

OUR FATHER

A Study in Prayer



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THIS, THEN, IS HOW YOU SHOULD PRAY:	1
OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER	1
OUR HEAVENLY FATHER DRAWS NEAR TO US	2
A PART OF THIS FAMILY AS CO-HEIRS	3
IF WE ARE “LED BY THE SPIRIT	3
IS HE FROM THE PAST, THE FUTURE, OR NOW?	3
GOD IS NOT CONSTRAINED BY TIME	3
MAN KEEPS TRYING TO REINVENT GOD	4
GOD IS WILLING TO TEACH US	4
WHAT’S IN A NAME?	5
YOUR KINGDOM COME.”	6\
WHAT IS SOVEREIGNTY?	6
WHAT ABOUT GOD’S WILL?	7
GOD WILL MEET OUR EVERYDAY NEEDS	7
OSCAR WILDE	8
GOD HAS PROVIDED ALL THAT WE NEED	9
”DOES GOD TEMPT US?	10
ARE WE THEN SINLESS?	10
KEEP US FROM THE EVIL ONE	10
OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HEAVENLY FATHER	10

Mathew 6:9-13, “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. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

How many times have we repeated this prayer either as a part of a group of people or as an individual without a single thought as to what we are saying? Has our prayer life become just a life of mouthing the words? The intent of this paper is to take a close look at the words of the Lord’s Prayer and draw out their meanings as to the believer’s life.

As we open up the prayer we need to take note of the relationship between the one reciting the prayer and the one to whom the prayer is directed. Jesus instructs us that when we pray we are talking to our Heavenly Father. The significance of this is that we are not talking to someone or something that is detached from us, but that we are talking to someone with whom we have a relationship.

Our relationship with our earthly fathers may or may not have a positive effect on our relationship with our Heavenly Father. If our relationship with our earthly father has been a close, love-filled, one then it would suggest that our relationship with our Heavenly Father should follow suit. However; if our relationship with our earthly father has been one of separation or abuse then we may find it hard to develop a relationship with our Heavenly Father. Even the frailties of our earthly fathers may come into play when it comes to our Heavenly Father. We may put the limitations of our earthly father onto our Heavenly Father, robbing Him of His awesome power.

In my own life I had a father who had the belief that there is no such thing as a bad boy, just some boys need more direction than others. Dad not only believed this but he also practiced this with the boys in the local scout troop. I was only in the sixth grade when my father fell to a blood clot to the right side of his heart. I watched an active man become immobilized by more than a failing heart. Like most men in this condition, my father felt like less of a man, as he was not able to provide for his family in the manner he was taught. Through this condition t my father was brought into a closer relationship with his Heavenly Father. I remember that one time when my oldest sister questioned faith in one God and that this was the true God. My father’s response was the first time I ever remember him testifying of his faith in the one who pulled him through.

There were times in my life that I felt as if my earthly father was asking too much of me, not unlike any other pre-teen and teenage boy. We didn’t have much money, as there were six of us kids in the family, and we wanted bikes so that we could ride around with our friends. My two brothers and I were given second hand bikes that needed some work. Under our father’s supervision we stripped down the bikes to their bare elements so that we could paint them. When I say “stripped down,” I mean all the way down even to the point of removing the spokes in the wheels. Now anyone who has ever tried to re-align spoke wheels knows that this is not a job for the weak of heart or little patience. Needless to say, I was not very patient in my teen years.

My father was able to help the two younger ones align their wheels but when it came to me, I had to do it on my own. I felt slighted and that he was expecting too much of me. With my temper loosed and my mouth under the control of the slighted teenager, I “lipped off” to my sister about how unfair it was for him to help the others and not me. I further expressed my thoughts on how he expected too much of me. My sister did not reply but her eyes looked over my shoulder to the doorway that was behind me. As I turned, there stood my father who had heard every word I said; his face reflected the hurt in his heart. I felt about as big as a flea. That was not the end of it. Within the hour the doctor was at the house administering oxygen to my father as they waited for the ambulance to come. Talk about crushing words; my own words hurt my father and made him feel even worse than if I were to call the neighbor man, “father”. But, those same words had even more effect on that loudmouthed teenager. As I watched my father in his helpless state, I felt as if I caused such pain to my father that it put him in the hospital. My father returned home after several days but I never lost the shame I felt for hurting my father in that way.

