

No.  
127.

"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS  
WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE  
RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

THE DISCIPLES' PRAYER

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IN MATTHEW 6 AND LUKE 11.  
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*An Address (revised) at*

61, Upton Lane,

FOREST GATE.

9th June, 1919.

by

PERCY W. HEWARD.

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An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,

At 61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate.

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The Disciples' Prayer in Matthew 6 and Luke 11 is on my mind. Do we know the words of the usual version of Matthew 6 in their context? In the 8th verse, "Be ye not, 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." And in Luke 11, "And it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father Which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." It is very beautiful to notice that the Lord Jesus repeated Himself. More

than once He gave this prayer. In like manner more than once He uttered certain parables. He delighted to bring the same things before His people more than once (Phil 3, 1) Do you learn everything at once when you hear it, beloved friends? Do you not value repetition? How precious are repetitions of Scripture for our failing memories. Once the Disciples' Prayer (miscalled the Lord's Prayer) - once the Disciples' Prayer comes in the address on the mount; in the other place it is given where the Lord Jesus Christ utters it in answer to the request, "Lord, teach us to pray." Have you noticed that in Matthew the Lord gives the contrast, "They think they shall be heard for their much speaking"; "After this manner therefore pray ye." But in Luke very strangely, immediately after <sup>He</sup> brief disciples' prayer He says, "Which of you shall have a friend and shall go unto him at midnight and say unto him, "Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey, is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?" And he from within shall answer and say, "Trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed, I cannot rise and give." I say unto you; "Though he will not rise and give him, because he is a friend yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, "Ask." So in one passage the Lord says, "Let there not be vain repetitions," in the other passage He says, "Let there be heart-intense repetitions." Ask, seek, knock, that there may be an earnestness. So in Matthew 7, "After this manner", in Luke, "When ye pray say." "After this manner -

here we notice that the Lord Jesus Christ brings before us the manner of prayer more generally, affecting many prayers, but in Luke some exact words. I take it therefore, beloved friends, that we have two thoughts here, first a sample prayer for manner; secondly, exact words to guide us and which we should include in our gathering. In Matthew we have the "as", in Luke we have the "what." In Matthew the mode and manner, in Luke the matter as well. So we are guided not only as to what words we are to use when we are gathered together, but as to the general manner of prayer on other occasions. Let us be clear on these two points. The Lord Jesus has put in Luke 11 the exact words, "When ye pray, say," but in Matthew it is not "When ye pray, say," but rather "when even you say other words let this be the manner, let this be the character of your prayer, let this be the mode of your prayer," - "After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father." How beautiful, beloved friends, is the thought of prayer to God as Father. How near does the word "Father" bring us but yet how humbly obedient should we be to our Father! The very word that brings us closest brings us to the most definite obedience for the obedience of a child to a father is nearer, dearer, than the obedience of a subject to a king. The name that brings nearest brings to a more comprehensive command, and to true humility. The law of the home is closer than the law of a state, and therefore if "Father" suggests love's embrace, it also shows love's submission, "Our Father," "Our Father which art in heaven" - here is the description of God. The three thoughts seem to be - "FATHER" - relationship to God,

"OUR" - relationship of saint to saint, "Which art in HEAVEN" - the glory of God. "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed," the first word of request is this word, "hallowed," "set apart be Thy Name, hallowed be Thy Name." O, beloved friends, that is the first desire of God's people. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory." If you want anything more than the glory of the Name of God there is something wrong, that must be first, that must be the climax, "Father, glorify Thy Name." We need that our hearts should be searched in this connexion. We all have different temperaments. Some of God's people delight in open and manifest service for Him, activity is not a strain, sitting still in meditation is a greater strain for them. Others can very easily sit still for meditation, other activity is a problem in their lives, and the brother who has the drawing towards activity is tempted by Satan to view himself as more spiritual than the one who has the drawing towards slowness, and the one who is drawn toward slowness has the temptation from Satan to look down upon the failures that are entwined with the energy of the one who falters in this respect, but it is needful for each brother to learn the lesson, "Hallowed be THY NAME." If that is the object of life everything else takes its right position. Not only the characteristic of prayer but the characteristic of life should be, "Hallowed be Thy Name" - God's Name exalted. Prayer is for God's glory; I do not only mean that when we pray we are glorifying God - it is blessedly true - "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me" - God has said so, but that is not the only

thought. Prayer is distinctly for God's glory - we ask God to glorify Himself!

