

Matthew 6:5-15 // The Lord's Prayer (Part 2)

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Preacher: Tim Scoular

[0 : 00] Today's passage is in three different sections. The first one is Proverbs chapter 30, verses 7-9, which can be found on page 667.

! The next passage is Matthew chapter 6, verses 5-15, which can be found on page 970 of your Bibles.

Amen. And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others.

Truly, I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father who is unseen.

Then your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

[1 : 40] Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. This, then, is how you should pray. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. And the final passage is Matthew chapter 6, verses 31 to 33.

So do not worry, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink?

[2 : 42] Or, What shall we wear? For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks, Matt. Church family, good morning. It's great to be with you, and a great privilege to be opening up God's word.

Let's pray as we come to meet God in the words of Scripture. Heavenly Father, we thank you that you are a God who speaks. And you haven't left us by ourselves to work out or to guess as to who you are, what you've done for us, and how we ought to live.

But you've given us your word, and you've given us words to pray. And so we pray that as we come to these words again in Matthew 6, and we think about what you would have us pray, that you would mould us and shape us by these words.

And they might help us to be your children. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. How do you react when someone tells you to not worry?

[4 : 04] In case you missed it, that was how our third Bible reading there began. Don't worry. Now, they are on the lips of Jesus, and when Jesus tells you something, you sort of know you're supposed to listen.

And maybe he knows what he's talking about, so maybe I should try not to worry. But if just about anybody else said to you to not worry, how would you respond?

Probably with a little more agitation, a little more visible frustration, and a little bit less generosity of thought. Because we don't like being told what to do. And we don't like being told what not to do.

And we certainly don't like being told what not to do when we may not feel like we've got any control over whether we do it or not. Don't worry. Now, I'm not naturally a particularly worrying person, but there are times when I feel in the pit of my stomach a nervousness, an uncertainty that gnaws away at me from the inside out.

And in those moments, the last thing that I want is for someone to tell me to not worry. What I want in that moment is for the things that are causing me to worry to be dealt with.

falsehood and lies far from me.

Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. What could possibly be the danger of having riches?

Well, it tells us, verse 9, otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, who is the Lord? [10:35] What's the danger of poverty? Or I might become poor and steal and so dishonor the name of my God. Now, if you're a student living in Glasgow, there may be times where you feel like you are in poverty.

For most of us, though, having to steal in order to eat is probably not on our radar anytime soon. I don't want to presume that that's not the case for anyone in here.

We prayed before, Ali prayed for us in thinking about those who are struggling with homelessness and these things, and it would be perhaps insensitive for me to assume that would be no one's situation.

But I think for the majority of us, it's more likely that we will drift into having too much. And it is a drift.

I read this from a sister in Christ who is about 50. After searching her own heart, she wrote this on her substack. Midlife often brings financial stability.

[11:35] The mortgage is shrinking, the job is steady, and the kids are, mostly, off the payroll. For the first time, income outpaces expenses.

And with that comes the quiet creep of comfort. More dinners out. A better car. Holidays that don't involve a tent.

And bucket list retirement plans. Weekends filled with garden projects, furniture purchases, and DIY plans. Saving and spending become habitual, even when the financial pressure has eased, fostering a growing appetite for more.

It's a far cry from the early days of sacrifice and generosity that marked our walk with Jesus. We rarely pause to ask, how much is enough?

And even less often, how is this shaping my spiritual life? And Proverbs 30 says, it could be shaping your spiritual life by causing you to disown God, saying, who is the Lord?

[12:48] Who provides for me? Who looks after me? Who gives me stability and security? All things we can end up trusting money to do.

And then what do we need God for? It's not just Proverbs, where we have this council. Jesus said, Matthew 6.32, that it's the pagans who run after all these things.

And of course they do, because, well, they're following the gods of this world. Who can blame them for doing that? But it ought to be different for kingdom people. We saw last week that it is kingdom people who pray the Lord's Prayer.

And kingdom people ought to know better than those who are in the world. Kingdom people know that it is dangerous to have poverty or riches. And so kingdom people pray today for their daily plans.

Now, I'm not saying that it's sinful to have savings or to have plans in place. It doesn't have to be. Though we ought to be careful about what those things are doing to our heart and where our trust is.

[14:02] But it's not the case either that spending more makes you spiritually healthy. There's other issues at play. What I am saying is, and what I think the Lord's Prayer is calling us to, is if you're a kingdom person, if you're a disciple of Jesus, pray the Lord's Prayer, being open to its rebuke.

Pray for your daily bread, neither poverty nor riches, so that you will not drift into serving the false god of wealth. Pray for your daily bread, neither poverty nor riches, so that you will not store up for yourself treasures on earth.

