



Q&A
22 August 2020

NOTES

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Q1. What was the purpose of the Lord's Prayer? How do we relate to it as New Testament believers?

We call it the Lord's Prayer but really it's our prayer. He gave it to His disciples. His prayer is in John 17. Our prayer is in Matthew 6:9-14.

But we pray it as post-cross disciples.

Pre-cross: *'And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors... For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses'* (Matt.6:12, 14-15).

Post-cross: *'And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you'* (Eph.4:32)

It's not a prayer to be prayed verbatim but is a model of how our prayers should be structured. *'In this manner, pray...'*

There are 6 parts to the prayer showing us what things should be included in our prayers:

#1 God's Name

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name." (Matthew 6:9)

Prayer is based upon relationship. God is our Father. Prayer begins with worship. His name is to be hallowed, i.e. glorified and esteemed higher than any other name. Use this part of your prayer to worship and praise the Lord.

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#2 God's Reign

"Your kingdom come." (Matthew 6:10)

When people are born again they are brought into the kingdom of God. To pray for God's kingdom to come is to pray for the spread of the gospel.

In this part of your prayer, pray for:

- Those who preach the gospel
- Your unsaved friends, neighbours etc
- The ministry of the local church
- Evangelism in the local church
- Evangelism in the community
- Evangelism in our nation
- Evangelism in other nations

#3 God's Will

"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10)

Use this part of your prayer to pray that you may understand and do God's will.

#4 Our Needs

"Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11)

Use this part of your prayer to bring your daily needs to God.

#5 Our Sins

"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" (Matthew 6:12)

There are two parts to this request:

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God's Forgiveness Of Us.

God has already forgiven all our sins through the blood of Jesus. At times we do still sin. Yet, we are still righteous, even when we sin.

Our Forgiveness Of Others.

Under the new covenant we do not forgive to be forgiven. We forgive because we have been forgiven. Use this part of your prayer to forgive those who have offended you

#6 Our Enemy

"Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matthew 6:13)

The devil will try to defeat us by tempting us to sin. Use this part of your prayer to ask that God will keep you from succumbing to the temptations of Satan.

Q2. Under grace what could be a good prayer for someone who wants to give their life to Jesus? Should one teach them to confess their sins? Which words would fit best? Would it be sufficient to confess according to Romans. 10:9?

The main thing to keep in mind is that we are saved by grace through faith. People can express their faith in Jesus to receive salvation in different ways.

- Raising their hand
- Walking to the front of the church to confess their sins
- Calling upon the Lord to be saved, saying "the sinner's prayer"
- Baptism

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Any of these things can be a way of expressing faith in Christ, but none of them will save a person if they are not a demonstration of one's faith.

A prayer which expresses faith would be something like this:

'Father, I know I have sinned against you and that my sin has resulted in separation from you. But I thank you that you love me so much you sent your own Son, Jesus, to die in my place so that I could be forgiven. I trust completely in Jesus for my salvation and thank you that I now have the gift of righteousness and eternal life and am your child forever. Thank you Father for your amazing grace. In the name of Jesus, amen.'

What about repentance? Does our faith need to be coupled with repentance before we can be saved?

The word '**repentance**' is a translation of the Greek word metanoia meaning to change one's mind. **Meta** = after; **noeo** = to perceive or think. Literally, '**think again**'. Essentially repentance is synonymous with faith in Christ. We previously held to certain views contrary to the gospel.

For example:

- Salvation is by our good works
- Salvation is by keeping the law
- Salvation is through another religion
- There is no need to be saved
- Atheism etc

But when we heard the gospel, we repented (changed our mind) and put our trust in Christ.

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E.g. *“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 2:36-38).

Doesn't repentance mean that we need to turn from our sins? Whilst we acknowledge that a sinful lifestyle is wrong the work of turning from that is not involved in our justification. It is our sanctification, which is also a work of the Holy Spirit and is a progressive work throughout our lifetime.

Q3. How are we to understand communion? Is it true that when we hear the word of grace we are eating the bread and drinking wine in spirit form because the New Testament is spirit? Is it true that when I am taking communion I am leaving Jesus to go back to shadows because Christ is in me? This is my body, eat of it means confessing what God has done? Explain 1 Corinthians 10:18; 11:22-26.

