

Matthew 19-07-28b

The ability to praise God is something that we're going to see this morning as we continue our study in Matthew chapter 6. This is what Jesus introduces the model prayer with, and we'll get there here shortly, but we're picking up in verse 5, when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites. They love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets that they may be seen by men. We still have the theme here, and the theme this morning is, what reward are you after? And if you were going to title this, if I was working with Patty to figure out something to put on a cassette label like we used to do, the summarizing title of this would be, what reward are you after? That's what Jesus introduces this with, and each of these has that element of, where is your reward? You do it to be seen by people, you got your reward.

They saw you. But the esteem of people is fickle. Look at how popular, you know, people are until they're not.

And some wrong word escapes their lips, or some peccadillo, or some bad action on their part comes to the attention of the public, and there's a feeding frenzy, and people that used to be esteemed as the singer on the cruise ship fall overboard, and now they're popular with the people who are shallow enough to base their esteem on superficial things like this, are also shallow enough to turn and tear you to pieces on a whim. And if that's the reward you want, that's the reward you're going to get. So when you pray, so what have we seen so far? It is a charitable deed.

This is some sort of contribution. It can be a monetary contribution, it can be an effort contribution, it is something overt, something that costs you either time, effort, or money. That's alms, that's a charitable deed.

It can be a contribution you make, you go through your closet and take a bunch of things, and, you know, us personally, if we have a choice, say, between goodwill or salvation army, you know, which one is closer to incorporating Christ and Christian values and representing Christ? Your salvation army is more Christian than goodwill. And you trace the roots of it, and the way they do things, and the division of spoils when it comes to how are the monetary proceeds distributed. This is why you have to be careful with charitable organizations.

There was a big scandal with UNICEF in days gone by. You look at the United Way, you look at Red Cross, and you think, well, it's a cross, and it's got to be great. If you want to be a good steward before God, and you want to give to charities beyond the local and the immediate, and things that you know well, it is required in a steward that a man be found faithful.

And to be a faithful steward, you want to look into charitable giving carefully. Now, are you doing charitable giving for a tax write-off? Well, that's your reward. But would you

rather do it? Maybe you don't get a tax write-off, but your Father in Heaven is going to smile.

This is not hard to grasp here. We're looking at the specifics. So first of all was charitable deeds.

Now we're talking about prayer. Prayer is a completely left turn from doing what you do to be seen by men, you would think. But as it turns out, people in Jesus' day and ever since had turned prayer into a public performance art.

And it continues to be a place to have great caution when it comes to public prayer. I'm not talking about let's all join hands and ask God's blessing on the food. This is the oratorical prayers.

I grew up listening to these in large churches. Somebody is going to stand at the microphone and pray on behalf of the congregation. Cuidado.

Caution. Beware. Watch out.

If your experience is like mine, pastor gets to the end of the sermon and he didn't quite get all of his points in, so he finishes up in the prayer. Oh, Lord, help us do the following. And then he puts his five points of application into the prayer.

And he's not really talking to God. He's talking to the people. Oh, Lord, help us to not be hypocrites and put a little bit more money in the plate.

And the parsonage has got a hole in the roof. And oh, Lord, help that hole get healed. And I mean, that's an exaggeration.

But prayer has been turned into a performance art. And there are people who are known for their prayers. I've heard people talk in big churches about, oh, I just love to hear that man pray.

And even if you do love to hear somebody pray, don't say so. Don't create the potential for subjectivity and for somebody to say, well, you know, I really need to be sure this next prayer I deliver lives up to the last one I gave because people really thought I knocked that one out of the park in the same way that a pastor should not be worried about what people think of the delivery. What's going to happen if I start measuring Bible classes by how many times people smiled or how enjoyable people thought it was, or how many people come up after, you know, as they're filing out of the building, quote unquote, and shaking hands and, oh, just love that.

And, you know, well, that went over well. Rather than standing before the Lord, and I'm using myself as an example, but this is the case for you and whatever your gift or your opportunities are. We all have to stand before the Lord and say, did I do my best to take

advantage of that opportunity and to do the best I could as unto the Lord.

Here is God's word. It's, I almost didn't get out of the Marine Corps and go to seminary. And I've told you all this before, because it's daunting to think that you have to be the one to take God's word on board and re-present it, learn it, and then present it.

