

Prayer

Part 2

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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:00] Der zweite Vortrag von Frank Wallis am Montag, 13.10.1986 Das Gospel von Matthäus, Kapitel 6 Vers 5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward [00:01:04] thee openly.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.

After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen. [00:02:01] For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. I want to speak particularly about what is commonly called the Lord's Prayer, but was the Lord's instructions for his disciples, how they were to pray.

And the verses preceding this instruction that he gave to them tells us that there are things to avoid, told them that there were things to avoid. For instance, to avoid making a demonstration of their prayers, so that this was something that made much of themselves instead of the prayer, or the one to whom the prayer was addressed.

And secondly, not to have long prayers, eloquent words, nice platitudes, something that men [00:03:07] prided themselves in, but to be precise to the point and to pray in secret. So there were things that were to be avoided.

But I particularly want to be occupied with what is positive, what the Lord Jesus directed his disciples to say in their prayers. Now I think you will agree with me that he never taught them this prayer, that it might be reiterated on every occasion they were together, or for any occasion they were together, but rather showing them the kind of prayer that they should pray. Now very simply, before we start to break it up, I believe it falls into three different sections.

First of all, God.

That was to be the preeminent thing in their prayer. And you'll notice that in that prayer, the Lord is directing their thoughts to what is [00:04:02] particularly in relation to God.

Secondly, others.

Because when they pray, thy kingdom come, the Lord Jesus is thinking not only of the supremacy of God and his own position in that kingdom, but the tremendous benefit that would come to the whole world when that kingdom was established. And thirdly, themselves.

Now there is a simple direction for us, and if we examine our prayers, we might find that they are hardly in keeping with that kind of direction. I think if we were to confess, we would say most of our prayers are in relation to ourselves, what we need, what we desire.

But oh dear friends, the Lord wants us to think about God first, others, and then ourselves. That's a good pattern for any prayer.

But I want to break it up even more. [00:05:03] We may not cover all the things, but I want to point them out to you. Our Father, which art in heaven.

I'm not going to deal with it as some deal with it in a dispensational sense, I'm just going to use the Lord's words to help us in our prayers today. So our Father, which art in heaven. Now it seems to me that's the prayer of a child, the prayer of a son, the prayer of one who has a known relationship with God, and in this tremendous relationship, knowing God as Father.

Secondly, hallowed be thy name, is the prayer of a saint, one who desires that God's name should be set apart, should be recognized, should be distinctive.

The prayer of a saint.

Then, thy kingdom come, that's the prayer of a subject in the kingdom, and that involves [00:06:01] a tremendous scope indeed.

Then, thy will be done in earth, is the prayer of a servant, a bondsman who desires his master's will to be preeminent.

Then we have, give us this day our daily or our kneaded bread, the prayer of a dependent.

Then, forgive us our debts, the prayer of a debtor. Then, lead us not into temptation, the prayer of one who has known weakness, knowledge of one's own weakness and desiring not to be led into testings that are too great. And then, deliver us from evil, one who is in known helplessness, desiring

to be protected from the tremendous evil influences that are around.

Now, the Lord Jesus, being who he was, could say a tremendous amount in few words.

[00:07:02] Some of us may say a great deal, many, many words, and not say very much. But it was the opposite with the Lord. When he said a few words, what tremendous meaning was in those words. Tremendous scope.

And I believe this prayer that we call the Lord's Prayer provides us with these things. So, this is how we'll use it tonight. Well, first of all, our prayers in a known relationship.

Now, I feel that's a tremendous thing. We were saying on Saturday night that one of the great distinctive features about prayer is a recognition of the greatness of God. Now, when we speak about God as Father, this is a distinct recognition of his greatness and deity. There are two scriptures that we can bring forward to prove this. One is in 1 Corinthians 8, where Paul is speaking about the idolatry that existed in the world and the Corinthians in the midst of it. [00:08:02] And he said, to us, there is one God, the Father.

There we have the distinctive name of God revealed in this dispensation. To us, there is one God, the Father. And then, in the seven ones that Paul presents in Ephesians 4, one God and Father overall, and many other things he says about him. I believe there are two scriptures, and there are more, many more, that indicate to us how great this glorious Father is. He is God, but he is our Father.