This is not the end of the story. As I grew older, my father and I spent time together with his love for the Native American. Dad was into Indian lore, the study of the Native American. He also was still tied in with the Boys Scouts and helped me to move to associate advisor when I became too old to be a boy member. Through this we were able to spend time together with his love showing others about native customs and dances. My last summer at home was spent working a fulltime job and spending time with my dad and my girlfriend. Dad taught me everything that I was willing to learn; he showed me what he was doing on his costume and how he wanted to finish it. Between the two of us, it was always expected that I would end up with his gear and finish it for him if something would happen. That never happened. I believe that the others did not understand the bond that we had forged. I cherished this time we had together my last summer at home. We always knew that I soon would have to leave home and serve my time in the military. (By the way my father’s Indian name was “Grey Cloud.” An Indian chief had adopted dad when he saw what my he had done over the years. Why “Grey Cloud?” Dad told me that the chief gave him that name because of all the troubles he had seen in his life for such a young man.)

Leaving the following summer for the Air Force, I knew in my heart that I might not see my father again. That December I got a leave to come home from tech school. It was a Christmas leave that I would remember. Dad was in the hospital and my sister Bea had just come home from England. My father had just had an operation that was not fully completed because of his heart. With my sister on one side and I on the other, my father would start laughing even though it hurt. He said on the one hand he heard a “Limy” and on the other a “Red Neck.” We had both assimilated the slang and accents from where we were stationed. That was my last chance to see my father. A month later I was home on leave again to say good bye to him for the last time. Even though I hurt my father, he drew me near and gave me a time that can never be taken away.

In a similar way our Heavenly Father draws near to us through His love for us. In 2 Samuel 7:11-16, God establishes a special relationship with David’s descendents. God tells David that He would be their father and they will be His sons. He tells David that he, David, would not build a house in God’s name but his son would and that God would establish the throne of his kingdom, which will last forever. Through the line of David comes the only

begotten son of our Heavenly Father through Joseph the husband of Mary [Mat 1: 1-17]. Jesus is the love of our Heavenly Father in that He gave us His only begotten son so that we who believe in Him will have life that is everlasting [John 3:16].

It is through Jesus the Christ that we become a part of this family as co-heirs [Rom. 8:12-17]. All things truly belong to Christ. It is through the freedoms we receive through Him that we can hope to be counted among God's children. In these verses we can find that depending on how we live, by our natural nature or by the Spirit, reveals to whom we belong. How we live is evidence of whether that faith [faith in God] is genuine or not. If we live a Spirit led life we are considered sons of God. It is by this Spirit that we receive our sonship. It is through the Spirit, himself, testifying to our spirit that we find we are truly God's children. As children of God we become co-heirs with Christ. Paul tells us that "we share in the suffering of Christ so that we may also share in his glory."

Another way to look at our connection to God is through Romans 11:11-24. Here we are looking at the process of how the husband (farmer or caretaker) takes away one set of branches and grafts in another. The purpose for doing this is the production of fruit. In these verses we are told that these branches were cut off because they did not believe. The branches that were grafted in were not the cultivated type but they were considered wild. Needless to say, this would not be the normal way of doing this. It is through disbelief that the natural branch (unbelieving Israel) was cast aside. Through belief the wild branch (the believing gentile) was grafted in. Now the branches that remain or have been grafted in are not safe from the pruning knife of the caretaker. Further pruning may be needed on the branches that are connected to the vine. This pruning only cuts away that which is not useful to the production of the fruit. God cuts away the things of our lives that are not good for the production of the fruit. The importance here is truly not the branches but the vine itself. If it were not for the vine there could be no life in the branch nor could the branch produce fruit. Jesus is the vine. It is through the blood of Christ that we have life and a direct connection to the Father as heirs as though we were true sons.

In Romans 8:14-17 we find that if we are "led by the Spirit of God we are sons of God." We are set free from fear and receive our sonship through the Spirit. It is through His Spirit that we can cry "Abba" (Daddy). His Spirit testifies to our spirit that we are His sons. In this condition we are His heirs with all the rights of legitimate heirs. We are co-heirs with Christ. As heirs we have been grafted in as true sons of our Heavenly Father.

Our Heavenly Father: is He from the past, the future, or now? Yes! God says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, who is, and who was, and who is to come." (Rev 1:6) "I am the First and the Last" (Rev 22:13). "I am the beginning and the end" (Rev 21:6). When God says that He is, He is telling us that He exists now and is among us. When He says He was, He is saying that He existed in the past. And when He said that He is to come, He is telling us that He will be in the future. How can this possibly be? To us this all seems to be so impossible. How can someone be from the past, exist now, and be in the future?