And it's daunting. What if you screw it up? What if you, you know, mess up and lead others astray? There's horrible discipline described in the Bible for those that go astray and lead others also. Well, if you stand up here and misrepresent and misteach, that's what you're doing.

And it's, sobering, awesome responsibility. And I can't worry about what you all think of the lesson. I worry if, if I get feedback that it wasn't clear or that I, you know, messed up in presentation aspects, obviously that feedback is necessary, but in terms of the content and what is presented, everybody that does this job has to be sure that what they present or they ought to be sure, what they present is coming from the pages of the word of God.

It's not a soapbox. It's not a platform for political opinion or discussion of the day's events. This is food for our souls.

And if I eat it myself and don't share, Jesus told a parable about the servant who began to get in and, you know, eat the master's goods and wasn't a good steward. If I don't find it and I don't present it and it's all off track, we all have to do what we do in the presence of God and as unto the Lord and be faithful and do the best we can with what he's put before us as unto him. And I have to ask myself at the end of every Bible class, is God pleased with the effort that I put into it, with the way that it was done, with the content? Have I done my best before the Lord? And sometimes people think it's great.

I can't really factor that in. Sometimes people are rolling their eyes and probably rightfully so, but I can't use that as a measure. Can't.

And you can't either. When you do what you do, when you exercise your opportunities and responsibilities and express your spiritual gift, you cannot go by the response. Was the Lord Jesus a faithful teacher? Was he the best teacher that ever was? Did he not distill and present the essence of heavenly truth in the most effective, most pertinent, most inspired, most wonderful way that it can be done? Nobody knocked it out of the park every time he opened his lips like the Lord Jesus.

What was the response? Well, they tried to throw him off a cliff in his hometown. The Pharisees were trying to hunt him down and kill him repeatedly. The leadership in Israel, the people groaned and left when he started talking about, eat my flesh and drink my blood.

And it was the inspired word of God. And there was a reaction and Jesus eventually

ended up being crucified with the approval and support of his own people as a criminal for doing exactly what God wanted him to do. You cannot measure.

You can take it into account. You don't want to be doing a bad job and not responding to feedback. Suggestions are great.

Godly counsel and speaking the truth in love is a wonderful thing. But as soon as you take that suggestion or criticism on board, you've got to go stand in front of the Father and ask him, is this your way of helping me do a better job? Is this your way of showing me my shortcoming, the truth in the words of a loving fellow believer or whatever it may be? But it all has to be in the presence of the Father. That's what Jesus is emphasizing here in the almsgiving.

What did he say? Your father sees in secret. You're doing this because you know your father sees it. Nobody else has to see it.

Your father sees in secret. So now when he turns to prayer, don't be like the hypocrites standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets out in the public in order to be seen and heard. You, when you pray in your room, shut the door, pray to your father in the secret place.

It's between you and him. And your father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen.

That's one thing to say as the self-righteous Jews. But he says this repetition is what the godless, what the pagans, what the Romans and the Greeks and the Scythians and the Carpathians and all these other people that are outside, what they do. I don't even know if there were Carpathians in this time.

I don't know why that word even came to my mind. But foreigners, Gentiles, the Goyim think that there is some value in repetition. And the extreme of this is the Hindu religions and it's almost hypnosis.

It's hypnotic to repeat a word until you don't recognize it as a word and it loses its meaning. And you're almost in a trance. But you look at the repetition on Mount Carmel in Elijah's day, where over and over again they were appealing to Baal as though, and Elijah mocks him and says, maybe you're not shouting loud enough.

You've been repeating yourself over and over and he doesn't seem to hear. So not as the heathen. Repetition is not required.

What does Jesus say? They think that they will be heard for their many words. Short, sweet, and to the point. Everybody's got their own relationship with God.

But I will tell you that I have probably got one of the, in some senses, I will just say this

much. I don't typically pray for things more than once a day. I feel like I go before God.

I don't need to pester him. He knows a lot more than I know. He knows my heart.

He knows my concern. I go to the Lord and I say, Lord, we've talked about this. I pray that you'll work your will.

Help me to see my part when I should act, when I should speak, when I should not act, when I should not speak. Let your word be a lamp to my feet and a light to my path in this particular issue. Thank you that you're involved.

Thank you that you care. And I'm done. And the Lord will not hear from me for the rest of that day.

Because anytime it returns to my mind, I already know I've committed it to him. He doesn't need to hear from me again. Do I think that by repeating it, he's going to be more interested? And look, everybody's different.