And this is the declaration that the Lord made to Mary on the resurrection morn when she met him, and he made that tremendous message that she should take to the disciples.

I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.

[00:09:01] What a tremendous message to carry back to the disciples. And, of course, we know from that that it is our relationship, it is our blessing, it is our distinctive and unique blessing to know God in this way, our Father and our God.

Go a little step further, and Paul tells us in Ephesians that through him, that is through Christ, in the power of one spirit, we have access to the Father. That is, we are helped by another to enter into the presence of this tremendous God, the one whom we know as Father. Free access at all times through Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Now, isn't that a wonderful thing? That at any time and in any place we can lift up our voices to our Father in this known relationship that this Father who loves us and who is so infinitely great [00:10:05] has a knee that is open to hear our prayers.

That's a tremendous thing for us to consider. And I think it's Peter who says in his epistle, if ye invoke him as Father, invoke God as Father, you address him in that particular way because you know he is your Father. That's the relationship that you have with him. And if I remember in the Gospel by Luke, the Lord Jesus said, When ye pray, say, Father.

Now I think all those quotations indicate to us what a dignified thing prayer is. We said at the outset, prayer honors God.

And so if we address him in this way, as Father, we are taking advantage of a wondrous relationship

that has been set up for us by Christ, can be known and enjoyed in the power of the Holy Spirit, [00:11:03] and should characterize our prayers. We don't come before him saying that we are miserable sinners. We don't come before him with a sense that he's so far off. Oh no, we come to him in a known relationship, in association with the Son, knowing that his place is our place, and we can speak to our Father in this tremendous position. Now I think you will agree with me that if we enjoy this and appreciate it, it will give a character to our prayers, a depth and dignity to our prayers, far beyond anything that might be in an established way, an organized way, a written way, this spontaneous outflow of the heart to the Father in this known relationship.

Well, that's the first point, our Father which art in heaven.

I've had a difficulty here, dear brethren, and I'll express my difficulty, [00:12:03] that sometimes people tell us, when you mention your Father who is in heaven, it is a sense of distance.

But then I find in the same portion, the Lord Jesus says, My Father who is in the heavens.

Now I can't think for one second that the Lord Jesus was thinking of any distance between him and his Father, not for one second.

But it may be he was talking as a godly Jew at that moment, taking his place with them, I don't know. But I would be glad of any help in this if the brethren can afford it. But again I say that in the application at least of this quotation, it would bring home to us a sense of nearness and relationship that we can enjoy as we speak to our Father.

Now it says, Hallowed be thy name, or sanctified be thy name.

[00:13:04] This word hallowed is more often used in the Old Testament with the same meaning as we have in the New, sanctified. That is, this great God in his holiness is distinctively set apart in demonstration of who he is and in whatever way he deals with his people. Now I'm going to draw upon the Old Testament to apply this statement to ourselves.

The temple was built, built by Solomon, and God said that he was hallowed in that temple.

Here was a distinctive place upon earth where God was known and God was approached in a unique way, not in the superstition and idolatry that marked the nations. Here was a God who had revealed himself to the nation of Israel, covenant blessings, a way of approach explained to them how they could draw near to him, [00:14:07] and also a moral condition that was binding upon the people as they approached him. And in this sense, he was distinctively hallowed in the whole world in a unique way distinct from the idolatry that marked the world. Secondly, he was hallowed in a certain class of people who approached him, the priests. The priestly family, God was hallowed in them. That is, they were thoroughly occupied with him. They knew what was right in their approach to him. They followed his commandments in their approach to him. They were not governed by their own ideas or anyone else's ideas. They were entirely and wholly governed by what God laid down in relation to them. Then we find, and you can search these scriptures out, [00:15:03] you'll find that in the failure of the nation of Israel, they come under the judgment of God, and God is hallowed in that. His holiness becomes apparent in this distinctive, unique way in his dealings with his people. And then, praise God, he is hallowed, sanctified, when he deals with his people in restoration and brings them back to himself. Well now, if we just simply apply these things to ourselves today, use these scriptures and apply

them to the distinctive Christian position, praise God, there is a building today, not a material one, a spiritual one. No need in a company like this to explain that. Not a building of lime, stone, girder, wood, and precious stones, but a spiritual building consisting of every true believer in Christ. A spiritual house.

