

Luke 11:3 Desert Prayer

Jesus teaches us to pray for God's provision in the desert.

1) Following Jesus is a journey through the cross into glory.

- a) Journey Motif in Luke
 - i) Jesus' Journey (Luke 9:31)—The Way—John the Baptist will prepare the way for Jesus (1.76, 79; 3.4; Acts 13:24); Jesus' journey to Jerusalem uses same word "Way" (Luke 10.38; 13.22, 33; 17:11); Jesus' teaching is called "the Way of God" (Luke 20.21)
 - ii) Disciples' Journey—The Way— His followers are said to "belong to the Way" (Acts 9.2; 19.9, 23; 24.14, 22); their teaching is called "the Way of salvation" (Acts 16.17) or "the Way of the Lord" (Acts 18.25) or "the Way of God" (Acts 18:26) or simply "the Way" (Acts 22.4)
- b) Suffering Precedes Glory
 - i) Jesus—"Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into His glory? . . . Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead" (Luke 24:26, 46).
 - ii) Disciples—"Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). "And He said to all, 'If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever would save His life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it'" (Luke 9:23-24).
- c) Luke presents Jesus' life as a new exodus, in which His sufferings parallel the wilderness trials of Israel, and His resurrection and ascension parallel Israel's possession of the Promised Land.
- d) Similarly, Luke presents the Christian life as one that is redeemed through the cross and resurrection of Christ, and is presently in wilderness trials, awaiting the full possession of our inheritance.
- e) So, we pray as the redeemed of the Lord who are journeying through the desert in constant need of provision.

2) We are to pray for God's constant care.

- a) "Give us" is a present imperative, which has the verbal aspect of continual or habitual action—"keep on giving us."
- b) Prayer is not reserved for extraordinary circumstances. Prayer is essential to the whole of life, even when we don't "feel" the need.

3) We are to pray for God's essential provision.

- a) What is "daily" (*epiousion*)? (unique word without extant history) Three proposals:
 - i) "Daily"—based on supposed Semitic expression that could not be easily translated into Greek; problems: there are Greek words for "daily" that would have been unambiguous; and Luke's "each day" (*kat' hemeron*) already captures this idea, making this interpretation of *epiousion* seem redundant.
 - ii) "Tomorrow's"—based on similar sounding word (*epiousa*) meaning "next one" or "next day" depending on context; must suppose that all manuscripts have a misspelled word here, which is unlikely when we consider scribal tendencies to "correct" what is perceived as a misspelling; if correct, the petition could have eschatological connotation—"tomorrow's bread" being the provision God has promised for the future consummation of the Kingdom of God
 - iii) "Essential" or "Super-essential"—based on the etymology of the word—*ousion* being the neuter participle of the verb "to be," thus "being" or "existence" and *epi* being a preposition that makes the concept more emphatic, thus "super"; usually, we do not depend upon such etymologizing, but without other usages to study, this is probably the safest method

- b) What is bread? (OT background of manna; Exod. 16)
 - i) Unnecessary concern for “spiritualizing” the text.
 - (1) The word is literally “bread.”
 - (2) Some restrict the application to basic food.
 - (3) Some restrict the application to basic physical needs.
 - ii) Unhelpful separations of mundane vs. spiritual.
 - (1) Physical need can become a temptation to complain against God.
 - (2) Departure from God can be detrimental to physical health.
 - iii) “Essential Bread” is a synecdoche (substituting a part for the whole or vice versa) of all that is needed for life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3).
 - c) God cannot be compartmentalized in our lives. He rules over every part, and we need Him in every part. So, our prayers petition God for everything necessary to please Him in this life.
 - i) Physical exhaustion requires physical sustenance.
 - ii) Emotional exhaustion requires emotional sustenance.
 - iii) Psychological exhaustion requires psychological sustenance.
 - iv) Moral exhaustion requires moral sustenance.
 - d) Petitionary prayer combats anxiety and discontent
 - i) Prayer combats anxiety by reminding us to trust the Father.
 - ii) Prayer combats discontent by exposing worldly desires for what they are.
- 4) Christ teaches us to trust God for provisions sufficient for the day.**
- a) “Each day” or “day by day”
 - b) Works of Providence—Christ the King “for the Church” (Eph. 1:22)
 - c) Means of Grace
 - i) Prayer
 - ii) Word of God
 - iii) Sacraments
 - (1) Baptism
 - (2) Lord’s Supper

Doxology: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every Spiritual blessing in the heavenly places!”—Ephesians 1:3