I'm not telling you, you have to pray the way I do. I'm just saying that for me, I trust God enough that I only really need to tell him a few times. And I'm good.

I'm not lackadaisical. I'm not disinterested. I'm not apathetic.

But I also think that there is a part of faith that says, I've already put this in the Lord's hands. And once it's in his hands, I don't have to remind him that it's in his hands. I already told him that I know that's where it is, and I'm happy for him to work with it.

And what I need to do is spend my clock cycles, not burning time, repeating things that I've already said to God and that he's already heard and he already knows. I need to spend that time analyzing my place and my part. There is a big opportunity for me to apply the word of God and to ensure that I have my eyes dotted and my T's crossed and that I am doing what I should do.

And that time is more profitably spent not me talking to God and saying things I've already said, but letting God talk to me, reviewing his word, reviewing what I've learned, reviewing what I know, seeing if I can apply more fully. And that's the direction Jesus is going here in this section. Go to the secret place, shut your door, pray to your father who is in the secret place.

And the reason they've translated it this way in the New King James, rather than just in secret, is that's the strong implication of the Greek here. This is a private place. You need to get away from distractions and your father is going to meet you there.

This is why Jesus went off by himself to pray. He was surrounded by huge crowds during the day, still had his disciples at night, but he even got away from the disciples and he would go off by himself. He met God in the secret place.

He didn't have a house. He didn't have a door to shut. But again, these are metaphorical.

They represent the need for the element of privacy. Your prayer is between you and God, the father. God, the father, do not be like these that use many repetitions thinking they will be heard for their many words.

Do not be like them. Your father knows the things you have need of before you ask him. And this is something to remember when you approach him.

You're not filling him in on something he doesn't know. What are we trying to do then? Why do we pray at all? If God already knows and we're trusting him to provide, to lead, to guide, to resolve, to manage situations, why do we pray at all? Because God will reward those who pray. Your father in the secret place who sees in secret will reward you, verse 6. When you pray, he will reward you.

This is something we are to do. Pray, not for God's benefit, but for ours. And if it benefits us to pray more frequently, then pray more frequently.

Me personally, I don't get benefit from repeating my prayer multiple times in a day. I get more benefit from saying, okay, I have brought that before the father in my personal private prayer. Now what I need to do is concentrate on my part.

I don't want there to be an obvious neon lit thing that I should be doing or should be saying or should not be doing and not be saying and be missing it because I'm too busy pestering God, asking him to resolve something when I'm supposed to be doing something here. I'm supposed to be paying attention to something down here. I'll give you just a real quick, super, super present example.

If you're driving your car and you're trying to get someplace you haven't been before and you've got Google Maps going on your phone, if you spend too much time appealing to Google Maps and looking at the screen and saying, well, where exactly is this? And where exactly is my next turn? And you're not gripping the wheel and looking out the, out the, you know, put the thing in, put it on voice, let Mrs. Google talk, keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road and go to the destination. If you spend too much time double checking and wondering about the traffic and the weather and what's around me, and you get too much time appealing to the source of your direction, instead of directing yourself to the goal, you're going to be a danger to yourself and others. So check it, be sure you know you're going in the right way and listen to the instructions, but keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road.

That's what Jesus is saying here about prayer. So, do not be like them. Your father knows the things you have needed before you ask him in this manner, therefore pray, our father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Why does he start this way? There's, I'm sure you like me have heard endless coverages

of what of the quote-unquote Lord's Prayer. It's a huge misnomer. This is not the Lord's Prayer.

Jesus did not pray this prayer himself. He says this is the disciples prayer. This is a model prayer for us.

When you pray, you pray this way. He doesn't say when I pray like I did earlier, this is how I do it. He says when you pray, this is what you should do.

And notice he doesn't say when you pray, pray these words. The rote repetition of this prayer is not necessarily a bad thing, but it's not an incantation. It's not a spell.

It's not a magical way to get results. Jesus says in this manner, not these exact words. This is the way to pray.

Here's one example of many that would fit this pattern. So prayer is addressed to the father. When you pray, pray to the father.

There is no example anywhere else in scripture. Jesus doesn't pray to anybody but the father. He doesn't say, oh, Holy Spirit.

None of the apostles anywhere at any time pray to anybody but the father. Paul has more of his recorded prayers than anybody in scripture. We have more of the recorded prayers of Paul than anyone.