[00:16:01] And God, without doubt, is hallowed in that situation.

Here is a way where God in holiness is approached and worshipped according to his own desire. He's laid down in his word how he is to be approached. He's known in that building. It's his dwelling place. It's the habitation of God in the spirit. And praise God, he in a unique way is sanctified in that sense.

And then, not a family of priests, but a whole company of priests. This great approach to God through the whole company of believers, knowing him, worshipping him in this distinctive way.

And then, if we do go astray, oh, thank God that he uniquely is hallowed when he brings us back.

As we've been singing together, if evil besets us and he chastens us, he has his own way to bring us back to himself, [00:17:01] and he is uniquely glorified in this, hallowed in this, if you like. And then, too, in our restoration, how he demonstrates his greatness and glory in this wondrous way. Now, this is what we are to pray for. We are to pray that this might be known in a greater way today. I would think that if we examined and analyzed our prayer meetings, a great deal of the time would be used up in praying for the gospel, and one would not deprecate that in the slightest. We thank God for that.

We want to pray more and more and more for the salvation of precious souls. But I think you will agree that the greatest thing we can pray for is that God should be honored in the midst of his people, a greater approach to him, a greater understanding of the position that the people of God have and the opportunity they have to worship him. And, if you like, he set apart in a way that he couldn't be anywhere else [00:18:04] but in the midst of his people, he is uniquely, distinctively set apart in their affections and in their minds. Oh, how wonderful.

And we should pray for this more and more. There might be greater substance in the worship of God amongst his people if we prayed along these lines. And then pray, too, that we might be able to take advantage of this priestly service in worshipping God and approaching him in the way that he desires, not with any vestment, as the Aaronic priests had, not in any specified way, but the outpouring of the affections and the power of the Spirit going out to God in such a way as to please his heart. And in restoration, and also in discipline, God is great, and God works on the basis of his holiness, never deviates for it, never bends it. We should never think of God as a beneficent old gentleman [00:19:04] who very, very kindly overlooks our weaknesses and failures. God's not a God like that. He's a holy God, and he's concerned that we might be up to his standard, and so he places us through discipline, chastisement, that we might return to him, and in this he is glorified, set apart as no one else possibly could be.

Then these things ought to be in our prayers, that we're praying that God uniquely should be in the hearts of his people, whether in worship or in any other way. Then he says, I think now we are praying this prayer more often.

We're longing for the kingdom to come. Indeed, Paul says we ought to love his appearing.

That's the setting up of the kingdom, when the Lord Jesus Christ comes, sets up his earthly kingdom. [00:20:04] We might say, why should we pray for the kingdom? Well, there are very good reasons why we should pray for the kingdom. We should be deeply concerned that the kingdom come. The first thing is that God himself might be glorified and honored, because as we search through the scriptures, we find that the kingdom has a very great place in the mind and will and purpose of God.

If you haven't read it, our brother has written a book. It's available in the depot, Brother John Blackburn, The Kingdom of God, and that will tell us something about it. But I believe the first thing is the greatness and glory of God, his will, his purpose, established upon earth, as he intended it should be. Secondly, and oh, how we appreciate this, the public vindication of Christ, the one who was crucified and rejected. [00:21:02] Oh, what a wondrous day it will be when he is supreme in the world in a public way, known from the river to the ends of the earth. All shall know him from the least to the greatest. Oh, how wonderful that will be. The man of Nazareth, the man of glory, power, administration. Secondly, or should I say thirdly, we think about ourselves, not selfishly, but as the time when we shall share in that administration, and the Lord will reward us for any faithfulness that we have accomplished in this world. Might be very meager, but the righteous judge will give his true assessment as to that which has given him pleasure in our lives, that which has been for his glory, that which has made much of him.

There will be degrees of rewards, ruler over ten cities, ruler over five cities, so on. But yes, thank God, we have an interest in the kingdom.

