the Father to act, He would wait for the Father to answer. Similarly, we also should regard our prayer requests of the Father. We must never imagine that we can say certain magical words which force God to serve us. As children speaking to their father, we must realize that He is free to grant or to deny the request we make. Of course, some requests He has already promised to answer. He has promised forgiveness, for example, to everyone who asks with faith in Christ, but even a request like this, which He has already promised to answer, is not granted because we say magical words; but because we ask in faith. The other requests we make, which He has not explicitly promised to answer, we must leave to His wisdom and timing, even requests for things altogether necessary and appropriate."

June Hunt in her book Above All Else says, "Not only must we recognize Christ within, we must also accept the way in which He chooses to work in our lives. Simply put, when we pray, we should accept the way He answers, even if it seems illogical-- as in the story of a man who was standing on the edge of a mountain viewing the scenery. Excited over the view, he got too close to the edge and fell over. As he was going down, he grabbed a limb protruding from the side of the mountain and began yelling, 'Somebody help me! God, you there, I need help!' A voice spoke loud and clear, 'I'm here, now listen to me. What you must do is let go of the limb.' The little man with his feet dangling in mid-air called back, 'Uh, is there somebody else there I could talk to?' It's this business of faith, total faith in our God who makes no mistakes. I have experienced projects which work, and I've seen prayers answered beyond coincidence and human comprehension, but I still have much to learn about the power of prayer. I can remember many times I thought God had not answered my prayers. I often forgot that 'No' and 'Wait' are also answers. Fortunately, God knows the deepest desires of our hearts, and He knows how and when to give us those desires. Make no mistake-- God's timing is perfect. He also realizes that there are times when, if He were to give us everything for which we ask, He would not be helping us fulfill those desires. God's no's are just as much expressions of His love as His yes's. From my childhood, mother taught me to trust God's no's because we are often blinded by our immediate need. A poem she shared with me expresses this concept beautifully:

Yes
No
Wait Awhile

More whites
Wait. A-whites

I asked for strength that I might achieve,
He made me weak that I might obey.
I asked for health that I might do great things,
I was given grace that I might do better things.
I asked for riches that I might be happy,
I was given poverty that I might be wise.
I asked for power that I might have the praise of men,
I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things that I might enjoy life,
I was given life that I might enjoy all things.
I received nothing that I asked for,
All that I hoped for,
My prayer was answered.

To here

5:20 Right.
Self & X Right.
Beatitudes
Salt & Light
6 illustrations
① Anger
② Adultery
③ Divorce
④ False witness
⑤ Eyes
⑥ The love your
enemies

v. 9 Therefore, as for you, in this manner be praying:
Our Father who is in heaven, let your name be held
in reverence.

Self - Right
① Giving
② Praying
③ Fasting

There are six short and meaningful petitions that go right to the heart of the matter. This prayer ought not be used by believers today, nor even in ritualistic fashion. Our Lord didn't say pray this, but pray thus. It was to be a model for disciples at the time given. It is questionable to call it the Lord's Prayer. He did not or could not pray it in view of verse 12. The Lord's prayer is John 17. Anything done over and over in the same fashion is detrimental to the spiritual caliber of the service. There was a little old lady who told a fellow who was addressing God in multitudinous ways and going through the whole systematic theology, "Listen, call Him Father and ask Him for something." The first petition is for sanctification, "hallowed be thy name". The second petition recognizes His sovereignty. The third petition, submission. The fourth petition, provision. The fifth petition is for pardon. The sixth petition is for protection.

In this pattern prayer, there are three things Godward:

1. reverence	—	Sanctification
2. rule	—	Sovereignty
3. obedience	—	Submission

There are three things manward:

1. dependence	—	Provision
2. restoration	—	Pardon
3. preservation	—	Protection

It starts with adoration and ends with praise; and starts with God and ends with Him.

Criswell points out, "The very prayer which our Lord gave as an antidote to vain repetitions is the most abused to this superstitious end; the number of times it is repeated counting for so much more merit. Is not this just the characteristic feature of heathen devotion which our Lord here condemns?"

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown says, "The petitions in these are six. The three first relating more immediately to God and his honor. The three last, to our own concerns. The method of this prayer teaches us to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and then to hope that other things shall be added."

Lange in his commentary says, "Hence it is that in the first part of the Lord's Prayer, the infinite riches of God are unfolded. 'Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done.' While in the second part, the poverty of man is brought to view. 'Give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our debts, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil.' Lastly, the rich doxology expresses the certain hope that our prayers shall be heard in view of the character of God, who being Himself the highest good, will also bring to pass the highest good, even his own kingdom.

William Barclay points out, "Prayer must never be an attempt to bend the will of God to our desires. Prayer is always an attempt to submit our wills to the will of God."

Charles Hadden Spurgeon says, "Our Father which art in heaven, we have a child away from home. Hallowed be thy name, a worshipper. Thy kingdom come, a subject. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, a servant. Give us this day our daily bread, a beggar. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, a sinner. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; a sinner in danger of being a greater sinner still."

Vincent McNap, an English clergyman, tells about a friend's visit with the daughter of Karl Marx, "During the conversation, the talk switched to religion. Miss Marx admitted, 'I was brought up to not believe in God.' Then she added very seriously, 'Recently, I discovered a German prayer in an old book, and if the God of that prayer exists, I think I might believe in Him.' 'What was the prayer?' her companion asked. The daughter of atheistic and disbelieving Marx repeated slowly in German, 'Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.'"

