

03.22.26

Luke

Chapter 11 - A Polarizing Wish

God's Wish for You (vs. 1-4)

Luke 11:1-4: It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.” And He said to them, “When you pray, say:

‘Father, hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation.’”

If you were reading from the King James Version or maybe another version, you might have had more of a

prayer in that particular passage. And the reason is that the rest of the words were actually added in later in newer manuscripts. This is more the ancient manuscripts, the NAS. And so, the rest of the words weren't in there. However, what they did was they took the passage in Matthew, Matthew 6:9-13, and they just filled in the blanks, so to speak. And so, you have what we would perceive to be the whole prayer in Matthew 6. It is important to remember that Luke was really the earliest gospel. Matthew is written later on, but also you have two different occasions in which Jesus is teaching the prayer. And so, in Matthew, it really comes after the fact in which He's proclaiming specifics about the kingdom of heaven. In Luke, we actually come off of the fact that the disciples began to ask, "Teach us to pray," and Luke's going to be very unique in that regard. So, it's not a misprint. It's just that what the newer manuscripts did was they go, "Well, we're just going to fill in the whole prayer," and they tied it in. But the ancient manuscripts don't have that. So, the NAS has what was there in the Gospel of Luke. It's not wrong to add it in because it's actually part of the prayer.

I remember when I first moved to Florida, I was in grade school, 3rd grade, 1963. I remember that because my dad bought a new Impala. That's the only way I can remember dates, really. But anyway, so we went down to Florida. And when we moved, one of the first things I had to learn was to say, "yes, sir, and "yes, ma'am," or "no, sir," and "no, ma'am." I remember one particular teacher goes, "So, you're from Illinois?" I go, "Yeah." She goes, "Yeah, what?" And I said, "Yeah, yes." I had no idea what she was talking about. But finally, when I went to the principal, I felt like I could now understand a little bit better what she was talking about. And you learn to say those kind of things. But what was interesting is, at the beginning of every class, we would say the Lord's Prayer at that time. So, you would start off by saying the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name." I remember, you know, I grew up in church, so I'm thinking, "Okay, we bow our heads." A lot of kids are looking around, throwing papers or whatever, and not really into it. But they knew the words, and so we were all saying it together. Then after you said the Lord's Prayer, you do the Pledge of Allegiance. And then you sat down, and that

was class. And then you went to eat your meal, and when you ate your meal, you know, “God is great, God is good, let us thank Him for our food. By His hands we are fed. Give us, Lord, our daily bread. Amen.” And you would pray that prayer. You couldn't actually eat until everybody said it in the cafeteria. So, it was clearly a different time. The point is that we oftentimes see these prayers as perhaps words that we say that Christ was basically saying, “I want you to say these words.” And that's not quite the emphasis of what He's doing within the passage. So, we're going to look at what it actually means to pray this way. And that's what Christ is dealing with.

This setting that Luke puts us in is a unique setting in the sense that he really comes off of this Chapter 10, remember verse 21? If you don't remember, just read it with me.

(Luke 10:21) “At that very time He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, “I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to

infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.”

And remember, I was talking about that He was really very excited about that. Because what you have are men that are really transparent. You have men that are simple in their beliefs. And so, it's not a complicated realm that they see it. They don't see these things as complicated. They go basically, “Can I walk on water like You?” I mean, that's the way they're thinking. And of course, that's what God is looking for. Unless we come in the simplicity of our faith, even as a child, we can't see the kingdom of heaven. And so, there is great rejoicing.

Probably nothing says it more than the beginning of this chapter, because in Chapter 11, as this chapter starts off, you have the disciples going, “Could You teach us?” And, you know, a Pharisee would never think to say something like this. A Pharisee would never think, “Well, I need to learn how to pray,” because he already thinks he knows how to pray. He thinks he knows all the words. But the disciples turned to Christ in this. So, it's in this that we see the simplicity of their hearts. We see the genuineness of

their hearts. And it's a simplistic request. It's uncomplicated as they begin to ask this. So, we're going to see an uncomplicated answer within the passage.