[00:22:03] Fourthly, from a humanitarian point of view, what a tremendous desire to have that the kingdom should come. Oh, dear brethren, when we think of the sorrow that's in this world, the increasing wickedness, the awful chaos, the awful inhumanity that marks this poor, sad world, to see it at an end, no injustices, everything administered by Christ for the benefit of those upon earth. Oh, surely, this should be very much in our minds, thy kingdom come.

What a tremendous day that will be when rule, administration, will be seen in its perfection in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Just one word, in Revelation 5, we find many things ascribed to the Lord, honor, power, glory, and so on.

Amongst them is mentioned riches, [00:23:03] and we might well say, what is the Lord going to do with riches? I believe those are material riches. I don't think pound notes or hundred pound notes or gold and silver.

I believe the resources that exist in the world. That is true riches, and those riches will be administered by the Lord Jesus Christ.

No one will be able to corner the market and make a fortune at other people's expense.

There will be no maladministration in the world. There will be an administration of the resources that will be to the glory of God and the honor of Christ and for the benefit of all concerned. No wonder we should pray, thy kingdom come.

What a day it will be when the knowledge of the glory of the Lord covers the earth as the waters

cover the sea.

Thy kingdom come.

Then we have the prayer of a servant.

[00:24:01] Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

What a tremendous day that will be when this prayer is answered.

In Ephesians 1, Paul reminds us that there is a day coming when God will head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon earth, even in him.

That's the good pleasure of his will, the mystery of his will rather, when everything will be under the headship of Christ and a head who will control and influence for the glory of God.

That's a prayer to pray for.

Let thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. God's will today?

Well, it's certainly not apparent in the affairs of men. I wonder in that summit meeting that we've been hearing about so much, [00:25:01] Gorbachev and Reagan, I wonder if they ever bowed their knees and cried aloud to God that they might be governed by his will. I'm afraid not.

One is an avowed enemy of God, the leader of an atheist nation. How could they possibly bow down, the leader of it rather, bow down and confess his need of God for guidance? Oh, that day will come when every knee will bow and all shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father and God's will will be operative upon earth in every conceivable way. What a prayer to pray and we should be praying this, that God's will will be manifest.

We can pray today that it is manifested in our lives individually as we think of Romans 12 where Paul beseeches the saints to give their bodies a living sacrifice unto God [00:26:01] in view of knowing and doing his will. That is something that we can all do, every one of us.

And in that measure, the will of God will be seen upon earth. That's something that we can do ourselves. Praise God.

We have the power to do it. We have the instruction to do it. And a good thing to pray more and more that this might be evident in our lives, every one of us.

Then Paul, in a prayer in Colossians 1, he prays that the Colossian believers might grow by the true knowledge of God's will, the full knowledge of God's will. There was a distinctive prayer for a Christian company upon earth that they might advance in the knowledge of God's will for them. There would be a demonstration of the will of God upon earth.

I believe that the particular will there would be that they would be entirely free from anything that man would provide because that was their danger. [00:27:02] The philosophies of man intruding into Christian revelation and Paul's desire that they might be entirely free from that and be subject to the

known will of God and grow in the appreciation of it and in the practice of it. So that's a very wonderful thing that individually and in our companies there can be the evidence of the will of God active upon earth long before it is known in its extensive way under Christ in the world to come. We're involved in that. We're involved in the future. We're involved in the present. I think it's a tremendous thing, tremendous triumph of God's grace and love that creatures like ourselves so poor and failing can in some measure exhibit the will of God. Oh, how great this was seen in our Lord Jesus Christ when in the hour of his greatest sorrow [00:28:01] just approaching it he could pray not my will but thine be done.

Not avoiding the suffering that he was about to pass through but ready to go through the declared will of God for him. He had come into this world in incarnation saying this, Lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, O God.

And nothing caused him to deviate from that.

He knew it was God's will. He did it every day of his life. He desires that each one of us should follow his example and do his will.

Yes, this is a prayer we can all pray thy will be done on earth. We can pray it for ourselves we can pray it for the Christian company we can pray for its speedy coming upon earth in an extended way under Christ.

Thy will be done in earth. [00:29:10] Come to these confessions of need.

Give us this day our daily bread I'm going to give you the rendering that Mr. Darby gives.

Give us this day our needed bread.

He has a very interesting footnote in his new translation and he says they are not to pray for an abundance it's a question of what is necessary day by day.