God is not constrained by time. Man created time to mark the passing of one event and the commencing of the next. Man marks his days by marking the event increments from one sunrise to the next. These increments he calls hours or even minutes. He marks the events

between his birth and his death and calls it life. Time only serves to help show the limitations of man. Man, if he allows, lets time rule every second of his own life. Because of this control over man he has a hard time relating to something that is timeless. God is timeless.

In the opening of His Word the first words that appears to our eyes are, "In the beginning God created" (Gen. 1:1). When nothing existed He was there. How can someone exist before time itself existed? If time is the marking of the passing of one event to the beginning of the next then how can God exist unless He is above the constraints of time? God created everything, including man himself. God is infinite. In Psalms 90 the psalmist tells us that God was there before the mountains were born and that He brought forth the earth and the heavens. He also tells us that God is from everlasting to everlasting or eternal. Eternity has no beginning or an end. If God is eternal then He has no beginning or an end.

Through time everything ages. Not everything that ages through time is good. Some things that age through time become harmful to the consumer. Cheese that is aged is normally a good thing. They say that wines improve with age. Milk, on the other hand, will become spoiled. Meats left out on the counter for any length of time will soon spoil and become harmful to the one wishing a good meal. Fish, if allowed to spoil, can become deadly.

Man keeps trying to reinvent God so as to fit Him, God, into their mold or idea of whom they need Him to be. This constant changing god is truly no god at all. This god, of man's creation, has the frailties of man himself and will need to change as the needs of man change. As man navigates through the twists and turns of life, then so does his god change to meet those needs. This constant moving with the waves of life can only lead to confusion and disaster. A god spoiled by time is more deadly than the spoiled fish.

In order to navigate through even the roughest of terrain we need a point to focus on. If that focus point is constantly changing then we have no hope of ever finding our way to safety. Our God is consistent, not changed by time; He is our focus point and our standard. God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Never changing, He is that one thing in our changing times that we can depend on. God will help us to navigate through the twists and turns of life that can come our way. God is our moral standard that we can use to find our way out of the traps set before us by the deceiver.

God is willing to teach us what we are willing to learn. Even though we may do things or say things that hurt Him, our Lord is always there to draw us near to Him. God is not trapped by the frailties of man and loves us so much that he has paid the price for our sins.

One of the ways that we know someone existed is through the testimony of those of that time period. Job says, "I know my redeemer lives, and in the end He will stand upon the earth" (Job 19:25). If God lived in Job's time and He is eternal then He lives today and as Job said, He will be living at the end. So what kind of comfort can one find in a God who is timeless?

If someone lives then they must exist somewhere. So where is He? One of His places of existence is the place called Heaven. We look up and see the heavens above us. We know from His word that He created the heavens along with the earth (Gen.14: 19). In Exodus 20:22 the

Lord tells Moses to tell Israel that “You have seen for yourself that I have spoken to you from heaven.” In his prayer of dedication Solomon request that the Lord hear the prayers from His dwelling place in heaven (1 Kings 8:30). Solomon has been noted as the wisest king ever. So, it is by his testimony that we see one of God’s dwelling places is in heaven. God says in Isaiah 66:1, “Heaven is my throne.” In his spiritual revelation, John tells us that God’s temple is in heaven (Rev. 11:19). It is from the testimony of those from across the ages that we can reasonably declare that Heaven is God’s dwelling place.

We can draw near to heaven with our faith in Christ Jesus. In Mathew 4: 17, Jesus begins His ministry with the same message as John the Baptizer; “Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is near.” If God is sovereign in heaven, then we can draw near to Him through His Son Jesus. In Mathew 19:14; Jesus says that we are not to hinder the faith of the children who come to Him. It is through such a faith as these “little ones” that we could hope to obtain heaven. God, in heaven, draws near to us through His Son Jesus and we can draw near to Him through faith in Christ.

So far we can see that we truly have a father who wants a relationship with us and that he exists in heaven.

What’s in a name? Shakespeare said “a rose is a rose and if it were called by another name it would smell just as sweet.” When Jesus says, “hallowed be your name,” it would not be the same if he said, “your name is George.” The word hallow means, “to be clean,” ceremonially and morally and hence “sacred”(Wycliffe Bible Dictionary, 745). There is no more sacred name than that of our Heavenly Father. God is the ultimate moral being who is above all others. God is without sin.

