

We are continuing tonight our series on the Lord's Prayer
and last week we turned to the 2nd half of the prayer, the horizontal dimension
where Jesus gives us the 3 petitions we should offer on our behalf beginning w/
the Give us this day our daily bread

Tonight we are going to be looking at the next two, the 5th and 6th petitions,
forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors
& lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil
which really do fit nicely **side by side**

In fact, it has been rumored that Martin Luther went to sleep w/ the 5th & woke w/ the 6th
and his morning & evening catechetical prayers suggest this was his pattern...
a pattern that makes a lot of sense...

At the **end** of a day, it's not hard to see we need to ask forgiveness for our failures
and as we **rise** in the morning and consider all we have facing us
it is obvious we will need God's help in this new day so we pray
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil...

Now I want to note that the word in the Greek for "evil" has a definite article, "*tou ponairou*
which suggests it should be translated
"lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil (one),"

And being that the Sermon On the Mount comes after ch. 4
where X was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the evil one
I think it more likely we are asking deliverance **not** from evil generically, but from Satan

So if we back up now to consider the reasons for why Jesus taught us these 3 petitions
We pray 1st for daily bread, for what we need to live< because **Death** is our enemy
2nd we pray for forgiveness< **Sin** is our enemy
3rd we pray for deliverance< the **devil** is our enemy

Sin, Death, and the Devil!

We hear often in our declaration of pardon these are the 3 enemies Christ came to destroy
because these 3 have been our enemies since the beginning of human history

Will you please turn in your Bibles to Genesis ch 3? **READ GENESIS 3**

Now we have just read of the sad moment where Adam and Eve plunged us into a mess
& all 3 of our enemies, Sin, Death, & the Devil make their entrance onto the world scene
The **Devil** in v. 1 **Sin** makes its entrance in v. 6
And **death** is announced as the final player in every life in v. 19
for you are dust, and to dust you shall return

And we see immediately after this beautiful world would become inundated
w/ the most gruesome and catastrophic horrors, Gen 4 begins w/ brother killing brother
and it ends w/ Lamech's proud boast of how he killed a man who wounded him
& how he desires to multiply his sin

Lamech boasts *If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold*
4 chapters into our story we not only owe a debt of obedience to God we cannot pay
but our debts against our fellow man are revenged seventy-sevenfold

Therefore, let us look w/ renewed thankfulness to our NT lesson from Matthew 18:21-35
READ MATTHEW 18:21-35 & PRAY

Now in the Gen passage I want to look at the first 6 verses, mankind's 1st temptation
so we can better understand what we are praying for when we pray
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

Q. 106 What do we pray for in the sixth petition? A. In the sixth petition, which is, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, we pray that God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted

Now the evil one comes on the scene in v. 1
Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.
Now we have indications from NT writers that this serpent is Satan himself

In Rev 12:9 **John** refers to the ancient serpent as Satan
and Paul speaks of the crushing of Satan **under our feet** using the language of Gen 3:15
and we see here that Satan's being crushed will be a good thing for us
because he wants nothing more than to destroy us and he is truly crafty
Notice it only takes him 4 verses to deceive Eve

Satan begins w/ a seemingly innocent question
"Did God actually say, 'You^a shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'"
But this question is far from **innocent**
It 1st encourages Eve to stand over God's Word to judge its merit
and it looks to sow seeds of doubt about God's goodness
and Beloved, this is where temptation starts...

When we begin to listen to a different voice than the voice of God

Now the moment this snake started questioning God's Word, Eve should have shut it down
just the fact that a serpent started **talking** should have revealed something was amiss
so she makes her 1st mistake by engaging the snake in a back and forth,

and she responds

"We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

And we see that by giving ear to Satan's voice, doubt about God's goodness **has** crept in
Notice she adds to God's Word by saying *they could not touch the tree*
God **never** gave this prohibition about not touching, only about not eating!
They could have carved Adam & Eve, built themselves a treehouse...
but instead Eve has the hint of doubt and begun to run w/ it

Which gives Satan an opening which he immediately pounces on, saying
"You will not surely die." ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Children, Did you notice what the Devil does in temptation?...
1st the Devil introduces question about what is good for you,
& after you begin to think about it, he says, "**don't worry about consequences!**"
I know that when I am tempted to do something I know I should not
One of the 1st things that pops into my mind is,
"What is the worst thing that could happen if I do this?"

