

The Words Our Savior Taught Us
7th Sunday after Pentecost - Year C - 07/28/2019

Psalm Reading: 85

1st Reading: Col. 2:6-15, 2nd: Luke 11:1-13

Two versions of the Lord's Prayer in the Synoptic Gospels.

Matthew

The version we pray in church

Luke

Plainer / More Concise

Today looking at the Lukan version, but Matthew will come into play.

So, in our reading, Jesus was praying in a certain place.

Don't know where or when

Context after his visit to Mary and Martha

Between Bethany and Jerusalem.

As Jesus prays, his disciples can see the effect of prayer in Jesus:

Calmness / Spirituality / Guidance / Assurance / Hope /

Encouragement / Builds him up.

Disciples want some of that for themselves.

Disciple / Master relationship

John taught his disciples how to pray...

So ask Jesus to teach them.

So Jesus proceeds to tell them... "When you pray, say:"

"Father"

God is whose father?

Jesus' and Ours

Jesus son, we adopted – created by God – Children of
God

Significance of father in Patriarchal society.

Inherit / Love / Kindness / guidance / Leadership
provide for us

Ancient Rome

We know that God is all of this and so much more.

“Hallowed be your Name”

Hallow = make holy.

Call for us to make God’s name holy

Ten Commandments: #3 Not use Lord’s name in vain.

G-d, Adonai

Call for God to spread that holy reputation.

Not only is it holy but may it always be held holy.

“Your Kingdom come.”

What are we asking for here?

For the end of time.

A time when all our hearts are filled with the spirit
and love for one another.

For God’s holy city to merge with earth.

Making earth like heaven.

Luke leaves out... “Thy will be done.” perhaps thinking that when God’s kingdom comes that all God says will be done. But I think this is different. Matthew expresses the desire that God’s will should be fulfilled whatever the circumstance.

“Give us each day our daily bread.”

Could be reference to manna from heaven.

Triple meaning:

Practical aspects/ food / sustenance / shelter. etc.

Fed by the Word – Our Daily Bread

“Do not live by bread alone”

Christ Jesus – bread of life + Communion

“do this in remembrance...”

“Forgive us our sins / debts (money) / trespasses (crossing a line) ...”

Parse the Greek:

Luke: ἁμαρτίας (sin) and ὀφείλοντι (debtors)

A sin is taking something away from someone.

Matthew: “Forgive us our debts...debtors”

This is the literal translation, but I think his meaning is clear. Jesus is talking about human relationships. We are actually praying for a smoothing out of relationships in every sense of the word. Financial / Moral / Spiritual / Legal / Whatever.

“...as we also forgive everyone who sins / trespasses / or is a debtor to us.”

Does this mean that we must forgive to get God’s forgiveness?

No...We have already been forgiven

Saved by Grace through faith in Jesus Christ...

But we are agents of God’s activity in the world.

Through the body of Christ we act...

We are called on to forgive and not to worry about if we have been forgiven.

Really, when we forgive isn’t that for our own good?

Forgiving releases us from the strain of holding a grudge, of hating another for what they have done. And doesn’t

Jesus say that those who hate are like a murderer subject to judgment?¹

Deuteronomy (15:1) – Forgiveness every seven years.

Finally, Luke records Jesus saying “And lead us not into temptation.” Matthew has the additional line, “but deliver us from the evil one.”

Does God tempt us? Does God test us?

Jesus, Job, (devil, adversary)

These cases it was the devil who did the tempting.

James (1:13-15): “When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil nor does he tempt anyone, but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.”

Along the lines of what James has to say, I think “lead us not into temptation” is a general plea that we not be confronted with more than we can withstand. Because we will always be confronted with circumstances that afford an opportunity to do things that are not good for us, whether that is smoking, over-eating, binge watching your favorite TV series, making some snide remark about someone, or even something more serious. And, indeed, God gives us the strength to withstand all temptation, if we simply put our whole trust in Jesus Christ.

So, these are the words our Savior taught us. What is nice about them is that when our minds are empty and we really do not know what to say, we can simply bring these words to God,

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Matt 5:21-22

because they express so much about the human condition. And because of this the Lord's prayer can also be a model for us to use to make up our own prayers.

We should begin by addressing God in a meaningful way, like "Father" or "Creator" or "Almighty" or "Eternal God". Then we should speak of God's activity in the world, "Thy Kingdom Come" or recall what it is that God has already done for us. Next as we consider what God will provide in the form of our daily bread we can address our spiritual and physical needs. Then we can look to our own faults, debts, sins, or trespasses, and ask forgiveness. And finally, we can ask that God supply us with the spiritual strength to refrain from sin in the future.

I believe that threaded through the Lord's prayer is an important message that speaks to the notion of relationship, our relationship with God, our relationship with our church in the Body of Christ, and our relationship with each other.

For most of us it carries reminders of the time when we first came into the faith, whether we were children or adults. My mother taught me this prayer when I was just a small boy perhaps in the same way Jesus taught the disciples to pray. She would repeat this prayer every night with us children before we went to sleep until we could say it on our own, and then we would all pray it together night after night. In that way I think she was unconsciously living in imitation of Christ. I would encourage you all to imitate Christ and begin by teaching this prayer to someone you know who is longing for faith, longing for a relationship with Jesus, with the Spirit, with God, our Father.

Please pray with me...

Eternal God, you watch over us. You see us as we are with all our faults and insecurities. But as a loving father you also see us as you would have us be, perfect and holy, made in your image. Lord, you have given us the tools to grow into a reflection of your son Jesus Christ, You gave us your Word and sent your son as our guide. Help us to live up to your expectations.

ἀμήν