Pray for your daily bread, neither poverty nor riches, so that you will be reminded that having too much may be spiritually dangerous for you. And for parents, pray for your daily bread, neither poverty nor riches, so that you're reminded that having too much might be spiritually dangerous for your children.

And when we pray to our Heavenly Father, who has adopted us into His kingdom, and we ask Him, give me neither poverty nor riches, give me my daily bread, you might find that radical generosity for the sake of the kingdom is an inescapable next step.

Jesus says, in contrast to the pagans who run after these things, who run after worldly possessions, His followers are to live differently, Matthew 6.33. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things, daily bread included, will be given to you as well.

[15:58] As I've thought about applying this in my life over the years, this is an area that I haven't always found easy. I don't find it easy. For what it's worth, I'm someone who is interested in money.

I studied a business degree at uni. I enjoy thinking about economics, things in the world of finance. I know some of you have nothing that you can relate with me right now.

Right? That's okay. I'm one of those people. But I have found it hard to know what wisdom looks like in this area. But this verse, Matthew 6.33, has been probably more helpful for me than any other when it comes to thinking about personal finances.

I've always found it helpful to think about Matthew 6.33 as God's insurance policy. It allows me to coach myself, don't sweat the small stuff, Tim. God will sort that out.

You just focus on living for the kingdom. And so sometimes I've been guilty of having been too risk-averse as I think about my future, our future.

[17:06] Other times I've been more generous. Lauren and I have an annual conversation where we think about what our giving to church will be for the next 12-month period. And sometimes those are hard conversations because we come to it with different pictures of what is going to be good.

But as I reflect on those times, we've never regretted the moments where we've given sacrificially. We've never regretted the instances where we've sought the kingdom first with our time, with our money, with our energy.

And I don't think that you will either. And praying, give us today our daily bread, ought to rebuke us so that it frees us from the desire to accumulate.

And frees us from the worries associated with that. It's a really helpful, healthy thing for us to pray. It's the first thing that we pray for ourselves in the Lord's Prayer.

Give us today our daily bread. The second thing, point two, forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. Now we saw last week that the prayer is set in the context of Jesus' teaching on being like anti-hypocritical.

[18:24] He's teaching against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. 6 verse 1, Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others, to be seen by them.

If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. Because practicing your Christian life to look good in front of others is what the Pharisees were doing and Jesus identifies that as a hypocritical way to pray.

Because you're saying that you're doing things for God, but actually you're doing it for the praise of people. Forgiveness is actually a really helpful barometer for how hypocritical we are or are not as Christians.

Now it's a difficult topic to speak to. We need to be a bit careful about it because forgiveness, restoration, repentance from the other parties involved, all of these things are important when it comes to having a restored relationship.

It's not always within your control to restore a relationship that's gone bad. But what is on view here is having a posture of forgiveness in our relationships towards others.

[19:46] A readiness to forgive. And the challenge is that that posture is not a cheap one to hold and to have. A definition of forgiveness might be something like this.

Releasing someone from the debt of their sin against you and trusting God with justice. Releasing someone from the debt of their sin against you and trusting God with justice.

and the bigger the debt the more costly it is. And because it isn't cheap because this is a costly thing well then we can get it wrong so we can be too slow to forgive others.

If we think deep down that other people hurting us is a bigger issue than us hurting other people or us hurting God well then we're probably going to be too slow to forgive others or we can end up not forgiving them at all and just live with a grudge the rest of our life.

Or we can be too quick to forgive others if we don't actually count the cost of what the debt is that we're releasing people from. We can verbalise forgiveness without having properly processed it.

[21:13] And similarly we can be too quick to receive forgiveness from God. We can dismiss our sin say a prayer think of the cross thank God for Jesus and move on without any real desire to change to repent and that will be fuel for hypocritical Christianity.

or we can be too slow to accept forgiveness from God. We can refuse to believe that we're actually forgiven. So we live with a nagging sense that God hasn't dealt with our sin.

And when we do that we downplay the work of the cross because we say that Jesus' death was not sufficient for us. But all of those ways are possible ways to go wrong with forgiveness.

You can work out where you're most likely to go wrong. But it's a good thing to pray that God would forgive us our debts and that we would forgive other people the debts that they owe to us.

There ought to be a flow between God's relationship with us and our relationship with others. So in the context of being kingdom people praying big prayers in line with God's word we've prayed for our daily bread and we've prayed for the flow of forgiveness and then the final petition in the prayer is point 3 verse 13 lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

[22 : 50] Now that would seem to be a pretty straightforward thing to pray right that God is hardly going to lead us into temptation or is he? There's a couple of chapters before this in Matthew where Jesus is being tested in the wilderness and Satan comes and tries to steer him off course from his mission to bring the kingdom of heaven to earth.