When you are **tempted** to do something you know you shouldn't
The moment you begin to think to yourself that you won't get caught
or even if you do get caught, there won't be any real punishment...
>>>The moment that thought pops into your head you need to **stop & say,**
"I recognize this voice! It is how the Devil likes to trick us..."
and then pray to God **to deliver you from evil** (P)

The Devil tells Eve, "*Go ahead, take & eat... You will not surely die. It is no big deal...*"
This is one of the **biggest lies** our age has bought into
How many people don't think there will be any consequences for the ways they live
So they continue in sin their whole lives, refusing to change
believing the lie of the Devil that there is no judgment for sin

And Eve buys into the lie that it is no big deal
and notice how the Devil cleverly appealed to her by saying she would *be like God*
He even took and used a **good desire** that agreed w/ her nature!
Adam and Eve were made in God's image, made to be like God
but remaining in that estate **was conditional upon their obedience**
and by listening to another voice, and believing a lie
Eve was deceived into thinking there was another way

And notice the plummet into sin
It begins w/ temptation> saw it was good to eat, a delight to the eyes, to be desired to be wise
> then she took (sin #1)
> then she ate (sin #2)
> then she gave some to Adam (sin #3)
>and then he ate, (sin #4)
and sin truly began to multiply when Adam refused to stop the snowball effect

It is hard to say whether Adam was close enough to this scene to stop it from happening
but it is clear from our text that he did **nothing** to help his wife **after**

I would suggest that if Adam did arrive too late to stop her from eating
He should have first defeated & cast out the serpent
even if it meant he had to lay down his own life for his bride

But Adam chose to listen to the Tempter, **“Take & Eat. It is no big deal to disobey God”**
never even remotely comprehending the depths to which the human race would sink
We see immediate consequences> shame, fear, and isolation
and when God arrives we find blame-shifting, and accusations
and all this sin precedes the death sentence & banishment

The beginning of Genesis is a powerful polemic about the world we live in
In the 1st 2 chapters, God creates a marvelous cosmos where everything was **good**
And in 5 verses, Satan tempts mankind into turning on their Creator
bringing a wake of destruction that continues into our own day
and Satan did not stop in Gen 3, but continues his work today

Here is the thing I want to impress on us as we consider why we need to pray the 6th petition

We are more prone to temptation than Adam and Eve were

Adam & Eve didn't have anything in them for Satan to hang his hooks on
They were untainted by sin, totally **able to not sin**
however, we live in this life as those who have been tainted by sin
Thus, there are all kinds of footholds in our lives, sins we are prone to,
wrong desires that Satan wants to use to destroy us (P)

And this is why we needed Jesus to come in our flesh, but flesh untainted by sin
And He took on the Tempter in the wilderness, refusing to listen to any voice but God's
He conquered **Satan** in the wilderness, **sin** at the cross, **death** at the resurrection
and He then poured out His Spirit on us so that we too,
as those reborn, (praise be to God) **we are able to not sin**

But we are still fighting our old nature which is why Jesus instructed us to pray to God that
He lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one
Now perhaps the first part of that petition may be puzzling
We clearly see Satan wants to lead us into temptation,
but God **would not lead us into temptation**, would He?

And the problem is that the word **temptation** has taken on solely a negative meaning in our day
But if you look back at the Old English use of this word it had a dual meaning
To tempt also meant positively, “to test,” “to try,” or even “to refine”
This is why in James 1:12-15 you have the same Greek word “peirasmos”
translated both as “tempt” and as “trial”

¹² Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under **trial**, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is **tempted**, "I am being **tempted** by God," for God cannot be **tempted** with evil, and he himself **tempts** no one. ¹⁴ But each person is **tempted** when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

James says God does place us in situations to **test** our faith,
There is a crown of life that awaits the one who remains steadfast under trial
Adam had a crown that awaited him if he had stood the test in the garden in Eden
God was **testing** Adam, Satan came to do the **tempting**