‘The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread. Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons’ (1 Cor.10:16-22)

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Just as participation at the table of the heathen brought them into communion with demons, so partaking of the table of the Lord causes us to partake of Him and also of the others who partake. The cup and bread are blessed to minister that purpose.

Both Jesus and Paul definitely intended us to understand taking the bread and wine literally.

The wine represents the blood of Jesus, shed for us for the remission of ALL our sins. Sin will never be imputed to us. We will never come into judgment for sin. '*Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him*' (Rom.5:9). At communion we proclaim His death in our place.

Righteousness is accomplished in the spirit. The bread is His body i.e. the Church.

Through the bread we remember we are joined to Him and to one another

The health of the body is our health. We can experience His strength, health, healing and wholeness just by being rightly related in the body.

The opposite is true. Disharmony in the body results in sickness. But the Corinthians did not understand this. '*Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse*' (1 Cor.11:17)

Healing needs to be experienced in the body. Paul was concerned that many did not experience healing, because they did not discern the Lord's body.

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'Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep' (1 Cor.11:27-30).

- 'Unworthily' — in an unworthy manner
- 'Weak' — literally means without strength
- 'Sick' — used five times in the Greek New Testament. In every case, it means physical sickness
- 'Sleep' — this word also means death but only when applied to Christians
- Many were weak, sick and died prematurely because they did not discern the Lord's body and were therefore partaking in an unworthy manner.

11:27&28. Examine (judge) yourself that you are eating worthily, in a worthy manner. This means:

- a) We discern the blood. We understand the finished work of Christ has qualified us for everything, including healing;
- b) We discern the body of the Lord, i.e. that His life and health flows through His body.

'Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much' (James 5:14-16).

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Q4. What should be our approach to homosexuality under grace? What can we say about it? One Christian psychotherapist has written a book about it and he comes to the conclusion that homosexuality is wanted by God. What do you think about it? How can we deal with this topic, especially within churches? Is it sin or not? Can we accept homosexual people/couples in the church, even though their faith in Jesus does not bring forth any visible changes?

The Bible is very clear about this subject that it is a sin. '*You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination*' (Lev.18:22). '*If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death*' (Lev.20:13). '*For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due*' (Rom.1:26-27).

Having said that we must remember:

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- It is not the only sin
- It is not an unpardonable sin. *'Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God'* (1 Cor.6:9-11).
- Our mission is not to moralise society but to preach the gospel. *'I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person"'* (1 Cor.5:9-13).

How should we deal with this situation in our churches?

- With much prayer and care
- With much patience – reasoning with them from the scriptures, pleading with them, etc.
- If there is repentance (change of mind) we receive them, even if there appears to be little visible fruit

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- But if there is no repentance, we need to disassociate ourselves with them. This could mean asking them not to partake of communion, or not to attend church. '*Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth*' (1 Cor.5:6-8).

Q5. During your series in Romans, you mention two ways that a Christian can come back into bondage: by going back into sin, and by going back under law. How is 'bondage' to be understood, please? Not losing salvation, but rewards? A carnal Christian? Two scriptures come to mind: Rom 8:13: '*For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*' What does 'die' mean here, please? Not die in terms of not gaining eternal life, I understand? Rom 8:14: '*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*' What if we are saved, but not led by the Spirit then? Still sons of God, but fleshly?

'Bondage' means to come under the dominion of something or Someone other than Jesus and His grace. '*...for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage*' (2 Pet.2:19). We were created to serve something or Someone and we will always do so. E.g. Adam thought he found freedom from God but became a slave to sin and Satan.

Three characteristics of bondage:

- 1) Addiction
- 2) Life domination
- 3) Destruction.

It comes with a price tag.

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People think they can be free of sin's dominion through the law. But that only brings them into greater bondage. True freedom can only be found in Jesus and His grace. *'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed'* (John 8:34-36).

Regarding Romans 8:13-14 Paul is **not** teaching **'cause and effect'** otherwise he would be advocating justification by works. **Salvation is a gift.** In the verses before, as we saw in our previous session, he is contrasting those who are 'in the flesh' and those who are 'in the Spirit'. Those in the flesh will die. Those in the Spirit will live. Those who are in the Spirit are sons of God and have the means, through the Spirit, to mortify the deeds of the body.

RESOURCES

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