And verse 1 of chapter 4 is interesting. Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

So the Holy Spirit actually leads Jesus into temptation. But then you pair that with other verses in the Bible and it starts to get a bit confusing. So James 1 13, when tempted no one should say God is tempting me for God cannot be tempted by evil nor does he tempt anyone.

Cue the simple minded person to start talking about contradictions in the Bible. there's no contradiction. But what's going on? Well there are two sources shall we say of temptation.

There is temptation that comes from outside of us and there's temptation that comes from inside of us. The temptation that comes from outside is what Jesus experienced in Matthew chapter 4.

[24 : 19] The source of temptation is not in Jesus. it's the devil who is tempting him. Thus opposed to the temptation that comes from inside from our sinful nature, our sinful desires.

So earlier in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus has spoken about sexual sin, adultery and lust and he's spoken about anger. And we need to be very careful about this in our thinking but let me try to illustrate a bit.

In both of those areas temptation can come from outside ourselves or inside ourselves. So for sexual sin the outside is what you see with your eyes or perhaps someone of the opposite sex who is flirtatious with you.

and that's potentially a temptation to go down a sinful path. Or with the anger side of things, someone mistreats you and there is a consideration of what an anger response could be.

That's all outside of you. You can't control that. That's living in the world, things that are happening to you. Jesus experienced that sort of temptation, temptation that comes from the outside.

[25 : 37] But very quickly and very subtly it can turn into a temptation that comes from inside ourselves. That is when what is outside causes our internal desire for sin to flare up, to rear its ugly head.

and inside we notice our own hankering for what is sinful. And we taste in our minds the lust or we taste in our minds the bitterness of an angry outburst and it tastes sweet.

That is all inside of us. That's our sinful desires at play. And by the spirit you are not a slave to those desires anymore.

By the spirit, by his power you can train yourself and put those desires to death. Jesus didn't experience that sort of temptation.

That's part of us being sinful creatures. So, with that in mind, what are we praying for in the Lord's Prayer then? Well, when we pray, do not lead us into temptation.

[26 : 57] We're praying about those things that are outside of ourselves. We're praying, God, don't lead me into situations where I'm likely to experience temptation. Because, of course we will.

We're the people who confess our sins every week. We know our own frailty. We know how prone we are to falling off. So, we pray that God wouldn't let us anywhere near that.

And then, we pray that God would deliver us from evil and the evil one in every sense. Every aspect of temptation, every aspect of life.

Because we know that we have an adversary. We trust that God is stronger and more powerful than him, but we pray that God would deliver us from him.

Because we know what we're like. And so, we pray, lead us not into temptation and deliver us from the evil one. So, as we draw to a close our time this morning, let me ask this question.

[28 : 10] What are the worries of someone whose prayer life is filled with these things? They aren't the worries of this life.

They are kingdom warrants. They are a concern to be living a life that is shaped by Christ and his kingdom. I've said it a number of times last week and this week, but the more I say it, the more true it seems to me.

This is not an easy prayer to pray. It's a prayer that rebukes us until it encourages us deeply. Because as Jesus becomes more and more the king of your heart, you might find that some of the worries of this life quieten down a little bit.

That actually they're not worth worrying about. But you won't be free from worrying. Hear me rightly when I say this, but it might just be that your worries and anxieties become Jesus' worries and anxieties.

worries. You start to be concerned for what he is concerned for. That might even increase your worries. When Jesus is the king of your heart, you might worry more because you carry the burden of the lost.

[29 : 38] You're anxious for those who are stuck in the kingdoms of earth to be released. And as those worries rise, as kingdom concerns rise, you pray the first half of prayer again.

You petition God to be God. God to be your father. God to hallow his name. God to bring his kingdom.

God to do his will. And you rest in the cross. And you rest in the cross because that is where Jesus shows that he didn't come for people who pray perfectly.

He didn't come for people who have all of their worries perfectly sorted out. He didn't come for those who are free from the worries of this world.

He didn't come for the spiritually healthy. He came for you and me who struggle with our worries, who struggle with this life, who find it hard to live the kingdom life, though we strive to.

[30 : 53] And Jesus came to the cross and he released us from the debt of our sin against him. And he trusted God with justice, even when that justice meant his own death.

won't you take a moment to reflect on these words of the Lord's prayer. And then I'll lead us in the time of prayer, saying the Lord's prayer together for those who'd like to.

Take a moment. Let's pray together.

Words are on the screen. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[32 : 12] For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen. I'm