Yet James also told us we are tempted by our own desires
But we saw the Devil at work in this Eden scene
So is the devil responsible for my temptations to sin, or am I?
And the answer is simply "**Yes.**"

The Devil does at times tempt us to sin but since the Fall we're also tempted by our own desires

In fact, in James 4, when we are told to resist the devil and he will flee,
the devil James is speaking of is the one Mick Jagger sought to embody
there is a part of us that sympathizes with the devil, wanting to be conformed to his image

James paints a graphic picture of what happens when desires w/in us meet temptations out there
If there is no desire w/in, the temptation out there **is no problem**
If there is desire, but nothing out there to tempt, **there is no problem**
But when the sperm of desire meets the egg of temptation **there is a problem**
Sin is conceived, which when fully grown results in death (EDEN)

And it is because we have desires that are still fallen & we are weak
we are encouraged to pray that God will not lead us into trials
but then we also pray that when He does bring us into times of testing,
that He will **support** and **deliver** us when we are tempted
and we can have confidence that He will provide us with a way of escape

Paul writes in 1 Cor 10:13 ¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

God is faithful in not ever placing you in a situation where you have to sin...
but what about when you do sin???

Well this is why we need to pray that God *forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.* ***

Q. 106 What do we pray for in the fifth petition? A. In the sixth petition, which is, *And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors*, we pray that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins, which we are rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

Now I believe this is perhaps the most formidable petition of all
which may be why Jesus emphasizes it,
providing commentary on it immediately after the LP

Matthew 6:14-15 *For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

I say this is the most formidable petition because there are 2 sides which are equally daunting...
1st believing that God has forgiven us for all the many ways we have rebelled
& 2nd being able to forgive people and live as though it is **truly forgotten**

Peter seems to be wrestling w/ this 2nd part when he asks Jesus in Matthew 18:21
“Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?”

Now commentators note that Peter has actually begun to grasp Jesus’ message of forgiveness
and his willingness to forgive someone 7 times is actually generous
but Peter still believes that must be some limit to forgiveness
After all, we cannot live as **fools** in this age

But Jesus calls him to be a fool in this age “I do not say to you 7 times, but **77** times.”

Jesus is saying that the Church is to be not only a forgiven people but also a forgiveness people
living as a distinct counter culture to this Lamechian age begun in Genesis 4

And as Jesus does so often, He then gives us an amazing story to help us understand

In the 1st scene of Jesus’ story we find that there is a King who is owed a great debt
A servant owes him 10,000 talents, which he cannot pay
Now some commentators have done the math to figure out what this would equal today
& then calculated an average servant’s wage to see how long it would take to pay
I think Gundry does the best at looking at the Greek & getting Jesus’ point

*“the indefinite plural of the highest number used in reckoning
cannot be calculated and therefore means ‘zillions’”* **He owes a Zillion dollars!**

Because of that I don’t really care what this servant makes in a year.
because this is not a cash amount he could have even borrowed, much less repay
It is a **representative parable**, meant to show us where we stand before God
You are in the role of the servant-debtor.

We stand before the King as those who have sinned,
and it is not as though your **sins** are **so great**, you are just a lowly servant!

but rather that the One you have sinned against is so Great!

Which makes what you owe impossible to repay

Think about it this way.

If you sin against an equal, the consequence might be the loss of respect/ friendship

If you sin against your boss, you may lose your job/ income

If you sin against the President, you will lose your freedom

Notice how as the level of authority goes up, the penalty increases (P)

So what happens when you sin against the infinite majesty of God Almighty?

And there you stand, a finite man of dust before the throne of God

and you find your debt is going to cost your life and infinitely more

And this servant hears the decision of the king and pleads

'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.'

Now this shows us that he really doesn't get it...

He promises to repay a debt that is humanly impossible

which means he doesn't see how great his debt is... (PAUSE)

This should prompt us to ask, **"Do we see how great our debt is before the Almighty God?"**

Your cannot pay the debt because of **who** you owe, Almighty God Himself

In fact, the only One who could pay such a debt would need infinite resources

which is why when God pitied us, He had to send His Son

who was **fully infinite God** yet became **fully man**

so He could stand in the servant's place

It takes the infinite Majesty of Jesus in the flesh to make the check clear!