J. Vernon McGee tells the story of a conversation which occurred between two men who were boasting of their respective knowledge of the Bible. "The first man commented to his friend, 'Why, you do not even know the Lord's Prayer.' The friend stated that he certainly did. To which the man replied, 'Then, let me hear you say it.' So the friend began, 'Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take.' When he had concluded the challenger said, 'Well, you sure fooled me, I didn't think you knew it.'" For the want of accurate information, much this same confusion surrounds our use of the title "The Lord's Prayer". Technically speaking, John 17 is the Lord's Prayer. That is the prayer which he prayed. He could never have prayed the prayer which to us has always been known as the Lord's Prayer. For instance, He could not have used the first word 'Our'. Have you taken note of the fact that his relationship to God is different from that which we hold? We call Him 'Father' because of regeneration. He called him 'Father' because of His place in the Godhead. He is always careful to use the terms 'My Father' and 'Your Father', never 'Our Father'.

Allen Redpath in Victorious Praying says, "This prayer has moved from worship, 'Our Father which art in heaven' through adoration, 'hallowed be thy name'; through missionary zeal, 'thy kingdom come'; to a place where we have abandoned all interest in ourselves to a supreme desire for the will of God to be done in earth as it is in heaven."

John MacArthur points out, "Studying God's word gives birth to a meaningful prayer life. There are people who plead with God to give them the Holy Spirit, when the Bible says they already have the Holy Spirit. People plead with Christ for strength when the Bible says, you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. People pray, 'Lord, be with us.' and the Bible says 'Lo, I am with you always'. People plead for love for

others. The Bible says, 'The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.' You don't need to get it, you need to let it out. Unless we understand the truth of the Word of God, we do not really know how to pray. When you study God's Word and discover His truth, we discover also the real condition of our hearts, the truth about our spiritual lives. Such discoveries should drive us into opening our hearts to God."

Some people think prayer is like a parachute. They are glad it's there, but they hope they never have to use it.

John R. W. Stott says, "The first three petitions in the Lord's Prayer express our concern for God's glory in relation to His name, rule and will. If our concept of God were of some impersonal force, then of course, He would have no personal name, rule or will to be concerned about. In the Christian counterculture, our top priority concern is not our name, kingdom and will, but God's. Whether we can pray these petitions with integrity is a searching test of the reality and depth of our Christian profession."

Boice points out, "Andrew Murray says 'There is something here that strikes us at once. While we ordinarily first bring our own needs to God in prayer and then think of what belongs to God and His interests, the Master reverses the order. First, 'thy name, thy kingdom, thy will'. Then 'give us, lead us, deliver us'. The lesson is of more importance than we think. In true worship, the Father must be first, must be all. The sooner I learn to forget myself and the desire that He may be glorified, the richer will the blessing be that prayer will bring to myself. No one ever loses by what he sacrifices for the Father.'"

Warren Wiersbe points out, "The purpose of prayer is to glorify God's name and to ask for help to accomplish His will on earth. This prayer begins with God's interest, not ours; God's name, God's kingdom, and God's will." Robert Law has said, "Prayer is a mighty instrument, not for getting man's will done in heaven, but for getting God's will done in earth. We have no right to ask God for anything that will dishonor His name, delay His kingdom or disturb His will on earth."

Allen Redpath in Victorious Praying says, "Our Father, Daddy, I'm sorry - hardly are the words out of his mouth before daddy's arms are around him. The fellowship is restored and the home is filled with singing and laughter and joy and happiness. The cloud is gone. God is our Father and we are His children. Has His face been

turned away? Come to Him now and say, 'Lord Jesus, I'm sorry.' He always has His arms outstretched to welcome His wayward children. Then thank Him for cleansing and forgiveness and sing:

My Jesus, I love thee,
I know thou art mine.
For thee all the follies
Of sin I resign.
My gracious redeemer
My saviour art thou,
If ever I loved thee
Lord Jesus, 'tis now.

W. Philip Keller in his book A Layman Looks at the Lord's Prayer, says "The term 'Our Father', this reassures our hearts. It sets our minds at ease. It frees our spirits and releases us into a deep dimension of delight in our dealings with our heavenly Father. How good to know, here is someone who really understands, who knows all about us and who, even though He knows the worst, still loves us. This explains why we can come to Him in any situation and find a warm welcome. It explains why we can count a sympathetic hearing. Nothing is so sure to dispel our fears and allay our anxiety as to know that in dealing with our Father we are indeed dealing with a consistent character. 'Our Father', just two short words, yet they have a whole world of meaning wrapped up in them. They set the tone of this entire prayer. They embrace all the beauty to be found in a unified family. They convey to our hearts and minds the strength and serenity of the Almighty. They speak to our souls and spirits of the love that comes from an understanding father's heart. No other religion in all the world carries such a happy, contented concept of communion between God and man. No other philosophy or teaching so intimately touches the heart of our human needs. Where else can one turn to find words more tender, more meaningful, more mighty in their simplicity than 'Our Father'? Do you really know Him this way? We can." Boice comments, "If I were to rephrase this first part of the Lord's Prayer, I believe I would say 'My Father in heaven, my first desire is that in everything you might have preeminence.'" *First Place Col.1:18*

But He is also the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He is the ancient of days, seated upon the throne of heaven. He is the child of Bethlehem, lying in a manger. He is

Jesus of Nazareth. His titles are Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting, the Prince of Peace. He is the righteous judge of the universe. He is our rock and our high tower. What more can we say of our God? Can we say that He is the way? Certainly, for He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He is the source of our life, the sustainer of life, He is life itself. He is the light of the world, the bread of life. He is the good shepherd, the great shepherd, the chief shepherd. He is the Lord of hosts. He is the king of kings. He is the faithful one. He is love. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Moses, David, Isaiah, Elizabeth, Anna, Simeon and John the Baptist. He is the God of Peter, James and John, Timothy, Apollos and Paul. He not only is their God, He is my God. Is He your God? If so, you can raise your voice with those of all generations of the Christian church and sing to His honor:

O, for a thousand tongues to sing
My great redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of His grace.

