

## **Reflection on the Lord's Prayer (part 2)**

In the opening of the Lord's Prayer, we pray to God our father, and pray first for His kingdom needs and priorities-for His name to be considered Holy, His kingdom to become visible, for people to serve Him, living under His authority. When we have that perspective in our lives, then we can turn to our needs, as God is our merciful provider, and we live in the context of His kingdom.

We continue to pray... **Give us this day our daily bread**

God is the creator, the almighty and yet He also cares for us, and wants us to ask for our needs-our daily sustenance. This is our fourth petition-a reminder of our utter dependence on God for our existence and our food:" I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-dresser....As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." (John 15:1 &4b)

However, this petition is not only for food. It is also about asking God to satisfy our spiritual needs as well. We are reminded of the scripture that Jesus cited when tempted, (from Deuteronomy 8:5) *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word, that comes from the mouth of God."* (Matthew 4:4) Jesus also pointed to the fact that He is the one who satisfies our spiritual hunger because He is the *"Bread of Life."*

...**forgive us our sins...**

We make our fifth petition. Our sins separate us from the love of God, and although Christ died once for all to sacrifice an offering for our sin, we need to continually come before Him asking for forgiveness, and thus restore us spiritually. Asking for forgiveness reminds us of our need and His faithfulness. (1 John 1:8-9)

...**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

We must forgive others as he has forgiven us-we imitate God and forgive others as we ourselves have been absolved of our sins; this is one of the most significant ways of healing broken human relationships. Forgiveness this brings joy and gratitude-a "God-given-great" attitude! We do not do this to earn our salvation, but rather to respond to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Let us never forget that how we forgive determines whether God will forgive us or not.

Our sixth petition is ...**Lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil...**

In James we read that God cannot tempt us. (James 1:13) Therefore, we need to understand exactly what it is that we are saying here. We remember that God allowed Job to be tested, but that God Himself was not the agent of testing. Jesus is praying with us and for us that we will not face insurmountable temptations to sin, for His protection and His deliverance. We pray that he will help us and rescue us.... "So that we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison..." (2 Corinthians 4:16-17)

We conclude the prayer

**...for thine is the Kingdom,**

**the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

An outburst of praise brings our prayer to its climax. It is appropriate to close our prayer on a high note, because we believe that Christ will come again and that He has already won the victory over death. This vision of ultimate and inevitable glory is the trajectory along which we live our lives. Amen. Come Lord Jesus! We pray for the Lord to come daily in our lives, and with our collective minds' eye on his triumphant second coming!

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