Now I think that's beautiful because we are never taken out of the place of a dependent.

It means that every day of our lives we are praying this.

Now [00:30:02] in this affluent society in which we live I don't suppose any of us pray this kind of prayer that we need a loaf of bread. But we can pray in a material sense that we might be provided with everything that's necessary for our righteous requirements as Christians to meet everything every obligation that we have as citizens in any particular place that we need to meet the righteous obligations that are upon us as citizens and we may not have the wherewithal to do that and so I think it's perfectly correct that we should pray that that is forthcoming. But the main thing I want to stress is that we're dependent we don't want to be independent that would be false and we have to pray this prayer every day of our lives that we're dependent upon him. Many had an uncle who used to [00:31:02] have a little business and one day he felt he had done extremely well and he sat down and he counted his day's takings and he was congratulating himself that he had been so successful. And then into his mind came the quotation from Deuteronomy Think not that it was the power of thy right hand that acquired thee this wealth. There was a word to him that whatever he had received he had received it from God. God gave him the strength God gave him the wisdom God gave him the

guidance and he was privileged to acquire what he had acquired.

And surely in this affluent society there is the danger of us becoming independent in mind and in practice.

Oh how necessary it is to cry aloud to God every day of our lives that we might be supplied [00:32:02] with that which is necessary to maintain us as Christians. Our needed bread whatever is necessary for us as true believers in the place where we are. We may have plenty of this world's goods and yet we need to pray this prayer that we might be strengthened, supplied in various ways.

I'm sure you will all agree that no matter what we may have materially that we need to pray every day of our lives to be kept in this attitude of dependence. I'm sure that Joseph of Arimathea would learn this.

I'm sure that many, many rich people have learned it that whatever they have it never delivers them from the position of a dependent. Every day they are dependent upon God. Every one of us, we are all dependent upon God.

A great king was told by the prophet the God in whose hands [00:33:02] thy breath is, thou hast not glorified.

Do we glorify God as we rise in the morning? Do our hearts rise up to him in thankfulness that we have health and strength and soundness of mind?

Do we thank him for the homes we live in, the food that we eat, the clothes that we wear, not with any ostentation, but just profoundly thankful that we have these things that the people take for granted. These are just the necessary things to them. They are necessary to us too, but we acknowledge a God who gives them in all the grace and kindness of his heart.

And how to administer these things is surely a constant problem and exercise, but oh dear brethren my desire from my own heart and I'm sure for yours is that we might never feel ourselves independent, but every day of our lives acknowledge that we are dependent. We need God. We need him every day and in every portion [00:34:02] of our lives. Let us pray this prayer then. Give us this day our needed bread.

I think I ought to say this, that I believe with all my heart that this will be the prayer of the beleaguered remnant during the time of the great tribulation. You remember it tells us that if you don't get the mark of the beast in your forehead and in your hand, you won't be able to buy and you won't be able to sell.

That is so and it will be so. How are those people going to buy bread? How are they going to get bread? Impossible. They don't belong to the beast. They won't be supplied by anyone. Give us this day our daily bread. It will be a real prayer coming from their hearts. A prayer for guidance, control and support. A prayer for what is necessary to maintain them in life as they represent [00:35:02] God. It will be very real to them. It ought to be very real to us. Day by day dependence.

Then it says, forgive us our debts. Here is the prayer of a debtor.

It goes on to say, as we forgive our debtors.

Now, thank God if we have a forgiving spirit. Great deal of unhappiness amongst the saints of God would be soon cured if a forgiving spirit were more practiced. Oh how hard we can be.

And the Lord Jesus said this, remember in the parable of the servant who owed his master a tremendous amount of money. And when the master was going to treat him in a very hard way, he pleaded, pleaded for time to pay back.

And his master was so struck by this attitude. He had compassion upon him and he [00:36:02] forgave him all. And then he had a colleague, co-servant, who owed him a paltry sum.

And he demanded that payment. Indeed was violent in his desire to get the payment. And when he didn't get it, he treated his co-servant shamefully. Now that's a very simple parable, but my, it speaks volumes. When we think of the immense amount that God has forgiven us, are we able to assess it? The tremendous forgiveness that God has exercised towards us in all our sin and folly. Yet we're so reluctant to forgive anyone who says something to us, or does something to us, that we don't like. How unforgiving.