"Hallowed be Thy Name," then we have, "Thy Kingdom come." Have you noticed that there are three "thy's" brought before us? "Thy Name," "Thy Kingdom," "Thy Will." I have thought that God gives a precious suggestion in the ORDER - "Hallowed be Thy Name," when others are despising it in the present time of evil. "Hallowed be Thy Name." "Thy kingdom come" - the return of the Lord Jesus. Yet even then, when favour is shown to the wicked, there will still be a failure of such to behold the majesty of the Lord. But God will create new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Hence, "Thy will be done, as in HEAVEN, so in EARTH." Thus the special thought before God's people at the present time is, when men despise His Name, they are to think upon His Name (Mal. 3. 16) and hallow His Name. Beloved friends, we cannot pray "Hallowed be Thy Name" and utter the Name carelessly. There is too much slipshod "prayer." We speak as though God were such an one as ourselves. WE need to take our shoes off, as it were. WE must all be lowly and confess sin in this respect. "Hallowed be Thy Name." The beginning of the prayer is to give the tone to the prayer, and a tone of reverence through prayer means a delightful enjoyment; but let irreverence come in, and the WHOLE blessing of the prayer is greatly diminished. So, "Hallowed be Thy Name." is particularly as to the present time, when men are speaking lightly of the Name of the Lord. And then we continue, "Thy kingdom come." The people of Israel used to say that no prayer was complete unless it

included the kingdom.. You will remember in Psalm 72, David desires and pleads for the glory of the Lord's kingdom, and then we read, "The prayers of David the Son of Jesse are ended." A very beautiful statement. Whenever David reached a climax it was a wonderful climax. You<sup>u</sup> recollect in Samuel it may be, we read, "These be the last words of David, David the son of Jesse said, and the man that was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, ... He that ruleth over men must be just." His last words are full of Christ. HIS last prayer is full of the kingdom, and his last words in another place are full of worship, for, "By the last words of David, the Levites were numbered, from twenty years and upward."

He had a number of "last" words, they were all legacies of concern for the glory of God which have been handed to us and we share these legacies. The kingdom - THY kingdom come - then it is not the Lord's kingdom now. Whenever we pray we are to realise we are strangers in a strange land, THAT is our position. "Thy kingdom come." Beloved friends, I am afraid there is often error in this connexion. Many pray somewhat lightly for the "extension" of the Lord's kingdom. I think we should be clearer if we prayed for the coming of the kingdom. The coming of that precious kingdom. But, you say, is there not a kingdom now? Undoubtedly, it is the kingdom and patience in Jesus (Rev. 1. 9.) It is the kingdom OF THE HEAVENS, THAT is the kingdom now, - but Thy kingdom COME."

We have, in God's mercy, been transplanted into the kingdom of the Son of His love, but the kingdom has not come. We have

been brought to come into it, yet it has not come, but it will come with power. "Thy kingdom come." It is a precious thing to be brought out from earth. It is not the extension of the kingdom in earth, but we are brought out of earth in to a heavenly position now, quickened by the Holy Spirit. THAT is the kingdom now, the kingdom of the heavens. If you and I are in the kingdom we do not belong to earth, we are strangers here. "Thy kingdom COME." This is a precious separating thought, and our prayers are to be full of the heavenly calling.

I wonder if there is a further aspect in these three prayers? "Thy NAME be hallowed" seems to specially suggest the word "Father," for the Lord Jesus came to REVEAL that Name, "I have declared Thy Name unto the men which Thou gavest Me." And what was it? "O Righteous FATHER, holy FATHER." The Lord Jesus gave the message, "Go to My brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father," "I will declare THY NAME unto My brethren, in the midst of a church will I hymn Thee," If so, "Thy kingdom come" suggests the return of the Lord Jesus. This would give another aspect to, "Thy will be done," and would explain the force of, "In earth as in heaven" in a present aspect, though I believe it looks finally to the new heavens and new earth. "In earth, as in heaven," They will be in entire harmony then, and prayer reaches the climax! Yet I think we agree it is precious to apply its principles now. Why and how is the Spirit of God working in the hearts of the Lord's people? You observe we have referred to God the Father - "Hallowed be Thy Name;" then to God the Son