The most common used term for deity is El, Elim, Elohim, and Eloah or Theos (Greek), or Deus (Latin) or God (English). The Old Testament writers used the plural Elohim to refer to the God of Israel. Some note that this refers to the Trinity as it, or they, existed from the beginning of time. El-Elyon refers to the most high (Ps 78:35). El-Shaddai is the Almighty God (Gen. 17:1) The word Jehovah or Yahweh are terms connected to the Hebrew verb, “to be,” meaning “self existing one, one who causes to be.” Adonai is both a title of honor of meaning of rank, “Master,” “Sovereign,” or “Lord”, and an appellative, a proper name, meaning “my Lord”.

Appearing 31 times in Job the name El Shaddai, “Almighty God,” means God’s power. El Olam, the everlasting God,” means God is everlasting. Jehovah – jireh God the provider. Jehovah nissi the Lord is my banner. Yahweh Roi the Lord is my shepherd. The God of peace “Yahweh shalom.” The Lord is there, “Yahweh shammah.” The Lord of Hosts, “Yahweh Sabaoth.” With all of these references to God it isn’t hard to see that the most high, God, Creator of all the heaven and earth, is truly to be honored above all names.

My father was given the name “Grey Cloud” because of the afflictions he had in his life that were not normal for a man of his age. These afflictions were normally found in men twice his age. In our age we don’t seem to assimilate the name given to us with anything other than that is who we are. In other cultures, such as Native Americans, names have a meaning. When

we look at the Lord's names we see "holy" or "hallowed". How can we relate to that? Again to see that it means to be morally clean. What is morally clean? Morality has dogged mankind from the time of the fall in the garden. Man has been searching for a moral standard ever since. To be morally clean is to be above the reproach of mankind, to be unaffected by the whims of man's fallen nature. Untouched by man's depraved direction, God is able to remain our standard. In His love for us, He reaches out to us asking us to reach for the higher standard that He sets before us.

"Your kingdom come:" This is a call for the kingdom of God to come to full fruition. "The kingdom of heaven is the rule of God and is both a present reality and a future hope" (NIV Notes Mat 3:2). When we say your kingdom come, we are saying that we want God's rule in our life. God wants to rule not only in this moment but also for eternity.

Hodge writes: "If God be a spirit, and therefore a person, infinite, eternal, and immutable in His being and perfection, the Creator and Preserver of the universe, He is of right its absolute sovereign.... This sovereignty of God is the ground and peace and confidence to all His people. They rejoice that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; that neither necessity, nor chance, nor folly of man, nor the malice of Satan controls the sequence of events and all their issues"(Thiessen 119).

What is Sovereignty? When one is given sovereignty over something they are said to have power over that one thing. One could be considered to have supremacy or dominion over that one thing or person. A sovereign country is said to be self-governed. When we say that God is Sovereign, we are saying that He is the supreme Lord of all. He has dominion over all and is self-governed.

Scriptures tell us of His rule in the entire universe. 1 Chron. 29:11 tells us that God has dominion over everything that is in the heavens and the earth. Psalm 115:3 says; "But our God is in Heaven; He does what ever pleases Him." In chapter 45 verse 9 Isaiah says, "Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd (broken Pottery) among the potsherds (broken pottery) of the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, what are you making? Does your work say, He has no hands?" "His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation. All the people of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done'?" (Dan 4:34-35).

So with this information in hand we can see that God's kingdom is eternal and sovereign. The sovereign rule of God not only is effective in the universe but also in the world in which we live. There is nowhere that we can go to hide from God's rule. By asking His Kingdom to come we are acknowledging that He is the ultimate domain in our world. Our Heavenly Father is the head of the body of believers and as so He is the sovereign rule of the body. To ask Him to be the head of our family, or ourselves, means to surrender to His will. To give Him Rule in our lives means to surrender our will to His.

With His sovereignty, God gave a gift to mankind. That gift is the gift of a free will. He gave us a free will to choose to follow His will. No other part of creation, known to man, has this gift.

What about God's will? When we pray this prayer we are asking that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. The will of God has two aspects, the efficacious and the permissive. The efficacious aspect of His will is accomplished through cause or actively. It is not only what He wills but also His desire. The permissive will of God is permitted to occur by unrestrained rational creation.

How do we know God's will? God does have plans for His children and it is His desire that we know it and Him. In history, God has made His will known through dreams, a voice speaking, manifestations, angels, etc. The best way to find and understand God's will is to be saturated with His word. God does not contradict Himself. By saturating our lives with His word we can determine His will for our lives and therefore spot the counterfeit will of the deceiver. Just the opposite can occur if we should neglect the study of His word. We could become double minded, swaying from one assault on our spirit to the next until we are totally deceived into believing that the spirit that is leading us is God. Many who neglect God and deny His sovereign power will find themselves on the wrong side of His will.