So the Lord Jesus is saying, this is the kind of prayer. I want you to pray. Forgive us our debts.

As we forgive our debtors, we forgive [00:37:02] those who are indebted to us. And that's a very small thing. Oh, we want to be forgiven, because we haven't fulfilled our obligations towards thee. Now, dear brethren, when we think of how much we are indebted to God for his mercy, his grace, his love, when we think of the vast realm of blessing that we have brought into, and we so feebly respond to him in relation to it, I think in this sense we can view ourselves as debtors. That we haven't fully, adequately, livingly answered to what God has given to us. We're indebted to him in such a wonderful way for his greatness and love to us, and how paltry our return to him. I'm going to apply it in that way. That we're a debtor to God in that sense. Oh, that we might be more conscious of responding to him [00:38:02] in a way that gives him joy and gladness, and I'm sure that he appreciates it. We just need to quote one little story from the word of God to prove this. You remember the ten lepers who were cleansed? What tremendous blessing in their lives. Completely freed from this loathsome disease. Nine never found it in their hearts to come back and say thanks. One came back and said thanks to God. Incidentally, the only one in the gospels that ever said thanks to Christ. And oh, how he appreciated it. Not only did he give thanks, it says he gave glory to God. Here was one who was indebted and responded to his indebtedness by giving glory to God and saying thanks to the Lord Jesus. Oh, how easily we might fall into this snare of, yes, enjoying these things. Well, if we did enjoy them we would be more responsive. [00:39:02] But we accept them in a casual kind of manner. Oh, yes, I'm blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. And perhaps not responding to the God who has blessed us in such a wonderful way. So, the Lord says, pray this kind of prayer. That we might be forgiven. That we might not be held against us, if you like. Now we have to make ourselves clear here. There is a forgiveness that is absolute. Oh, how wonderful it is. That in the death of Christ, everything has been forgiven in relation to our sin and guilt. There's no possibility of anything being brought up against us in that realm. The death of Christ is absolute in that sense. Those sins of ours are covered, dealt with, finished through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And we're deeply thankful for that. I think what the Lord is saying here, pray that there might not, on your part, any slackness [00:40:02] in showing your response to your God. Very, very difficult to put in Christian terms. But that's the way I apply it this evening. And so, we too should be marked by this tremendous

indebtedness to God and ready to respond to Him and give Him pleasure.

Now, we come to those last two in verse 13. Known weakness.

Lead us not into temptation.

You know from the epistle of James that he tells us that God would never tempt anyone with evil, with sin.

That's an absolute statement that we can take. It's perfectly true. God will never lead us into a place where we'll sin. Every man is led away by his own lust and when it conceives, brings forth sin and sin brings forth death. That's the order [00:41:02] that James presents.

But here is unknown weakness on the part of the believer and he says, don't allow me to be in circumstances that are too testing for me.

I think Paul felt something like this when he prayed aloud to the Lord three times that the thorn from the flesh might be removed from him.

This is something that was bearing in upon him. He desired earnestly that it might be removed. But it wasn't removed. That was a prayer that went unanswered because he proved in his circumstances that the power of Christ was able to help him and sustain him. But here is a person knowing his own weakness. I know my weakness.

I know how easily I can succumb to temptations, testings, how easily I can give way. I don't want to be like that. I want to be kept free from these things. I want to go forward and do the things that are pleasing to God [00:42:02] and not be allowed to fall into temptation, fall into testings that will be too great for me.

I think God understands this. He's so gracious.

Do you remember when the children of Israel came out of Egypt?

He led them by a way whereby they avoided the wars that were going on.

He didn't want them to be embroiled in strife immediately coming out from Egypt. How kind he was.

And he looked after them and cared for them in that way.

He did allow them to be tested by various means.

Sometimes they were successful and sometimes they failed. I think here this is the prayer of one who knows his own weakness.

Don't allow us to be drawn into circumstances that are too great for us. Do you feel that you're strong enough to face any testing?

I don't.