"Thy kingdom come;" and God the Holy Spirit is working in our hearts that we may be concerned to do the WILL of God, not our own will. The Spirit of God never leads to selfishness. The Spirit of God never leads to our own way. "Thy will be done on earth" - "on EARTH." The Spirit of God came down to work on EARTH in believers that they might do the will of God from the heart. "Thy will." We are told in 2 Timothy of some who were captured, though they are alive, in a snare of the Devil, and they are to be brought out into what? Into the will of God. I know no more beautiful name for a gathering of believers than in 2 Timothy 2 rightly rendered. It is the "will of That One." "That One" is the Name of the Lord. He is the Contrasted One, - "The will of THAT One." Here is a name for a gathering of believers - the sphere of His will. If anything be the will of God it is law, if it be the will of God it is precious. If it be not the will of God the sanction of "great names" is nothing unless it is HIS Name. The attraction of great opportunities is nothing unless the attraction is toward Him. "Thy Name," "Hallowed be Thy Name" "Thy kingdom come," "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven."

And now the prayer changes. We have had the word "Thy," and now we reach the word "us". "Give us" - O how natural it is to begin with the words, "Give us". But three prayers are recorded first to EMPHASIZE our gracious God. Then we can pray for our needs, "Give us day by day our daily bread." Let us delight in the word which the Holy Spirit uses

here. The daily bread is the bread that comes upon us. "The bread that comes upon us," HOW does our bread come upon us daily? Can we understand this expression? Surely we can. Our bread comes from heaven. We are dependent upon God exactly as Israel in the wilderness. Oh, do you say, "That means Spiritual bread." I suppose we have no difficulty as to such an interpretation. Our SPIRITUAL bread comes from heaven. But this does not exhaust the passage. Whatever we need - every good gift - every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights. Every good giving is from above. O, beloved friends, if you have been made a new creation in Christ Jesus, there is nothing natural, everything is become supernatural. "Every good gift is from above", the ordinary things come to you from a FATHER'S hand. The common things of life are thus sanctified. You remember the words in 1 Timothy 4. 4, 5, concerning food. "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is SANCTIFIED by the Word of God and prayer" - then the food of God's people is holy food. It has come from a Father's hand. The man of this world works, earns his money and buys his bread, but the believer looks beyond the power to work to Him Who gives it, the baker to the One Who caused the corn to grow, beyond the purchase to the Divine arrangement which permitted him to attain it, desiring to purchase nothing unless it be God's arrangement with God's money. He feels he has no "right" to say, with self-exaltation that HE has bought it, he gave something which God gave him for something else which God meant him to have! The money was not

his, it was the Lord's, he therefore passed on some of the Lord's money and obtained some of the Lord's bread. Everything to a believer is supernatural, he is an extraordinary person, his life should be extraordinary. Everything is invested with a new meaning. "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation," old things are passed away, new things have come to pass, and ALL things are of God," not only new things, but ALL things are of God. The common things of daily life are now from God, from a Father's hand, nothing comes by chance, nothing comes by human effort. God may use means but it is God Who uses them everything is FROM Him. "Give us day by day the bread that comes upon us." The believer does not look down for the corn to grow, but looks up. The believer does not look around to see where he can obtain his food, but he looks up. "Give us the bread that comes upon us." Here we have the first prayer in the requests for one's own need.

And then we have, "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." We are in need of daily bread, but we are also those who are debtors. We are not only needy, we have debts. The Lord never instructed His people to pray as those who were beyond having debts. He never instructed them to be proud. He told them that they would always have to confess their sins, not that they would excuse their sins, or treat the confession as a small matter. Wandering from the Lord increases sins and dulls the perception thereof. Nearness to the Lord decreases sins, but increases perception of them. "Forgive us our sins (our debts) as we forgive our