My gracious Master and my God
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honors of Thy name.

Hear him, ye deaf, his praise, ye dumb.
Your loosened tongues employ,
Ye blind, behold your Saviour come
And leap, ye lame for joy.

D. Martyn Lloyd Jones in speaking on this first petition says, "This petition means just that. We should all have a consuming passion that the whole world might come to know God like that. It means a burning desire that the whole world may bow before God in adoration and reverence, and praise and worship and honor and thanksgiving. Is that our supreme desire? Is that the thing that is always uppermost in our minds whenever we pray to God?"

Boice points out, "'Hallowed be thy name'. The 18th century poet Isaac Watts was one who did this. He wrote:

"I sing the mighty power of God
That made the mountains rise,
That spread the flowing seas abroad
And built the lofty skies.

I sing the goodness of the Lord
That filled the earth with food,
He formed the creatures with His word
And then pronounced them good.

Lord, how thy wonders are displayed
Where'er I turn mine eye,
If I survey the ground I tread
Or gaze upon the sky.

Creatures as numerous as we
Are subject to thy care.
There's not a place where we can flee
But God is present there."

Philip Keller in his book A Layman Looks at the Lord's Prayer says, "Our Father who is in heaven is also in my heart. To know this is to know a new dimension to life. To sense the presence and person of God, our Father, within is to have set our feet on the highway to heaven. But even more than that, we will see our lives now as a residence and habitation of the Most High. We will know ourselves to be host to our heavenly Father, and in such knowing there will steal over us a quiet awe and deep respect for our Father who deigns to have His son come and share himself with us as Lord and King."

Those of us who are human fathers know how very hurt we can be by such an attitude from our own children, yet on the other hand, when they act toward us in gratitude and appreciation, when they express their love and respect for us in consideration and affection, how our hearts are warmed. It is then, our own love for them is multiplied and aroused to the point we are willing and eager to do even more for them than ever before. This same principle applies in our relationship to our Father in heaven. The least movement on our part, feeble as it may seem, to honor and uplift His great name produces an immediate response of love in His great heart. We find ourselves engulfed by His sublime presence through His Spirit. We discover our lives enriched by boundless blessings beyond our fondest hopes. This is just the way it is with our Father when His name is honored.

To help us grasp this, that is "hallowed be thy name", I sometimes think of His character in the form of a perfectly symmetrical six-sided cube. On one side, He is utterly holy, pure and flawless, but this is counter-balanced on the opposite side by His absolute love, compassion and concern. Only because of this, is it possible for us to approach such a sublime being. On a third side, he is absolutely righteous, just, impeccable. Yet again, this is counter-balanced on the fourth side by His boundless mercy, kindness, and long-suffering. If it were not so, how could we ever stand in His presence? He is also on the fifth side, utterly honest, true and reliable; again, counter-balanced on the sixth side by his infinite faithfulness, understanding and interest in us as His children. Irrespective of what strata of society we move among, it is very common for men or women to degrade and defile God's name. His name is used in blasphemy, it is used in obscene jests. His character is lampooned and ridiculed. His person is heaped with insults and abuse equal to anything hurled at Christ during His mock trial and cruel crucifixion. From very small children to white headed old men and women, there races a continuing stream of scorn, sarcasm, sneering and cursing against the Holy One.

Exodus 20:7 - "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord, your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His name."

Acts 4:12 - "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

John MacArthur points out, "God is given many names in the Bible and each expresses some part of His character. In Genesis, He is called Elohim, the creator God. Later in the same book, He is called El Elyon, or possessor of heaven and earth. The Old Testament also calls Him Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide; Jehovah Nissi, the Lord, our banner; Jehovah Rapha, the Lord that healeth; Jehovah Shalom, the Lord our peace; Jehovah Raah, the Lord our shepherd; Jehovah Tisidkenu, the Lord our righteousness; Jehovah Sabaoth, the Lord of hosts; Jehovah Shama, the Lord is present and near; and Jehovah Maquodeshkim, which means the Lord sanctifieth thee."

MacArthur points out, "Our God does care, and is not asleep. He is there waiting for us to enter His presence because He is a loving father, who cares for His children whatever their circumstance." Paul Tournier, the great Christian doctor wrote in his book Doctors Case Book, "There was one patient of mine, a youngest daughter in a large family, which the father found it difficult to support. One day she heard her father mutter despairingly, referring to her, 'We could well have done without that one.' That is precisely what God can never say. He is a loving father to every one of His children."

J. Vernon McGee asked the question, "Can someone give that testimony to your holy living; are you hallowing God's name in your daily life?"

William Barclay says, "There remains one further ingredient in reverence. We must believe that God exists. We must know what kind of a god, God is. We must be constantly aware of God; and a man might have all these things and still not have reverence. To all these things must be added, obedience in submission to God. Reverence is knowledge plus submission." In his catechism, Luther asks, "How is God's name hallowed among us?" and his answer is "When both our life and doctrine are truly Christian." That is to say, when our intellectual convictions and our practical actions are in full submission to the will of God. To know that God is; to know what kind of a God, God is; to be constantly aware of God; and to be constantly obedient to Him; that is reverence. That is what we pray for, when we pray, 'hallowed be thy name'. Let God be given the reverence, which His nature and character deserve."

William Hendriksen points out, "To hallow God's name, means to hold it in reverence, hence, to hold Him in reverence, to honor, glorify and exalt Him. To do this, far more than mere intellectual knowledge of the meaning of the divine names is required. Humility of spirit, gratitude of heart, earnest study of God's works until observation changes into rapturous astonishment and worship, is certainly implied."