And in none of them does he pray to Jesus ever. All of Paul's prayers go through and count them. We did a study years ago, and I covered something like 13 separate prayers by Paul that are recorded by him in his epistles.

And he says, I bow my knee to the father. I pray the father that you understand the following things. I pray to the father.

And there's over a dozen times where Paul records his prayers and every single one of them is to the father. Jesus said pray to the father. Paul prays to the father.

Nobody else anywhere prays to anybody but the father. So do not pray to Jesus. Do not pray to the Holy Spirit.

And try to not groan audibly if you hear someone pray a prayer and then say in your name, amen. Because if they say in your name, they're praying to Jesus. We don't pray to the Lord Jesus.

There is no encouragement or example in scripture for praying to Jesus. And you think, well, doesn't that seem kind of an odd thing? Aren't we his body? He said he is with us and will be in us. He's communicating to us.

But prayer is not communication with Jesus. Prayer is communication with the father in heaven. Hebrews chapter 10.

We enter boldly by a new and living way through the veil, which is his flesh by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. We enter into the throne room of God, the father and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews chapter 10, read it.

Jesus is the way. John 14, six, read it. I am the way.

I am not the destination. I am the way I'm the truth. I'm the life.

You come to the father through me. Jesus said, come to the father. You are related to the father.

You have been adopted as sons by the father. Romans chapter eight, so that Jesus might be the firstborn among many brethren. He is the son of God.

We are sons of God. We are brethren. He is the firstborn among many brethren.

We are all sons of the father. Cannot emphasize enough that you're related to God through Christ, but you're related to God, God, the father. He is the one we speak to.

And notice in all of these previous prayers and previous operations, Jesus says, you're going to meet the father in secret. The father is in the secret place. You are going to meet him and talk to him there.

He doesn't say I will be there. If he was involved, why wouldn't he tell the disciples as long as I am with you, come to me. And when I am gone, you can pray to me.

And, and this has been carried to an extreme when you go to the Catholic church. And not only can you pray to Jesus, but you can pray to saints and you can pray to Mary. Oh, Mary, I know you've got leverage.

You've got influence. You put in a good word for me. You have a foot in the door of heaven and, and, uh, Oh, St. Bartholomew, you know, St. you know, lady of the highways and all the, you know, St. this and St. that and St. the other and the merit of the saints.

I'm going to, I'm going to leverage somebody else's righteousness to get in. It's blasphemy to think that you're going to leverage somebody besides the Lord Jesus in coming to God. Jesus is the only source of righteousness for us.

You can't invoke a saint. You can't invoke Jesus mother. It's absurd.

It's unbiblical. It's heretical and it's blasphemous. Our father in heaven hallowed be your name.

The focus is the father. The purpose is to please the father. We live our lives before the

father.

Our reward comes from the father. Everything hinges on the father. It is his name that should be respected, that should be praised, that should be hallowed.

What we do, we do in the name of the father, nothing short of that. And, and again, when Jesus said, take heed, beware people in these days, talk a lot about the kingdom, it's kingdom work. It's a kingdom ministry.

It's kingdom righteousness. It's kingdom this and kingdom that. It falls short.

What kingdom are they talking about? It's, it's a kingdom that hasn't come yet, but who's the king of that kingdom? When people say the kingdom and you say, well, what king are you talking about? They'll say, king who? King Jesus. I'm doing kingdom work. I'm doing it for King Jesus.

No, it's, it's wrong. Did you hear me? Kingdom talk for Christians in this age is an error. Don't fall for it.

Don't be sucked into it. Don't glide along with it. It is wrong.

Listen to the Lord Jesus himself. When Jesus prays this next line, your kingdom come, what kingdom is that? That is not the kingdom people are talking about here. And it is not King Jesus.

He didn't say my kingdom come. Did he? Why not? Could he have said it? Sorry about that. I just want to be sure you're paying attention.

He did not say my kingdom come, thy kingdom come. Our eyes, the Lord Jesus's eyes are not even on his own kingdom. It's not the millennial kingdom.

It's not the imposition of the rule of the Davidic Kings. That's going to come after the return of the Lord Jesus. It is the ultimate destination.

The final resolution, the ultimate reward is in the kingdom of the father. That's where the new Jerusalem is. That's where your home is hopefully going to be close to, or praise God, the possibility inside the new Jerusalem.

