



Volume 15 Issue 14

April 5, 2020

LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY

"It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.' And He said to them, 'When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation,''" Luke 11:1-4. I continue to have a deeper appreciation for the specific template of this prayer provided by Jesus the more I increase my focus on it. While we have specific areas of need that bring up specific types of prayer throughout the day, I continue to find the practical value and help when I pray this template at least once a day. As we approach God in prayer, it is so

helpful to be reminded that His very name is special and hallowed. A great reminder that God is unlike anything or anyone we feel we need or depend upon and ought to bring a unique dependence in our lives of how closely we need to draw near to Him. It is also helpful to be reminded that He is our Father, in Heaven, reminding us that He is the perfect Father, with the perfect love, and perfect affection and perfect counsel and advice for us, His children. As such, there is nothing greater or more comforting and peaceful than being reminded we belong to Him in His Kingdom and to make the work of the Kingdom the priority of our lives. By praying for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is Heaven, we are acknowledging that God's ultimate purpose in His

connection with the things of this earth is to fulfill His mission of adopting souls into His family. By seeking His will to be done on earth, we are essentially giving up our personal agenda to make way for His, accepting that any way He seeks to reconstruct our plans or alter our lives is going to be accepted and welcomed as all part of His plan and will work with it and not against it. We are committing ourselves to trusting Him when suddenly our lives and the life around us suddenly changes and becomes uncertain. We are giving ourselves to Him to agree that we will still offer ourselves to Him in service to His will instead of spending the majority of our time trying to figure out how to get back on track with the way we prefer to order our lives. If God desires to interfere with our time tables, we are essentially saying we agree to welcome it, trusting potential good for His Kingdom purposes is more important than our own preference of comfort for how we choose to organize our personal lives. Once we have accepted this, we can truly move on to the next phase of being content with what God provides for us physically for just one 24 hour period of time. Rather than focusing our time

and energy on how we can maximize and secure financial and material comfort for time in the future, we are seeking to become content with whatever God provides for a single day in order to focus our entire devotion that day to service in the Kingdom. By this portion of the prayer, most likely we are being confronted with our own inadequacies in our willingness to comply with these priorities in the past and our struggle to fully comply and have solid faith in our ability to practice what we are praying in the moment. It is a great time to ask God for forgiveness. It is a great time to not only depend upon and appreciate the understanding, patient nature of God who waits for us to grow stronger in our trust of fully dependence and fully devoting ourselves to Him, but also of being just as patient and understanding with those who struggle to treat us fairly, courteously or lovingly. This is the time where we realize our great need for God's forgiveness is completely dependent on our willingness to forgive and be patient and understanding with others. "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others,

then your Father will not forgive your transgressions,” Matthew 6:14-15. As we acknowledge our weaknesses and sins and shortcomings to our Father, it naturally leads us to the next portion of the prayer, seeking for more of His guidance and teaching and leadership to direct our paths in ways that draws us closer to a greater desire to act and live life with His heart and mind. Lead us not into temptation. It is a moment where we realize we are asking Him to lead us, because often, when we lead by our own steps, we walk in ways which ultimately justify our own selfishness and personal desires in ways where it becomes too tempting to live ultimately for this temporary physical world. Lead us not into temptation. Teach us to learn to crucify our flesh and desires in ways which renews a more obedient and trusting spirit to walk in God’s ways and will. And yet even when we have the knowledge and the teaching and the understanding, we are still too weak to overcome temptations on our own. Deliver us from the evil one. Let us not seek to fight tempting battles with our own strength, but humble ourselves to rely more on God for deliverance and strength to

overcome. “Pray, then, in this way, ‘Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen,’” Matthew 6:9-15.

– Daniel Ruegg



“Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven’; or to say, ‘Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk’? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, ‘I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home.’”

Mark 2:8-11



DIRECTIONS: Each first Sunday of the month, we will have challenges that you should attempt to complete by the end of the month. If we all, as members, complete these challenges, our church will grow in spirit and in number.

1) Quarantine Bible Study Challenge

Exodus 12:21-22 "Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, 'Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover lamb. You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning.' As we continue to practice social distancing and a certain level of quarantine during this pandemic, let us continue to seek counsel and strength and encouragement from the Lord in His Word. The Bible has several examples of different times for different reasons when different people were quarantined for different periods of time. Some stayed in one place for one single day. Some were isolated for seven days. Some were quarantined for 40 days and 40 nights. Some were unable to leave a certain city until a specific event. "Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, 'Which,' He said, 'you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now,'" Acts 1:4-5. How many other examples can you find and what can we learn?

2) USING YOUR BIBLE IN THE WORLD

Share the following verses with someone who does not attend this congregation at least twice this month:

Isaiah 6:1-8

"In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.' And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, 'Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.' Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. He touched my mouth with it and said, 'Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven.' Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and whom will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'"