Philippians 2:9-11 "Therefore, God exalted Him to the highest place, and gave Him the name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth; and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

v. 10 Let your kingdom come, let your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Harry A. Ironside says, "'Thy kingdom come' looks on to the second advent of Christ when the kingdom of God will be established in power over all this world. 'thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'; up there no one seeks to circumvent the will of God. Here on earth, self-will has caused untold misery. When men learn to do God's will, in this scene as saints and angels delight to do it in heaven, the golden age will have come indeed."

God says
Turn out the
lights the
Party's over

Matthew Henry points out, "'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'. We pray that God's kingdom being come, we and others may be brought into obedience to all the laws and ordinances of it. Having prayed that He may rule us, we pray that we may in everything be ruled by Him. The thing prayed for 'thy will be done'; In this sense, Christ prayed, 'not my will, but thine be done.' 'Enable me to do what is pleasing to thee. Give me that grace that is necessary to the right knowledge of thy will and an acceptable obedience to it, that we may neither displease God in anything we do, nor be displeased at anything God does."

"On earth as it is in heaven" we pray, that earth may be made more like heaven by the observance of God's will.

Horatius Bonar says, "Fill thou my life, O Lord my God and every part with praise, that my whole being may proclaim thy being and thy ways. Not for the lip of praise alone, nor e'en the praising heart, I ask but for a life made up of praise in every part."

Allen Redpath in his book Victorious Praying says, "Listen to these; 'hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done'. Here we have thy name, thy kingdom and thy will. A man learning how to pray is being taught here first of all, to put the glory of God before everything. Thy name, Lord, thy kingdom, Lord, thy will, Lord and then give us our daily bread, forgive us our sins, our debts, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil. Our food, our sins, temptation, evil. Christian friends, it is necessary for me to stress that in all true prayer, the glory of God has to come before the need of our heart. I think it is because so often you and I reverse the process. How we hurry into the presence of God and pour out to Him the story of our wants, our troubles, our temptations. Perhaps then we take just a minute when we finish with all that to ask for His glory or add a postscript concerning

that missionary in Africa who comes to our mind. How this pattern of prayer given by our Lord shows up all that kind of praying."

John MacArthur points out, "If you think prayer is for your benefit, you've missed the point. That's why we get so confused. We are praying for ourselves. The reason we pray and the reason God answers is to put himself and His glory on display. His glory is the issue. That is the message of John 14:13, 'Whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified.' Your prayer will not force God. You cannot badger Him, irritate Him, con Him. You can only submit to His sovereignty and seek His glory. That is the affirmation of the disciples' prayer."

Notice what he does not teach us. He does not teach us the posture of prayer, because any posture will do. In the Bible, people prayed standing, lifting their hands, sitting, lying down, kneeling, lifting their eyes, bowing, placing their heads between their knees, pounding their chests and facing a temple. He does not teach us the place to pray. People in the Bible prayed during battle, in a cave, in a closet, in a garden, on a mountainside, by a river, by the sea, in a street, in God's house, in Hades, in bed, in a home, in a fish, on a housetop, in a prison, in solitude in the wilderness and on a cross.

Frances Havergall has beautifully written in one of her hymns this verse to Jesus Christ:

O the joy to see thee reigning,
Thee, my own beloved Lord.
Every tongue thy name confessing
Worship, honor, glory, blessing.
Brought to thee with one accord,
Thee, my master and my friend,
Vindicating and enthroned,
Unto earth's remotest end,
Glorified, adored and owned.

John MacArthur points out, "Have you ever wondered how the angels do God's will? To know how it is to be done on earth, we need to know how it is done in heaven. Eight words summarize all that Scripture teaches regarding the way the angels do the will of God. First, unwaveringly. There is never a discussion. On earth, the Lord prods and pokes and

maybe we get moving sooner or later, but in heaven, there is an unwavering commitment to do His will.

2. Completely - There are no alternatives, no gaps, no omissions.

3. Sincerely - They are eager, waiting for the next command so they can hurry to accomplish it.

4. Willingly - Do you know how many wills there are in heaven? One. There were two once, but one god kicked out.

5. Fervently - They are aggressive in doing God's will.

6. Readily

7. Swiftly

8. Constantly

Remember the three ways to see the kingdom.

1. Through conversion when Christ comes to reign in the heart.

2. Through commitment when a believer lives according to righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

3. In His second coming when the kingdom comes to earth.

I see the same three things here. His comprehensive will embraces the ultimate end, the coming again and the setting up of an eternal kingdom. His compassionate will embraces conversion and His commanding will embraces the the idea of obedient commitment in my life.

"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." There is coming a day when God the Father is going to say, "Turn out the lights, the party's over."

W. Philip Keller in his book A Layman Looks at the Lord's Prayer says, "'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done'. There is far too much at stake. The great majority are utterly unwilling to surrender the sovereignty of their lives to God. They have no intention whatever of abdicating the throne of their own inner wills and hearts to the king of glory. They are no more prepared or willing to accept the rulership of Christ, than were those who shouted at His crucifixion, 'We have no king but Caesar.' "

"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." Bishop Taylor Smith, the great and godly bishop in the Church of England put into one of his personal memos a moving statement of his own relationship to the kingdom of God. He said, "As soon as I awake each morning, I arise from bed at once. I dress promptly, I wash myself, shave and comb my hair. When fully attired, wide awake and properly groomed, I go quietly to my study. There before God almighty and Christ, my king, I humbly present myself as a loyal subject to my sovereign, ready to be of service to Him for the day."