That's where we want to be. That's the father we want to please. That is the king whose kingdom we want to enter and be qualified to dwell within is the kingdom of the father.

Your kingdom come. And if we can keep this in mind, it conditions everything we do. We love the Lord Jesus and we are endeavoring to avail ourselves of the grace that came to us through him.

He is our example. He is our savior. It takes nothing away from the Lord Jesus, but he

himself said, I'm not the destination.

I am the way. And I am not the king. The father is the king.

And modern Christianity, postmodern Christianity has gotten so diverted into kingdom talk and King Jesus and their songs. And there's, there's a bunch of songs that are praying to the Holy Spirit and it is distraction at best. And it is destructive at worst, because to the extent that you get enmeshed in that, you're not thinking the thoughts that Jesus has gone to great pains to elaborate here in chapter five and chapter six.

It is the righteousness that partakes of the father. It is the acts and prayers that please the father. You meet the father in the secret place through the Lord Jesus, by means of the Holy Spirit, Paul's going to elaborate that in this age of the spirit, we have more resources.

I was reading, I don't know how many copies of this have even survived, but I actually have a legal size sheaf of yellow paper, eight or 10 pages that is a Bob themes outline of the gospel of Matthew. Save that things for years. It's, it's curling around the edges.

The paper is old and things got to be 40 years old if it's a day, but I was reviewing through there. And when I got to Matthew chapter six, Bob themes note was this is not for Christians because this material doesn't mention life in the Holy spirit. This was a short term bandaid action for just the three years that the age of the law would continue before Jesus is crucified.

And this was a quick fix for how the disciples should live during that time. And most of you know that I appreciate Bob to the nines, but I respectfully disagree here. It isn't that, that because this isn't the age of the spirit, it doesn't pertain to us.

It does what the law does. And remember the righteous requirement of the law is filled, is fulfilled in us who do not walk after the flesh, but after the spirit, Paul's going to elaborate this, but it doesn't mean that there's anything wrong with the requirement. And these things, in my humble opinion, do pertain directly to us.

Unlike the disciples, when the spirit was not yet given because Christ was not yet glorified, you're not going to try this and fall short and say that Jesus is elaborating the law here. By the law comes the knowledge of sin. By the law comes the knowledge of our inadequacy.

We need to do these things. Is there something wrong with the law? Paul asks. No, the law is holy, righteous, and good.

These instructions are holy, righteous, and good, and they pertain to you and they pertain to me. We have been given the gift of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to actually do it. So the fact that the spirit is not yet given doesn't mean that this doesn't

apply to us.

And I'm laying a foundation here because what is the next line? Give us your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Whose will is done in heaven? Is it the will of the Holy Spirit, formally speaking? I'm sure the Holy Spirit agrees. Is it the will of the Lord Jesus that is done in heaven? Who's in charge of heaven? If Jesus was sent from heaven and was down here for a while, did he have to get somebody else to watch the shop while he was away? Who's in charge of heaven? It's the Father.

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And we say, well, that day is not going to come until the millennium. Listen, that day happens every day.

We pay attention to the words of the Lord Jesus. If you do what you do not to be seen by men, but before the Father, knowing that your reward comes from the Father, you are doing the Father's will on earth the way the will of the Father is done in heaven. In heaven, angels don't carry out God's will so that they can admire each other or reward each other or applaud each other.

An angel doesn't blow a trumpet in heaven so that other angels will look and then he can strut around and say, you see what a shiny angel I am? Why do the angels in heaven blow trumpets? Because God told him to, and they're doing the will of the Father. So when Jesus says, you need to pray that the Father's will be done on earth as it is in heaven, what are we praying? Lord, help me to be as obedient and compliant and conscious of your name and your will down here on earth in my daily life as the angels in heaven are. May your will be done in my life as fully as with the level of dedication, commitment, and complete obedience as it is in heaven.

It's a pertinent prayer. It is a prayer for myself. I can't control what a lot of people do in terms of God's will on earth, but where do I have power myself? So when I go before the Lord and I say, I'm basically saying I want to accomplish your will as perfectly and as completely as it is in heaven.

Your will be done. To the extent that I have anything to say about it, that's my heart. That's my goal.

Then Jesus says, give us this day. It says in your text here, give us this day, our daily bread, verse 11. It's not what it says.