[00:43:02] Oh, I'm terrified that I might be in testings whereby I might be overthrown, might dishonor the Lord. I think it's a prayer that's close to our hearts as we get older. George Muller, man of faith, man of God, right till the very day he died, he says, Lord, preserve me from being a wicked old man. There was the prayer of a man of God.

Desire in his heart.

You see, he had been a man who had known something of evil, debauchery. He had known it. He was a depraved man before he was converted. Didn't want to go back to that. Didn't want to be in circumstances tested by them and overcome. And so this is a good prayer. Oh, don't let us be self-confident. Poor Peter is an example for us in the scriptures. Though all forsake thee, yet will not I.

He didn't know his own weakness. Good thing if we know our own weakness. Good thing if we know our own smallness. Good thing if we can get a vision like Gideon when the barley cake [00:44:02] rolled into the camp of the Gideons. The...

Not the Gideonites.

The people who were against the children of Israel.

These enemies of Israel. And that's what Gideon saw. A little barley cake. That was to give him an impression of his own smallness and of God's power. And that's a very good thing. If we can always keep this in our minds that God is great and he'll help us in our weakness. And lastly, deliver us from evil.

I believe this is the prayer of one who knows his own helplessness. That the powers that are against him are infinitely greater than himself.

I like Paul's statement in the last chapter of 2 Timothy.

It's very near to my heart. And although it was uniquely true of Paul, I would like it to be true of myself. And I'm sure you would too. [00:45:02] The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work.

And preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.

What tremendous confidence. Here was a man who was confident that the Lord would look after him and preserve him from those tremendous evil powers that existed.

Some say that this could be translated the evil one. The evil one. And what a power he is. Oh, what a power Satan is.

We ought to know more about him. His subtlety, his cunning, his wiles.

There is so much in Scripture that tell us how great and powerful and wise and cunning Satan is.

Not one of us is a match for him. But in the power of Christ we can be protected.

Oh, how important it is. The evil one. What tremendous influence and power he is. [00:46:02] And like David, as he went into the valley of Elah against Goliath, he went in the power of the name of the God of hosts. That was his strength.

A little stripling against this man of war. But that's how he was successful. In the name of the God of hosts.

And that's our strength. Oh, what a prayer. Deliver us from evil. And also Paul reminds us that the Lord Jesus Christ died to deliver us from this present evil age. In the first chapter of Galatians, the first few verses. This is an evil world. If we find some of its things attractive to us, let us remember that those attractions are governed by the ruler of this world.

They take up our time.

They attract us. They deprive us. They take away our appetite for divine things. This is an evil world. If it shows its fair face to us, it's to allure us away from the things that are worthwhile. [00:47:02] And we need to pray that we might be delivered in a practical way every day of our lives from this present evil world. A good prayer to pray. A good prayer to pray. Every day of our lives. Evil things. Evil things. Evil things. Evil things. Every day of our lives. Evil is all around us. Every conceivable form. The ruler of this world makes sure some senses it's blatant. Other senses it's very subtly hid. And that's to ensnare the believer. Oh, what a tremendous thing it is. This prayer deliver us from evil. In ourselves we're unable to combat it because we have a nature that responds to it. Willingly responds to it. Thank God we have another nature that desires holy things. And this is the nature that can be successful in the power of the spirit and obedient to the word of God.

Well, I made these few suggestions [00:48:02] that in this disciples prayer, there is so much when we analyze it. The prayer, as we say, our Father which art in heaven. The prayer of a son. Hallowed be thy name.

The prayer of a saint.

Thy kingdom come. The prayer of a subject. Thy will be done on earth. The prayer of a servant. Give us this daily bread, our needed bread. The prayer of a dependent person. Forgive us our debts. The prayer of a debtor. And lead us not in temptation. The prayer of known weakness. Deliver us from evil.

The prayer of helplessness. I think you will agree that this prayer contains a great deal and can guide us that we might be accurate, that we might be intelligent in our approach to God in our prayers and see the scope that can be covered in our prayers as we intelligently take account of this great avenue that's been opened up for us [00:49:02] into the presence of God at all times in the power of the spirit and through Christ.

And I'm sure that those prayers will be deeply appreciated by God and in the words of the Lord before that, pray to thy father which is in secret and thy father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

May we be encouraged for his namesake.