"Your will be done". Still it is surprising, much more it is astounding, how many people profess to love God, but fear His will. They claim to trust Him, yet at the same time, react against His will. One who does this finds himself in a hopeless impasse. **It would be impossible to pray somewhat like this, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Your kingdom come, may your will not be done."** It is an absurdity, but many endeavor to live this way. Because of who God is, because of what He is like, because of the beauty of His behavior, because of the unique caliber of His character, His will is bound to be good and beneficial and acceptable, so that when we accept Him and sense our sonship, we also become clearly aware of His good will toward us in every aspect of life.

May my will be done...

Romans 12:2 "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, His good, pleasing and perfect will."

"Thy will be done". There lies the secret, complete cooperation between my will and God's will. As we progress in our desire to do all of God's will, it comes as a real surprise for some of us to find that our Father's will concerns the common round of our careers.

Philippians 2:12 & 13 "Therefore my dear friends, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence; continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose."

William P. Barker in his book Kings in Shirtsleeves says, "Failure and disappointment seem to be plowed deeply into life. Read the Bible. Even there, the greatest leaders had ships that never sailed, plans that never materialized. Moses never lived to go into the promised land. David was not able to build a temple. Mary, Jesus' mother, did not fulfill her hope of a warm, snug crib at home in Nazareth for her first-born, but had to settle for a makeshift nursery in a dirty stable. Paul probably was never able to travel to Spain to preach as he had wanted. Although many of these experienced the frustration of dreams that never came true, there is one dream founded on Biblical prophecy that will come true. 'Let your kingdom come, let your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.'"

v. 11 Give us today our bread, for the coming day

F. B. Meyer in The Directory of the Devout Life says, "Give us this day our daily bread." These words suggest great rest of heart about daily supplies, because if Jesus Christ taught us to pray for daily bread, He implied that we had only to use the laws of prayer and labor and God would supply all our need. He would never have put into our lips a prayer which was not in line with the thought and purposes of His father. I know not what the anxieties of your life may be about your health or investments or situation, but I do assure you that since Jesus Christ has put this prayer into your lips, it is already a pledge on God's part that He will feed you with food convenient and supply the body with all that it requires for its daily needs. A body hast thou prepared for me. And since thou hast implanted its daily recurring appetite, thou art surely responsible for their necessary satisfaction."

Charles Hadden Spurgeon says, "We pray for providential supplies for ourselves and others. 'Give us' we ask for our food as a gift. 'Give us', we request no more than bread or food needful for us. Our petition concerns the day and asks only for a daily supply, bread enough for this day. We ask not for bread which belongs to others, but only for that which is honestly our own. It is the prayer of a lowly and contented mind, of one who is so sanctified that he waits upon God, even about his daily food; and of one who lovingly links others with himself in his sympathy and prayer. Give me, Lord, both the bread of heaven and of earth, that which feeds my soul and sustains my body. For all, I look to thee, my Father."

Romans 8:32 "He who did not spare His own son, but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also along with Him graciously give us all things."

Allen Redpath points out, "Someone has said, 'The greatest of saints are the greatest receivers, those who know their own helplessness, those who refuse to carry one burden or anxiety themselves, those who cast all the responsibility for their welfare upon their God.'"

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength is failed 'ere the day is
half done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
The Father's full giving has only begun.

His love has no limits, His grace has no measure,
His power has no boundaries known to men,
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

Yesterday's strength is absolutely useless for today. May God save us as Christian people from relying on an experience of yesterday. Many a man lives his Christian life on the experience of years ago. It is literally years since he has felt a fresh touch of the grace of God upon his and upon his life. Often, his life is as dry as dust. His bread is stale and the world knows it. Such a man is looking back upon the past of his life and there he is, drawing upon moldy bread, while this prayer talks of daily bread.

Luke 9:23 "Then he said to them all, 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.'"

God is not the God of yesterday, but the God of today. This means that through the avenues of each day's life, I can expect to meet God again, that today I can have new supplies from Him and I can meet with Jesus in my home, in the street, anywhere; and may receive from my Lord today, my daily bread. This prayer does not say anything about tomorrow. Future supplies are not our concern. It is daily bread, fresh from the oven, and it is enough for today. God never gives a man stores of grace or a reservoir from which he can draw. Your spiritual life is not fed upon a storage plan. It is maintained on the contact plan. Moment by moment, your life needs to be in contact with the Lord.

Moment by moment I am kept in His love,
Moment by moment I have life from above.

James Boice points out, "These three petitions cover all our physical and spiritual needs." On this point Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd Jones has accurately written, "Our whole life is found there in these three petitions and that is what makes this prayer so utterly amazing. In such a small compass, our Lord has covered the whole

Nothing
About
Tomorrow

ill of
Gas Tank
The Trolley

life of the believer in every respect. Our physical needs, our mental needs and of course, our spiritual needs are included. The body is remembered, the soul is remembered, and that is the whole of man."

I Kings 17:2-6 "Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah, 'Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the ravine of Cherith, east of the Jordan. You will drink from the brook, and I have ordered the ravens to feed you there.' So he did what the Lord had told him. He went to the ravine of Cherith, east of the Jordan and stayed there. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning; and bread and meat in the evening and he drank from the brook."

Exodus 16:4 & 5 "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day, they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.'

v. 12 And forgive us our moral debts (sins) as we also have forgiven those morally obligated to us.

John MacArthur points out, 'Our daily bread' is the present. ^② 'Our debts' are sins from the past. ^③ And 'lead us not' is the future. Bread is physical, forgiveness is mental and temptation is spiritual. There is even alliteration and not just for a good outline. Our Father indicates God's paternity. 'Hallowed' shows His priority, 'Thy kingdom' is His program. 'Thy will' is His purpose. Our bread is His provision. 'Forgive us' is His pardon and 'lead us not' is His protection. 'For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever' is His preeminence."