And if one man's debt alone is a zillion dollars,

how infinitely awesome must the sacrifice of Jesus be to freely pay for **all** our sins

It is truly **brehtaking** what God has done in answering your pleas for mercy

But forgiveness of sins is not the end of our story,

as we see there is another scene we are called to live in

A scene that warns us to keep that **brehtaking pardon** ever in front of our eyes

because if you don't see how much you have been forgiven...

you will find it impossible to forgive others

And we see that is the case after this servant is forgiven his massive debt

The fact he begins running around to collect from others shows he hasn't done the math

and he comes upon a servant who owes him 100 denarii, but cannot pay

so he grabs him and begins choking him, demanding what he is owed

(and 100 denarii is a payable debt, thus nothing compared to what he was forgiven)

And the servant falls to the ground and says *'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.'*

It is almost exactly the same plea he had voiced in the previous scene
He should have seen himself in his fellow servant lying at his feet
but he **closes his heart** to his plea for mercy and puts him in jail
He doesn't forgive as Christians are called to do when someone asks forgiveness

I want to make a brief caveat here because in our day there can be confusion about forgiveness
There are 2 parts to forgiveness that we need to see here
What we 1st see in this parable is the **transactional nature** of forgiveness.
But there is also the disposition of forgiveness that is needed

In order for restoration the debt **must be acknowledged** in order for forgiveness to happen
Would the king have forgiven the servant if he refused to admit the debt he owed?
Will God forgive impenitent sinners who never confess their sins?
And the answer is NO

Yet there is also a disposition of forgiveness,
where the servant should have walked out ready to forgive
Because we've been forgiven, by God's grace we are ready and able to forgive!

And that is what this unforgiving servant completely missed after he walked out forgiven
He failed to appreciate the great act done for him in the past
and he **also** failed to carry a **sense of fear** of the One who had forgiven Him

As Psalm 130, v. 3-4 says *If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?
4 But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.*

We see the unforgiving servant bought into the 1st lie of Satan,
that there is no coming judgment for those who fail to fear the Lord & keep His commands

Frederick Bruner writes
*Judgment is taught as pervasively in Scripture as mercy, and the true believer learns to live w/
both- with a spirit both of full security and of responsible fear.*

This lack of responsible fear & failure to forgive results in his facing the Judge at the last day
You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have
had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the
jailers,^(a) until he should pay all his debt.³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do
not forgive your brother from your heart."

From your heart> our forgiveness cannot be superficial

Our forgiveness must be truly heartfelt

Bruner suggests helpfully that we pray a combination of the 5th & 6th petitions
*Lord, lead us not into temptation to forget your forgiveness;
deliver us from the evil of heartlessness*

And it is not “me,” it is “us” >though we have a parable about an unforgiving individual
it ends with Jesus’ command to the community
which actually concludes a whole section about the restoring & forgiving church
This is why we pray “*Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.*”

Now when you have been really hurt by someone,
I will grant that it can be a hard thing to forgive them when they come to you
Here is a prayer exercise that I have found helpful (DJ)

1st, go to your Father and tell him specifically what this person has done to you
2nd, be honest and tell Him exactly what you would like to see done to them
(and feel free to be bold because He already knows)
3rd, then remember how your Father forgave you by sending His Son to the cross,
and confess to Him how hard it is to forgive and pray for forgiveness
4th, then there at the **cross**, pray the 5th petition prayer
with the person you need to forgive, even if they are not there physically

As God shows us our own need for forgiveness, we are enabled by His grace to forgive others
And as we better come to understand what Jesus did for us at Calvary
we will find it easier to live as those who have been truly ***Delivered & Forgiven***

Closing, Let’s remember we can live a different way because X has conquered all our enemies
Yes, Adam and Eve turned our world into a mess by listening to the voice that said
“TAKE & EAT”

But the 2nd Adam has come and granted us forgiveness from Sin, so we can pray w/ confidence
for our Father *to forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors*
He has poured out His Spirit whereby we can confidently pray that our Father
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

And while I did not preach on praying for our daily bread, God has provided
We can look to this Table and see here God’s great **reversal** of the Death sentence
For it is here that ‘Take & Eat’ now means our salvation!

PRAY LP