One asks, "Does God have a perfect will for our lives or a permissive will in which His wisdom guides us?" Paul tells us, in Romans 12: 2, not to conform to the ways of the world, but to be changed, "transformed," by the renewing of our minds. To be in Christ, we become a "new creation [2 Cor. 5:12]," reconciled to God. To be transformed, to change our characteristics, to go through a morphosis, as a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, we change from that which we were, slave to the world, to freedom in Christ. We put off the old and on the new life in Christ then and only then can we hope to be able to "Test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2).

Just the study of His word will not do the trick either. To know someone's desires is to get to know them on a personal level. To have a cursory knowledge of someone may assist us in guessing what they may desire, but to really understand the desires of their heart we must first come to know them on an intimate level. This is the same with God. We can come to know Him on an intellectual level by reading His word but to know His desire we must first develop a personal relationship with Him.

So when we pray that God's will be done as it is in heaven, then we are asking that His will be also in our lives. We are asking to know Him on a personal level, a level that will help us to know the desires of His heart.

God will meet our everyday needs. "Bread was the most common and important food of the peasant. It was made from grain without yeast, in different shapes" (Wycliffe Bible dictionary 621). The word "bread" can be used for both the physical and the spiritual needs of the individual. First of all, it is easy for us to relate to the physical need for sustenance in that we all have the need to consume food in order to sustain life. We can exist for some period of time without consuming any food and we will live, but the longer that we go without the sustenance the lower our energy drops and so the quality of the life we are leading. On the spiritual side of the meaning of daily bread is the need for a daily presence of God in our lives. As it is with the reduced consumption of physical food so it is with our spiritual food. If we neglect to feed ourselves with the acknowledgement of God then we will find ourselves with a lesser quality of

our spiritual life. An interesting thing to note is the lack of yeast in the peasant's bread. The yeast was not there to puff things up. So it should be with our spiritual life. We do not need to add things to God's bread for our lives; he has provided all that we need. To try and add to His provisions would be to say to Him that He is less God and we are more, we can take care of ourselves.

What about those who are suffering and are a part of the Christian body? We, as man, have a tendency to put the inhumanity of man toward man on to our Heavenly Father. Throughout history man has demonstrated his inability to care for his fellow man out of hatred, hard heartedness, or just complete indifference. The saddest note to be made is that the more we seem to have, the less we are willing to part with and then we turn a blind eye to the needs around us. When we do have our eyes opened to the deprivation around us we ask, "Where is God? Why doesn't He do something about the suffering in the world?"

In his Encyclopedia of the Self, Oscar Wilde states; "The chief advantage that would result in the establishment of Socialism is, undoubtedly, the fact that Socialism would relieve us from the sordid necessity of living for others which, in the present condition of things, presses so hardly upon almost everybody. In fact, scarcely anyone at all escapes." Wilde thought that there were those who were able to isolate themselves from this drain of society, like Darwin, Keats, Renan, and Flaubert. Wilde says that the common man, who is not able to isolate themselves from the poverty, ugliness, and starvation, are strongly moved by the afflicted. Man's emotions get him in trouble because it is easier to stir up sympathy for emotions than it does for thought. It is emotions of man that causes man to reach out in a "misdirected intention" to remedy the evil that he sees.

Wilde was stating that socialism, or communism, had the solution to this evil bestowed on man. He was suggesting that stripping the rich of their private ownership and distributing it among the population would solve the problem of poverty, as we know it. History has proven that this thought was, in itself, misdirected. The rule of socialism and communism has not solved the problem of poverty but has only succeeded in increasing the dependency of man on the governing body for man's daily needs. In truth, socialism and communism, in the hands of man, only serves to hide the riches from the common man. As the common man struggles to find his daily bread, as he stands in lines awaiting the governments supply, the leadership wallows in the wealth of their position and ill gotten gains off of the backs of the common man.

Wilde stated that Jesus was in fact helpful in the support of socialism through His teachings. I believe again that Wilde was wrong in his perception. When the rich ruler approached Jesus he asked him, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" In his heart he believed that he had followed all of the commands that Jesus recited to him. When Jesus told him that he was lacking one thing the rich man turned away with a heavy heart. Jesus told him to sell everything he had and give what he received to the poor. The point here was not that all who are well off should rid themselves of all that they have because the riches are evil and that they are less evil in the hands of the poor. Rather the point is that the rich man's heart was the problem. When we rely on the riches of the world to meet our daily needs we find ourselves in want.