By giving us our daily bread, forgiving us our debts and by leading us, God hallows His name, brings His kingdom, and does His will on earth. It is as if the second half of the Lord's Prayer brings God into human life. We are saying, "God, glorify yourself in our daily provision. God, glorify yourself in our constant forgiveness; God glorify yourself in leading and the directing of your Holy Spirit in our lives. God, be on display in your world, that your kingdom may come to earth."

MacArthur points out, "Now let's take four words from these four principles and deal with them individually. Sin makes us guilty, forgiveness is offered by God. Confession is necessary, and forgiving one another is essential."

Lord Herbert put it very well when he said, "He who cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass."

Francis Schaeffer in his book, The Mark of the Christian says, "In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus himself teaches us to pray, 'forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.' Now this prayer, we must say quickly is not for salvation. It has nothing to do with being born again, for we are born again on the basis of the finished work of Christ plus nothing. But it does have to do with a Christian's existential moment-by-moment experiential relationship to God. We need a once for all forgiveness, a justification and we need a moment by moment forgiveness for our sins on the basis of Christ's work in order to be in open fellowship with God. What the Lord has taught us to pray in the Lord's Prayer should make a Christian very sober, every day of his life. We are asking the Lord to open to us the experiential realities of fellowship with Himself as we forgive others. Some Christians say that the Lord's Prayer is not for this present era, but most of us would say it is; and yet at the same time, we hardly think once in a year about our lack of a forgiving heart in relationship to God's forgiving us. Many Christians rarely or never seem to connect their lack of reality of fellowship with God with their lack of forgiveness to men, even though they may say the Lord's Prayer in a formal way over and over in their weekly Sunday worship services. We must continually acknowledge that we do not practice the forgiving heart as we should and yet the prayer is, 'Forgive us our debts, our trespasses; as we forgive our debtors.' We are to have a forgiving spirit even before the other person expresses regret for his wrong. The Lord's Prayer does not suggest that when the other man is sorry, then we are to show a oneness by having a forgiving spirit. Rather, we are called upon to have a forgiving spirit without the other man having made the first step. We may still say that he is wrong, but in the midst of saying that he is wrong, we must be forgiving. We are to have this forgiving spirit, not only toward Christians, but toward all man. But surely if it is toward all men, it is important toward Christians. Such a forgiving spirit registers an attitude of love toward others. But even though one can

MATT. 5:
Leave your
Gifts!"

call this an attitude, true forgiveness is observable. Believe me, you can look on a man's face and know where he is as far as forgiveness is concerned."

v. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

A. T. Robertson in his book, The Word Pictures in the New Testament says, "The word here translated 'temptation' means originally, 'trial or test' as in James 1:2. God does test or sift us, though he does not tempt us to evil. Here we have a permissive imperative as grammarians term it. The idea is then, do not allow us to be led into temptation. There is a way out; I Corinthians 10:13, but it is a terrible risk."

I Corinthians 10:13 "No temptation has seized you, except what is common to man, and God is faithful, He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out, so that you can stand up under it."

Charles Hadden Spurgeon points out, "In the course of providence, the Lord tests our graces and the sincerity of our profession; and for this purpose He does lead us into testing. We entreat Him not to try us too severely. 'Lord, let not my joys or my sorrows become temptations to me, as I would not run into testing of myself. I pray thee, do not lead me where I must inevitably meet it, but if I must be tried, Lord, deliver me from falling into evil. Especially preserve me from that evil one, who above all seeks my soul to destroy it. Temptation or trial may be for my good, if I am delivered from evil. Lord, do this for me, for I cannot preserve myself.'"

J. Vernon McGee points out, "'Lead us not into temptation.' This word lead gives us the wrong impression, because James says, 'God does not tempt any man.' That is true. God does ~~not~~ tempt any man. A better translation here would be, 'leave us not in temptation.' It does not mean to keep us out of, but when we are in it, do not leave us there."

"From dark temptation's power,
From Satan's wiles defend.
Deliver in the evil hour,
And guide me to the end."

"Keep us, Lord, O keep us ever.
Vain our hope, if left by thee.
We are thine, O leave us never,
Til thy face in heaven we see."

There to praise thee,
Through a bright eternity,
All our strength at once would fail us
If deserted, Lord, by thee.

Nothing then could aught avail us
Certain our defeat would be.
Those who hate us, thenceforth
Their desire would see."

1 Chron. 4:10

John MacArthur points out, "Our Lord prayed the same prayer in John 17:15, when he said to the Father, 'I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep from the evil one.' " Martin Luther said, "We cannot help being exposed to the assaults, but we pray that we may not fall and perish under them."

Philip Keller points out, "'Deliver us from evil'. It often helps to address Him aloud saying something like this, 'O Father, this is a bit beyond me, I can't cope with it. You can. Please extend your hand and by your spirit enable me to stand. Give me such a sense of your presence by your spirit, that I shall be empowered to walk through the situation without falling or stumbling.' When we do encounter evil, we need not feel apprehensive. To the person walking with God as Father, there comes again and again the quiet assurance that all can be well. Our confidence lies not in ourselves, nor in our ability to counteract evil, but rather in the character and strength of our Father, who delivers us. He honors His own commitment to us as His children. He knows exactly why every evil assails us and bless His wondrous name, He can free us from it. 'Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory, and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.' " Jude 24 & 25

Boice points out, "At the end of the 16th century, after the Protestant reformation in Europe, and the wars that followed it, an anonymous Christian wrote these lines about temptation:

In all the strife of mortal life,
Our feet shall stand securely.
Temptation's hour shall lose its power
For thou shalt guard us surely.

O God, renew with heavenly dew,
Our body's soul and spirit.
Until we stand at thy right hand
Through Jesus' saving merit.