It literally says, give us today tomorrow's bread. Give us today tomorrow's bread. Literally what it says.

A lot of modern translations actually translate it that way. It's not daily bread and you're not saying, well, I'm looking around here today and I wonder where the bread is going to come from. Lord, give me today's bread.

Give me my today bread. No, give me today tomorrow's bread. Now in another place, Jesus is going to say, take no thought for the morrow.

Look at the lilies of the field. They toil not, neither do they spin. Your father knows what they need, right? So take no thought.

Why is it you can take no thought for the morrow and yet here in the prayer, you're thinking about the morrow and you say, Lord, give me today tomorrow's provision. Bread here, a lot of these things are metaphorical and stand for bigger things. Trumpets stand for attention.

Bread stands for provision, provisions of all sorts. Give me today tomorrow's bread. Why would Jesus have us pray this way? It is good to plan ahead.

It is good to plan ahead. If I receive today, tomorrow's bread, guess what? Because I have asked God to give me today tomorrow's bread, I can now take no thought for the morrow, right? I went to the Lord and I said, Lord, give me tomorrow's bread and I'm done. I'm not worried about tomorrow.

I already put that in the hands of the Father. You see the pattern here, committed to the Father and now you don't have to worry. You don't have to go back and say, Lord, I haven't seen tomorrow's bread show up yet.

Lord, I wonder what I'm going to eat tomorrow. I wonder, you know, how am I going to get by tomorrow? I have prayed. I've gone to the Father and said, Lord, I am relying on you and I'm expressing that in terms of request.

I am counting on you. I am trusting you. I believe in you.

I have your promise. You're going to provide my bread for the morrow. I've not seen the righteous go hungry or his seed begging bread.

I know that you're the source of my provision. I will now turn my attention to my responsibilities. It may be that tomorrow's bread is going to come by me making sure I do what I'm supposed to do.

Paul says, somebody that doesn't work doesn't eat in the church, right? So maybe now that I have entrusted that to the Father, I need to look and see, maybe he has made provision for tomorrow's bread by me doing my job. He provided my job. I do my job.

Think of the analogy in Israel in the Bible. There is a patch of land. He told the landowners when they reap their harvest, not to glean the corners of the field.

And if they missed a patch, don't go back and clean it up later. Leave it for the poor and the widows and the orphans. Why? That's an opportunity.

If they are counting on God for tomorrow's bread, are they just going to sit there and say, Lord, I'm hoping manna will drop from my ceiling? God made a way of provision for the poor and the widow and the orphan. And when they say, Lord, I am trusting you for my provision. Now, once they've prayed that prayer, what are they going to do? They're going to look around to see where is God's provision.

Oh, let me go and see if there's an ungleaned field. I will gather my own grain. I will fresh my own grain.

I will grind my own wheat. I will make my own flour. I will use other resources to get oil and other necessities.

And I will bake for myself my own bread. There was no breadline in Israel. There was no charity soup kitchen in Israel.

The wherewithal to feed yourself was provided under the law by those who had an excess. God said, don't beat the olive tree twice. Beat it once.

Let the olives fall. There's still going to be some olives that you could get off of there, but you leave them for the poor, the widow and the orphan. They've gone and gleaned and made flour for themselves.

Now they're going to go and beat an olive tree, get some olives, crush them, make their own olive oil, mix it with that flour, make their own bread, and they're alive. But notice, they have a part. So when Jesus says, give us today tomorrow's bread, it's not magic bread.

It's not free bread. It is the opportunity to lay hold of bread. And you do it today, so you have it for tomorrow.

This is what they had to do every Friday in Israel, didn't they? Gather twice as much manna. I'm talking about the days of the wanderings. They had to gather twice as much manna on Friday, and they had to make tomorrow's bread, and then rest on the Sabbath.

And there's the principle that once you know that tomorrow's bread is accounted for, that it's on the way, it's available, God is going to make a way for it to be had, now you can rest. There's rest in the promise, but there is attention paid to my part. The poor widows and orphans in Israel had a part to play in their own provision, and they made up in effort what they lacked in cash.

So give us this day tomorrow's bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Much is made, you can keep your finger here and turn over to, if my memory serves, it's Ephesians 4.32 and Colossians 3.13. I didn't write it down, but I'm pretty sure that's right. Turn over to Ephesians chapter 4, be kind to one another, verse 32, tenderhearted,

forgiving one another even as God in Christ forgave you.