God has provided all that we need. It is not God who has deprived the poor of the basics of life but the hearts of those who have. No government can wipe out poverty by declaring the rich give up all they own, nor can they dictate that man's heart be changed as to care for his fellow men. It is only by the change in the individual man's heart toward God that we can hope that man change toward his fellow man. It is only through this change that we can hope to wipe out the poverty, ugliness, starvation, and illness that has beset mankind.

Next we are asking God to forgive the debt that we owe Him.

We owe God?

Yes, we owe Him for the price that was paid on the cross for all of mankind.

What debt do I owe God?

The price of sin is death.

You mean to tell me that I sinned and that I must die because I sinned?

The death we are talking about is the separation from God Himself.

So what, I've done pretty good on my own so far. Besides that we all die sometime.

True we all must die a physical death at some point in time. But, we are created in His image, body, soul, and spirit (Gen. 1:24). If our bodies die, what about our soul which is eternal? The soul of man is described as the essence of man. When preachers talk to us from the pulpit, they talk to us about saving our souls. Where will our souls spend eternity? In Mathew 10:28, Jesus tells us that man can kill the body but not the soul of man. But he does remind us that there is one whom can destroy the body and soul in hell. It is the soul of man that points man to eternity. In Revelation, we are told about the coming judgment of all mankind, a time of reckoning. Some believe that when we die it all ends while others believe that there will be this time of reckoning. What about Paul's letter to the Thessalonians? In the fourth chapter of Thessalonians beginning at verse thirteen, Paul starts talking about the return of Jesus for the church, body of Christ. Paul tells us that those who have gone before us will be caught up first and then those who are alive will not see death but will caught up into the presence of the Lord. What if you were caught up before the Lord this very day? Where would you spend eternity? John 3:16 says that, "God so love the world that He gave His only begotten son that who so ever believes in him will have eternal life."

So, we spend our time here on earth and we are not alone because God did not want man to be alone. When we deal with others in our lifetime there will be times when others will do things that will offend or even harm us. If we are asking God to forgive us in the same manner that we forgive those who come against us, how easy would we feel? Do we feel comfortable on how we are forgiven or would we feel at uneasy? Jesus tells us a parable about a servant who is caught in a debt to his master that he had no hope of repaying. The servant threw himself at the feet of his master begging for relief. The master took pity on the man and canceled his debt. In

turn the same servant went to a lower servant and confronted him about the debt he owed him. Instead of showing mercy on his fellow servant he had him thrown in prison until his debt could be paid. The master then turned and punished the original servant because of his lack of mercy to his fellow man (Mat. 18:22-35).

With this in mind, where do we stand in our relationship with God and with or fellow man? Can we stand in assurance as a forgiven man or in uncertainty because our hearts have turned hard towards God's creation? Mathew 6:14-15, "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

Next we look at the temptation of man. "Lead us not into temptation." Does God tempt us? Temptation to sin, does it come from God? If God is good how can He also be bad? It is against God's own nature to sin. He is not the author of sin. The true author of sin is Satan when he rebelled against God in his attempt to make himself the Most High (Isa. 14:12-14, 1 Tim. 3:6). The only way for God to look on sinful man is through the blood of His son Jesus Christ. In truth we are asking God to block our path to evil or keep us from our sinful nature. With our thoughts on the Lord and away from the sinful desires of our nature we can accomplish this as His Spirit guides our path.

Are we then sinless? No, but as we grow in our relationship with our Heavenly Father we are drawn further away from sinful desires and closer to a life filled with the desires that God has for our life.

"Keep us from the evil one." One of the things that we can hold to is that we serve a powerful God. When Satan attempted to overthrow God's rule, he found that his creator was stronger than he was. Satan was cast from Heaven because of his rebellion. It is Satan who tempts mankind to evil (Acts 5:3). So in order to keep from sinning we need to not only know the Heavenly Father; we also need to understand that there is still the one whom will attempt to overthrow the rule of God in our lives. Again to know the counterfeit, we need just to study the real. So If we come to know God more intimately each day of our lives we then will be more able to see the temptations that come before us and we can rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us around those traps the "accuser" tries to place in our path.

In conclusion; it is our relationship with the Heavenly Father that helps us through our daily life. It is comforting to know that He has come from the past and is with us this day and He will not leave us. It is more comforting to know that He will be there to greet us tomorrow.