

Coach House Church

BEACONS

PRAYER PART 2

27TH MAY 2020

Last time I spoke I talked about some of the aspects of the Lord's Prayer. Many of us see prayer as a time when we ask for stuff. Now there is nothing wrong with asking for stuff, in fact God wants us to seek Him for His provision as it delights Him for us to be getting involved in His work. That said, as we saw last time, the Lord's Prayer is not so much about asking for stuff and much more about recognising who God is and our relationship with Him. In this beacon I want to look at the practical applications of what we saw last time, examples of where Jesus himself prayed in the way He taught His disciples to do, and to see what happened as a result of the prayer.

Lets read the Prayer as it appears in Luke's Gospel.

"Father, may your name be kept holy. May your kingdom come soon. Give us each day the food we need, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation"

So to recap from last time: we saw that there were 6 examples in the prayer; Establishing a right relationship with God, Acknowledging God's holiness and sovereignty, Seeking God's will and purpose, Seeking to be a willing servant, God's provision for us, and Forgiving others.

In the Bible there are four different accounts of Jesus life whilst he was here on earth. These each show different aspects of Jesus life and are called Gospels. Gospel, by the way, just means Good News. We all like a good news story and the Gospels are the best Good News there has ever been. The Gospel written by Luke from which we read the Lord's Prayer, is the one that portrays Jesus in very ordinary everyday settings. Luke portrays Jesus as an ordinary person and whilst

Jesus did some extraordinary things the stories we read in Luke's Gospel are easy to relate to and for that reason it is a good example to follow.

So what about the examples of Jesus in prayer. Lets start at the beginning with Jesus baptism. This happens in Chapter 3 and verse 21, and, to set the scene, a man named John the baptist, who was actually Jesus cousin, had been baptising people in the river Jordan.

It says "One day, when the crowds were being baptised, Jesus himself was baptised. As He was praying, the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit, in bodily form, descended on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said 'This is my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy'"

Luke doesn't tell us here exactly what Jesus was praying but from the result we can see that it must have been along the lines of the first example in the Lord's Prayer. Using the traditional words "Our Father who art in heaven". Jesus was establishing that right relationship with His father. And the result was that the Holy Spirit came down and Jesus was audibly given God's blessing. When you become a Christian for most people the first thing that happens is usually that you pray with someone. In doing so you recognise who God is and immediately God will welcome you into His family.

The second line, **"May your name be kept Holy"** is about acknowledging God's Holiness and Sovereignty. In Chapter 9 and verse 28 it says **"Jesus took Peter, John and James up on a mountain to pray. As he was praying, the appearance of His face was transformed, and His clothes became dazzling white"**

Here, as in the previous example, Luke does not record the actual content of the prayer but does record the outcome. Holiness is about purity. God can not be in the presence of sin and it was important that Jesus was not only free from sin but that it was obvious to others that this was the case. We need to recognise what Holiness is and we bring ourselves to that place in prayer. God's endorsement of Jesus was emphatic and concludes with a second instance of a voice being heard from Heaven. "This is my Son, the chosen one, listen to Him"

The third point was about seeking God's will. From the example I am going to give we can see that this might take a bit more effort. In Chapter 6 and verse 12 we read about Jesus choosing 12 of his many followers, to be set aside for the special

purpose of spreading His gospel. It says **“One day Jesus went up on a mountain to pray, and he prayed to God all night. At daybreak he called together all of his disciples and chose 12 of them to be apostles”** We can see from this, that in this instance, Jesus is seeking Gods will to be done. Choosing the apostles was an important step and Jesus recognised this. He needed to listen to God in order to get the choice right. Jesus was willing to put in the effort in order to get this right reminding us that sometimes we must also put a bit of effort in sometimes, especially when we have important decisions to make.

The fourth point was to be a willing servant. On the night that Jesus was going to be betrayed and arrested, after eating the passover meal, Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives to pray. He said **“Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine”** Jesus knew what was about to happen and was no less fearful of it than you or I would be. His close relationship with the father was such that his only response was to be close to the father in prayer. Jesus demonstrates that his priority was not his own well-being but the will of the Father.

We know that after Jesus was arrested he was beaten, ill treated and put to death on a cross. It is in this situation that we find the sixth example, forgiving others. As he was being crucified Jesus said **“Father forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing”** Even though the soldiers were the ones carrying out the orders to crucify Jesus, even though they themselves beat him Jesus did not feel any hatred towards them. Instead Jesus prayed that God would forgive them. This can be the hardest prayer to pray, but Jesus showed that it is an important part of our relationship with God.

Now if you were paying attention you might be asking what about example 5, Gods provision for us? Remember we said that this was more about recognising Gods provision than asking for it in the first place. Jesus showed this when he fed 5000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fishes. In chapter 9 and verse 16 it says Jesus took the 5 loaves and 2 fish and looked up towards heaven and blessed them. Jesus was just recognising that Gods provision was sufficient.

We have seen here that Jesus lived his life as a perfect example of the words He taught us in the Lord's Prayer. The good news is that there is nothing whatsoever to stop us from following this example.

The words of the Lord's Prayer teach us to spend more time considering who God is and how to do His will, and less time considering our own needs and wants. As you pray, bear in mind the lessons from The Lord's Prayer and enjoy drawing closer to God.



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