So forgive one another as Christ forgave you. Flip over to Colossians chapter 3, starting verse 12, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another, even as Christ forgave you, so you also forgive as you are forgiven. And many people will see a contrast between that and what Jesus says here, forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

The idea is, my brother punched me in the nose, I forgive him, now God can forgive me. In Paul's notes, I've already been forgiven, therefore I need to forgive my brother. And they see something that doesn't line up.

The difference here is two kinds of forgiveness. Forgive us our debts as we forgive, forgive us what we owe as we forgive those who owe to us. What is the context? What is the immediate context of this? Do you remember chapter 5? Verse 42, give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you, do not turn away.

Don't press for remuneration, don't press for recompense. If someone asks for your coat, throw in a cloak. Somebody asks you to help to one extent, go beyond that and help further, one mile, two miles.

Be more ready to give than to receive, right? Your charity is outbound, you're not looking for inbound. And that's the foundation, that's the roots, and that's the context of chapter 6. You're not looking for input, you're not looking for reward from anyone but the Father. You do what you do, you give, and you're not expecting something from people, either the target or the people who might notice and observe.

And you're not calling anybody's attention to it because you want them to recompense you in some way, with glory or with favor or whatever. And so the same thing here in the prayer, forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. It doesn't say forgive us our sins per se, does it? Here it says forgive what we owe because we have that heart of forgiveness that was described at the end of the last chapter.

We're not interested in recompense from people and we're more interested in God overlooking what we owe Him and therefore we're ready to overlook what somebody may owe us. We know that we are debtors and why would we press others? Jesus is going to elaborate that in the parable of the servant who owed a great debt and was forgiven. Then he had an underservant of his own who owed him a small amount and he was pressing that guy to pay it back.

And when the master found out he said, guess what? I have unforgiven your debt and you're going to go to the poor house until you pay every penny. If you're not going to have a generous spirit and a generous heart that does it because it pleases the father,

the father is not going to be pleased. So there is no conflict between these two ideas.

Finally, do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. Now Jesus himself was led by the spirit into temptation in the wilderness. Did we not see this earlier in Matthew? He was led by the spirit in the wilderness to be tempted.

But Jesus says when you pray, pray that you're not led into temptation by the evil one. Why would he tell him this? The spirit is not yet given. Christ is not yet glorified.

What did Jesus have when he was led into the wilderness that they don't yet have? The spirit. We're not equipped in our own strength to handle the evil one. And at their point of training and learning, they're not ready to face the evil one.

And they need to recognize what they're not capable of. So do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. And this is temptation from the evil one.

And it is a recognition of our, this is the Clint Eastwood line, man's got to know his limitations. And we cannot in our strength overcome evil. We cannot survive temptation.

And once the spirit is given, they are going to face all kinds of temptation and successfully, Peter is tempted by fear and gives in before the crucifixion, the cock crows. But you look at Peter after the resurrection and after he receives the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and the guy is fearless. They have to kick him awake when he's in prison awaiting execution.

That's the difference. Don't underestimate the power of God's Holy Spirit in our lives. And that's really the only accommodation you need to make of the model prayer is lead us not into temptation is a recognition of the need for and power of God's Holy Spirit in our lives.

And then you cross out the rest. Well, we made it a partway to verse 21. We're about halfway through, but our focus here goes back to what Jesus states.

Be careful that you do not do what you do, that you do not pray, that you do not act for the short-term approval of onlookers. And it requires conscious thought. Our prayer is a good way to focus our minds on the need to do what we do before the Father.

And that can often determine the frequency of our prayers. If we catch ourselves being subjective or starting to wonder about what the public opinion is on what we say or what we do, that's a good time to find the secret place and go before the Father and renew that viewpoint, that objective need to do what we do so that the is pleased. It is for Him.

Jesus brought us to Him, paying a terrible price for that privilege. And we have to keep that focus. That will keep us aimed at the straight gate that leads to life.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. We'll pick up in verse 14 next time. Father, thank

You for the truth of Your Word and for the powerful way the Lord Jesus has communicated it for us.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress it on our hearts, help us to see in our own lives and in our own thinking the path forward, the ways that we can improve, the re-establishing of our priorities and our goals to ensure that we are found pleasing in Your sight and worthy of the wonderful privileges that we have received in the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray these things in His name. Amen.