

Foundations Bible Study - Prayer
Lesson 2

Scripture Readings:

- Luke 11:1-13
- Corinthians chapter 12
- Ephesians 4:1-7
- Colossians 1:15-20
- Prayer of Nehemiah in chapter 1

Lesson

In this week's lesson we will deal with the next two phases in the Lord's Prayer. They are full of power and help for everyday life.

First: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Stop and say this phrase out loud, whisper it, shout it. Maybe this is the hardest part of the prayer to understand and thus even harder to use in our prayer life on a regular basis. I think it is hard because we all have our own ideas of heaven. Some people think heaven is a place of eternal retirement, while other folks think of heaven as the eternal best job, plus there are many of us in between. What about the place, the people, and the relationships, what is the kingdom of heaven? You want to know what I think...I DON'T KNOW! I wish I did, really I do, but I don't think anyone does.

Here are some important aspects of what I do believe. The kingdom is not a place or a nation, or a time, or a person. I believe for the most part, the kingdom is in us, you and me. Yes, in all the people of God. The kingdom is us, it lives through us, it helps through us, it laughs through us, it cries through us, we are the body of Christ.

So to me a big part of this section is me saying to God, "Make me and your church like the people of heaven in the way we love, in the way we care, in the way we share, in the way we live out our lives in God's presence." So, can you pray for that? Ask God to become so real to you that your life is changed. Oh... Man.... That is hard to grasp and even harder to want.

I'd rather want to be me, and be in control. But I do believe God is in control of the Kingdom of heaven and I do believe my highest calling in life is to follow God's plan for my life. God's plan for my part in the Kingdom, that is a bit hard to grasp and ever harder to live.

Oh, I know it will never be like heaven here on earth but, I also believe from the depths of my soul that I want it to be heaven on earth. This part of the Lord's Prayer not only asks God for heaven on earth, the prayer compels me to do my part to make it so. I better get to work.

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The second section for this lesson is: "Give us this day our daily bread." This part of the prayer is for God's blessing and help with the very foundation of life, food, nourishment. We can not survive physically without food and water. Here Christ reminds us of two important parts of life and prayer. First God is the provider of all our needs. In the time of Christ and up to 60 or 70 years ago this request was much more meaningful and profound to the faith. Folks had to save seeds, plant, grow, can or dry, enough food till the next harvest began to come in. Few people in our country live on such an annual cycle now. Yes, there are poor among us for whom this prayer bears more meaning, but for most all Americans it seems almost meaningless. Yet, deep down we know it is true. God is the provider, not Price Cutter. Just this past January with the ice, our power went out, and we scrambled for gas, heat, and something to eat. That terrible situation must remind us of the great and wonderful creator God, who provides for our food.

We are mere creations of the great Creator, yet the Creator loves and cares for us. Even to the point of feeding us. I remember running out for formula for our babies. Sometimes this happened late at night in the midst of all kinds of weather and when I had to wake up a 5am to go to work. But, I went out for it for the babies because I loved them and they needed me. How much more does our God love us and provide our needs. Is it too much for us to ask that, on regular basis, we remember what God does for us?

So... to me these two phrases carry much power and love. "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread."

I need always to remember God's Love and Care for me as I try my hardest to live out the Kingdom in my life each day.

Questions for Thought and Discussion

1. How would you define, "The Kingdom of God?"
2. How does your definition play out in real life, daily living? Can you give an example?
3. How does God care for you? Think of different ways other than the food you eat?
4. Do you ask God's blessing and guidance each day, or do you just hit the floor running and forget about the Creator in your world? How can prayer change that? What might you say to remember what God is doing for you each day and be grateful?