W. A. Criswell says, " We incline to take it as a prayer against being drawn or sucked out of our own will into temptation, to which the word here used seems to lend some countenance. It was precisely this which Peter needed to ask, but did not ask when of his own accord, and in spite of difficulties, he pressed for entrance into the palace hall of the high priest and where once sucked into the scene and atmosphere of temptation; he fell so hard. And if so, does it not seem pretty clear that this was exactly what our Lord meant His disciples to pray against when He said in the garden, 'Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation.' "

S. Craig Glickman in Knowing Christ says, "But one last thing must be remembered. Apart from the same help He received, we cannot imitate the victory He won. At the very beginning of the temptation account, we are informed that Christ was led and strengthened by the Holy Spirit. Only His help will complete the conditions necessary for our victory in spiritual struggles. Even Satan himself will not defeat the ones in whom the Word and the Spirit and united in a willing heart."

I once heard the story of a dear old colored man who lived such a life of triumph with the Lord, that he was asked, "What do you do when you are tempted?" And he answered, "I just pray, 'Lord, your property is in danger' ". And we are His property. He has redeemed us at such a price that He will take care of us. He loves us and will bring us through.

Charles Swindoll in his book Three Steps Forward and Two Steps Back says, "It can be done. Look, we have made resisting temptation some mystical, unreachable, unattainable

talent reserved either for the very old or the pious. Baloney, saying no is something all of us who belong to Christ can do. There's nothing magical about it. You simply put Jesus Christ at the helm of your life and say 'No'." I think it was John Wesley who said, "Give me men who love nothing but God and hate nothing but sin." That's it precisely, the Lord will give you the power to stand up or run, and say 'No' when the tempter comes.

John MacArthur says, "Our Father means we have a father-child relationship with God. 'Hallowed be thy name' means we have a deity--worshipper relationship. 'Thy kingdom come' says we have a sovereign--subject relationship. 'Thy will be done' says we have a master--servant relationship. 'Give us our daily bread' means we have a benefactor--beneficiary relationship. 'Forgive us our trespasses or debts' means we have a savior--sinner relationship. 'Lead us not into temptation' says we have a guide--pilgrim relationship. The prayer also defines the spirit in which we are to pray. 'Our' reflects an unselfish spirit; 'Father' a family spirit; 'hallowed be thy name' a reverent spirit; 'thy kingdom come' a loyal spirit; 'thy will be done' a submissive spirit; 'give us our daily bread' a dependent spirit; 'forgive us' a penitent spirit; 'lead us not into temptation' a humble spirit; 'thine is the kingdom' a triumphant spirit; and 'the glory' an exultant spirit; 'forever' an eternal spirit."

The entire disciple's prayer must be something that flows out of a truly committed heart. It ought to be a definition of your spirit, your attitude toward God, what is inside you. An unknown author put it this way, "I cannot say 'our', if I live only for myself. I cannot say 'Father' if I do not endeavor each day to act like his child. I cannot say 'who art in heaven' if I'm laying up no treasure there. I cannot say 'hallowed be thy name' if I'm not striving for holiness. I cannot say 'thy kingdom come' if I'm not doing all in my power to hasten that wonderful event. I cannot say 'thy will be done' if I am disobedient to His word. I cannot say 'on earth as it is in heaven' if I'll not serve Him here and now. I cannot say 'give us this day our daily bread if I am dishonest or seeking things by subterfuge. I cannot say 'forgive us our debts' if I harbor a grudge against anyone. I cannot say 'lead us not into temptation' if I deliberately place myself in its path. I cannot say 'deliver us from evil' if I do not put on the whole armor of God. I cannot say 'thine is the kingdom' if I do not give the King the loyalty due him from a faithful subject. I cannot attribute to Him the power if I fear what men can do."

Prayer works. Abraham's servant prayed and Rebekah appeared. Jacob wrestled and prayed and prevailed with the angel. And Esau's mind was turned from twenty years of revenge. Moses prayed and Amalek was struck. Joshua prayed and Achan was discovered. Hannah prayed and Samuel was born. David prayed and Ahithophel hanged himself. Asa prayed and victory was won. Joshua prayed and God turned away his enemies. Isaiah and Hezekiah prayed and in twelve hours 185,000 Assyrians were slain. Daniel prayed and the lions were muzzled. Mordecai and Esther prayed and the plot to destroy the Jews was thwarted and Haman was hanged on his own gallows. Nehemiah prayed and the king's heart was softened in a moment. Elijah prayed and there were three years of drought. He prayed again and it rained. Elisha prayed and the child was raised from the dead. Believers prayed and Peter was released from jail.

Five

John MacArthur says, "Father, we echo this prayer in our hearts. Deliver us from evil. Deliver us from sin's penalty, dominion and guilt. Deliver our wills from bondage, our judgments from perversion, our imaginations from falsehood. Deliver our instincts from sinful drifting. Deliver our affections from what is earthly. Deliver us from weakness, that we may know the fulness of your strength. Thank you for this prayer. Your name be hallowed, your kingdom come, your will be done. Continue to give us abundantly our daily bread. Help us to be forgiving others that we may know the fulness of your forgiveness. And thank you for the promise that you'll never lead us into anything we can't handle. Help us meet the conditions to know the fulfillment of the inestimable promises of this prayer and to pray as we ought for Your glory, for Your's is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

v. 14

For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

v. 15

But if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

MacArthur points out, "How do you take care of a grudge? Here are three practical steps.

1. Take it to God as a sin. Be willing to repent of it and forsake it.
2. Go to the person. Tough? I'm only telling you this so you can know the spiritual joy. Say, I want to offer my forgiveness to you and seek your forgiveness.