debtors". Some dear children of God have felt that this is a very legal aspect, and when we read in Luke "FOR we forgive everyone that is indebted to us," they say, "Oh, I am glad that God forgives beyond our forgiving" - does the passage question that? Your sins are forgiven you FOR HIS NAME'S sake. The blood of Christ has secured the eternal blessedness of the redeemed. Here is grace, but let us ponder a solemn fact as to prayer. Can you dare to APPROACH God's throne of grace unless you forgive? Can you dare to come to God's presence and ask Him to forgive while you have an unforgiving spirit? Sin erects a barrier; excused sin hinders altogether. This prayer helps us to a right condition, that we may pray with power. Moreover, it is not asking God's forgiveness with respect to our eternal salvation, but His FATHERLY forgiveness. Can our Father treat us as though nothing were the matter if we are those who do not forgive? No, beloved friends, a forgiving attitude ALONE is "in the Spirit", and it is NEEDFUL if we would have power with God. An irritated believer cannot pray "Lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. If there is any "wrath", there can be no deep holiness. He who taught his disciples to pray said, "Father, forgive them", He had no debts but He had many debtors, He forgave His debtors and paid their debts, so wondrous was His love.

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil". "Give us day by day our NEEDS, Forgive us our debts", Our DEBTS are greater than our needs. "Lead us not into temptation" emphasises our weakness. "Deliver us from evil" shows our

dangers and failures worse than weakness. So you have the latter four petitions balanced. The three earlier requests are in connection with the Name of the Lord, and the four in connection with the word "us"; three and four together making seven, a usual number in Scripture speaking of a climax and of a restfulness. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God". Here is the seven-fold prayer, and the child of God should have the peace of God filling his heart and mind. The four requests are appropriately four, for four is the number of "earth". We read in Scripture of the four winds and the four corners of the earth and when the Lord's saving work is mentioned it is out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation (four). If the three petitions speak of our Triune God, the four petitions speak of His gracious work for His people from all parts of the earth, and amid all the difficulties of earth and the three and the four together bring before us the peace that God causes. Our daily bread given; our debts forgiven, our weakness met - "Lead us not into temptation," but deliverance from evil granted. Give us the bread, lead us not into temptation, though we deserve chastening, but lead us the OTHER way, or through the temptation (1 Cor. 10. 13.) We read are people dependent on gifts, a people Divinely led are here before us. Oh how great are our privileges.

Beloved friends, this is not only the wording of prayer, it is a suggestion of that which should be the warp and woof of all our prayers. Here is the pervading

character of our prayers in the Holy Spirit. Do you grasp the thought? God's glory FIRST, looking for Christ's return, concerned about His will MORE than your daily bread. THEN looking to Him for everything, conscious of ~~a~~ failure, seeking to have an attitude of love toward all others, realizing weakness amid temptation, wanting His leading instead of trying to lead Him, looking to Him for all rescuing and delivering. Self-confidence ruins prayer, but prayer ruins self-confidence. Prayer and our own will cannot flourish together. If we are dependent upon Him we shall learn how to pray, and so we have the precious words, "Deliver us from evil." We are to hate evil, and there may be the thought of the Evil One. Satan is the Evil One and we need the Lord's power to deliver. It is not written, "Greater are ye than he that is in the world," but "Greater is He that is in you" - there is all the difference. If we look to ourselves we falter, but if we forget that the Lord is in His people we falter. It is a precious thing to realize His power to be delivered from the evil. The evil is strong, but He is stronger. "Deliver us from the evil," and when saints are gathered they are to pray thus. This is to be the mark of their prayer. It is rather suggestive that the central words, the fourth petition, are, "Give us" - give us to-day, and all the other prayers are around that thought. "Give us to-day." Only as God graciously gives us to-day can we supplicate Him aright. We need the spiritual bread that we may pray from the heart and pray with power. "Give us to-day" - for He has promised that He will do so: and every promise is to be turned

into a prayer. For example, "Surely, I come quickly" -  
 "Even so come, Lord Jesus." There is an illustration of the  
 way we should handle promises in our prayers. Oh, beloved  
 friends, have our prayers the intensity here brought forward?  
 Have they the DEFINITENESS and simplicity? I wonder if you  
 have ever thought that many dear children of God would be  
 quite startled if in a prayer-meeting a brother were to pray  
 a number of short sentences like this. The pointed earnest-  
 ness would seem almost strange. But why should this be?  
 Reverence is quite possible with remarkable brevity. I do  
 not mean that we are CONFINED to such <sup>short</sup> sentences. But  
 sometimes our longer sentences lose their definiteness and we  
 lose the manifestation of deep concern. Oh that God may give  
 to us power in prayer and praise both in our homes and in our  
 meetings to the praise of the glory of His grace, as we rejoice  
 in redemption by the precious blood of Christ.

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