

In This Manner, Therefore, Pray – Part II

Matthew 6:11-14

Introduction – We have seen that we are to pray in the presence of the Father (vv5-8), through our union with Him in Christ (v9), consumed with a zeal for the glory of our God and King (vv9-10). The following petitions are in many ways, the means to this end. We are to pray for our daily provision, our daily reconciliation, and our daily protection, and all to His glory.

Daily Bread – Food is central to our physical lives, and this is no accident. Bread is central to having dominion over the earth, and was one of the first things to be affected by the fall. Obviously, bread is representative of all of our physical needs to sustain our lives. These are things we should pray for God to provide. It is disobedience not to ask for what we need, and it is disobedience to forget that God has provided (Deut 8).

Bread represents more than just our physical needs. Jesus is the manna from heaven, and so I should pray for daily mercies.

We are also acknowledging in the general request that God knows the specifics and we do not. For instance, God knows the food, the mercies, the job, and the spouse that you need. And there are numerous promises – “I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread” (Psalm 132:15), “...those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing” (Psalm 34:10). We also learn that it is good to pray for just enough in Proverbs 30:7-9.

In addition, He also knows the rebuke, the chastening, the sorrow, the suffering, the tribulation that you need. Remember, all of this is means to the greater end – the glory of God manifested in my life and in the world.

In all of this, it is good to see that Jesus is instructing us that the transcendent God of all creation, zealous for His own glory in everything, is concerned with your sandwich this afternoon.

Forgive Us Our Debts – After the prayer, Jesus goes back and gives additional commentary on this petition (vv14-15). “As we forgive our debtors” certainly means that there is a connection to our forgiveness and the forgiveness we extend. Do you see the assumption here? Christ assumes He is speaking to a disciple, that is one who forgives others. This was the blessing of the beatitude (Matt 5:7). The only way I can extend such forgiveness is by the grace of God, but the grace of God will cause me to live in such a way. I must question my own forgiveness if I am not one who extends forgiveness (Col 3:13).

False Forgiveness – How does forgiveness truly affect the Christian (Psalm 130:3-4)? If you fear God you will not think you can sin up a storm because of ‘the grace of God’. This is a false gospel. This is why we pray ‘forgive us our debts’, that we may understand the seriousness of our sin. Men look at their sins like people look at the stars, only noticing the biggest and brightest. But our lives are full of sin (Psalm 40:12, 38:3-4).

Christlike Forgiveness – Christ’s forgiveness is immediate (not ‘if I can find it in my heart to forgive you’). It is full and complete. His forgiveness restores the relationship. And Christ forgives you often. There are no bounds to His mercy (Zech 7:9, James 2:13).

Our Debts – There is a need to understand that we must confess our sins as covenant people – not just our own, but the sins of the whole church (Dan 9:3-19).

Do Not Lead Us Into Temptation – We not only want to be delivered from the guilt and debt of sin, but the power and influence as well. If you are growing in sanctification, you will love righteousness more and more and hate sin more and more.

Acknowledgments – God is in control of all things, and so there are trials and sufferings that He will have you go through. We are weak and constantly dependent upon His grace to avoid sin. If I do not pray this prayer, I lie to myself of my own self-sufficiency.

Deliver Us from Evil – The evil is of the devil, our own flesh, and the world. And so we are praying for strength to resist (James 4:7), grace to mortify our own flesh (Col 3:5), and repentance when we do fall. But your prayers are a mockery of God’s goodness if you do not employ the other means He gives – the Word, the Lord’s Day gatherings, the admonition of brothers.

For Thine is the Kingdom... We end where we began, acknowledging the nature and purpose of prayer – the unending and expanding glory of God. This Doxology answers the question “why should I pray this prayer”.

The Textus Receptus – How come some of us don’t have this part in our Bibles? Who should make that decision – Thomas Nelson publishers and Rupert Murdoch, unbelieving Academies, or the confessing church (Rom 3:2)?

Confidence That God Will Answer – His kingdom is the whole earth (Dan 4:34-35). His power and authority is over all heaven and earth (Matt 28:18), and nothing will stop His decreed will to declare His glory everywhere (Eph 1:11-12). To not believe these things is the sin of unbelief. To affirm these things and then not to give yourself to obedience and faithful labor is to be a hypocrite. What are the means that God has given you (us) to see His kingdom come and His will to be done right now. And so we say – Amen.