3. Give the person something you value very highly. Jesus said, 'Where your treasure is there will your heart be also.' Put something precious to you in his hands and your heart will go with it, and will change the way you feel about him."

v. 16

And whenever you are fasting, stop being like the play-actors of a sad and gloomy countenance, for they are masking their faces in order that they may appear to men as those who are fasting. Assuredly I am saying to you, they are having their reward and the receipt for the same in full.

v. 17

But you, when you are fasting, anoint your head, and wash your face.

v. 18

In order that you may not appear to men to be fasting but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who is seeing in secret will repay you.

We have considered in these 18 verses of Matthew chapter 6, the disciplines of the godly life.

1. giving
2. prayer
3. His instruction with regard to fasting

He first says, stop being like the hypocrites who have a sad and gloomy countenance. It is so that in public they may appear to be men who are fasting.

Then by contrast in v. 17, he says, when you are fasting:

1. anoint your head
2. wash your face

The purpose for that is given in v. 18, "In order that you may not appear to men to be fasting but by your Father and He is the one who will see this in secret and He will also repay you."

Don't parade your prayer life before men. Don't go around and look like you are a prayer warrior. The worst thing is to act like a prayer warrior when you are not. The next worst is to act like one if you are one. And best is to be one and not to act like it.

Exodus 34:29 "When Moses came down from Mt. Sinai with the two tablets of the testimony in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant, because he had spoken with the Lord."

II Corinthians 3:18 "And we who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory are being transformed into His likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."

Gothard mentions the following eight reasons for fasting:

1. Fasting is a discipline led by the Holy Spirit.
2. Fasting to seek God's will in a specific matter.
3. Fasting in repentance for sin.
4. Fasting for concern for the work of God.
5. Fasting for deliverance or protection
6. Fasting to humble one's self before God.
7. Fasting is part of worship.
8. Fasting when in deep sorrow.

CONCLUSION

It is Watchman Nee in his book Release of the Spirit who says, "Lord, I put my all on the altar. Find a way through me that the church may also find in me a way. I would not be one who blocks thee, and blocks the church."

What are some of the lessons we can learn from these verses?

LESSON #1: Giving, praying and fasting are to be matters of private concern between you and your heavenly Father.

LESSON #2: There is a loss of reward with public demonstrations of these private disciplines.

LESSON #3: Prayer is to be brief and to the point, because you're speaking to your Father.

LESSON #4: God's glory is to be the top priority in our prayer life.

LESSON #5: When you are fasting, reflect the glory of the Lord in your face.

Betty Elliot says, "We resist sentimentality. We know that it distorts our vision, weakens our purpose. Time changes things we do not want changed. Death puts an end to our love, decays our dreams. We almost lift our hands in an involuntary gesture to stop them, hold them back; but we drop them again, knowing our impotence."

Would that we would pray that God would allow us to exercise the spiritual disciplines of discipleship in an effective manner to demonstrate the living Christ to a lost and dying world.

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
Success	712-04	<p><i>Champions are champions not because they do anything extraordinary but because they do the ordinary things better than anyone else.</i></p> <p>CHUCK NOLL</p> <p>p. 105</p>
Pride	712-05	<p><i>Excellence that feels it has to be proclaimed, by the mere fact of its proclamation admits the doubt of its existence.</i></p> <p>CLEOMAE DUNGY</p> <p>p. 151</p>
Prayer	712-06	<p><i>The third special moment didn't involve the Colts at all. Derrick Brooks called me from Tampa to relate a story he thought I'd appreciate. The Buccaneers were preparing to play their first game under their new coach, Jon Gruden. After pregame warm-ups, they were back in the locker room, and Jon addressed the team with his final points before kick-off. As the team got up to leave the locker room, a few guys hesitated. This would normally have been the time when the team prayed before heading out to the field. Jon obviously wouldn't have known that; besides, he was in charge of game-day procedures now. Suddenly, Warren Sapp ordered everyone to come back. "We're going to pray," he said. "We've been doing this for six years, so somebody's got to step up and pray."</i></p> <p><i>Derrick thought that would mean a lot to me. He was right.</i></p> <p>p. 210</p> <p><i>1:14</i></p>
Trials	712-07	<p><i>If I'm going to call myself a Christian, I have to honor Jesus in the disappointments, too.</i></p> <p>p. 213</p> <p><i>10:4</i></p>
Pride	712-08	<p><i>Talent is God-given; be thankful. Praise is man-given; be humble. Conceit is self-given; be careful.</i></p> <p>DAVE DRISCOLL</p> <p>p. 215</p> <p><i>7:11</i></p>

Romans 4:4,5: "Now to the one who

works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as right-earning.

Blush Daily

Richard Alleine

MAY 18

Friends, whatever your faults are, do not mince the matter, do not count your errors little errors, your sins, little sins. Be sure of this, that mincing is not the way to mending. Shame yourselves before the Lord, abase yourselves in His sight; study the greatness of those you count your little sins; rip open your hearts, and find out what a nest of wickedness is there; ransack your ways, and see what a course of folly and vanity is to be found there, and do not go about to hide them. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper" (Prov. 28:13). Do not go about to hide them, but confess them, and spread them before the Lord, till your soul is ashamed. O that this word might send us to our homes, every one of us with an aching heart, and a blushing face, that it might make us all fall down before God, with Ezra's words in our mouth, "O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God, for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespasses are grown up unto the heavens" (Ezra 9:6). Let us blush at our hypocrisy, let us blush at our lukewarmness, let us blush at our worldliness and carnality; let us blush in our prayers, let us go blushing home, and weeping as we go; let us acknowledge we all are as an unclean thing, and our righteousness is as filthy rags.

*MAKE SMALL to appear
refined*

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

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Father I Adore
you # 15
All Three Verses

mending.