Now, after saying that, I'm going to go into some details about the structure that is used. And the reason I'm going to do that is to help you see the intent of the prayer. So, hopefully you and I will see the intent of the prayer.

If you look with me in Luke 11:1, it starts off this way,

“It happened that while Jesus was praying...”

And obviously, it's understood that we're talking about Jesus at this juncture, because we're tying into Chapter 10. So, we've been talking about His direction, and so it's understood that he's talking about Jesus.

“It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him...”

Now, that whole sentence seems extremely non-committal in details, and there's a reason for that. Because what Scripture wants to start off with is to remind you that basically you can pray anywhere, and

that prayer is going to be on your volition; you decide when you're going to pray.

The way that it's worded, if you look at this,

“It happened...”

Okay, so just kind of read this with me,

“It happened...”

It's in the active case, which means that Jesus made it happen. It wasn't passive in the sense that somebody's pushing Him to do this. So, it came about that while in a fixed state, He began to pray. It's active again. He made a decision to pray.

Look at the way that it reads here,

“... in a certain place...”

You might say, “Where? Was it on the Mount of Olives?” He goes, “It was just a certain place.” So, what He uses is an indefinite pronoun because you go, “What definite place is it?” He goes, “An indefinite place.” Here again, Scripture is saying, “Pray, wherever you are.” “Uh, when? Do I have to be here,” you know? Like the woman at the well, “We worship up in this mountain; You worship down

in that mountain.” And He goes, “You're a little off on your geography.” But the bottom line is that God is looking for those who worship Him in spirit and in truth. So, it's not about the place. So, you have this ambiguity of the place.

And then it goes on and says,

“... after He had finished...”

Which once again, on His own volition.

“... one of His disciples...”

“Who?” And He goes, “Not important.”

“... one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray...””

Now, he uses a term which the Pharisees and teachers up to this point have not been using because they've kind of been focusing on Him being another teacher or rabbi.

They might use a word like “*didaskalos*,” which makes reference to the fact that He's a teacher. But the disciples see Him as Lord. And so, this is the word “Lord”.

Sometimes it's translated as not, but they see Him as supreme, and they see Him as their Master. They see Him

as the One that really controls things. So, you can see a humble attitude and a humble state within this, “Lord, teach us to pray.”

“Teach us to pray.” What a simple question that is. Now, once again, I think that there are different words in Scripture that are oftentimes used for prayer. Some deal with intercession and such as this, but the general word that's used for prayer is a compound word which makes reference to “toward,” you know, maybe upward towards, and then “good”. He uses the word “*eu*,” which is good, and then “*chomai*,” which basically means “to wish”. And so, what prayer really is, is wishing to God for something. What do I wish for? So, when they come before Jesus, what they're asking for is, “We don't even know how to wish. What are we supposed to wish for when we come to God?” That's a simple question, isn't it? “What do we wish for? What do You want us to wish for?” So, in a way, what this prayer is, this is God's wish for us, that we would wish for this. Did I confuse you? God's wish for you is to wish the right way. And one of the problems is that we come to God with all our different

wishes, and they're just wrong wishes. Every good and every perfect gift comes from God. God's not going to give you a bad gift. He'll actually talk about that when you look at the passage, if you drop on down a little bit further.

He says in verse 11,

(Luke 11:11) “Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he?”

God's not going to give you a snake if you ask for a fish. In other words, God knows what you need.

He goes on and says,

(Luke 11:12) “Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he?”

It doesn't matter if you come up to God and go, “Please, God, give me a scorpion.” He's not going to do it. It's the graciousness of God that doesn't do that. So, He's going to be proving throughout the passage that we need to ask for the right things. And it's the right things that God will always give us. If you ask for wisdom, come to God; He

gives to all men generously and without reproach. He's not going to say, "Stop coming to Me." You know, you come to Him, you ask for a good thing, and God's going to give it to you.

So, when we come into the passage, really the simplicity of this is that they just want to know what to wish for. Now, they give an example of the fact that John has actually been teaching his disciples how to pray. We don't really have any examples of that, but I can pretty well fill in the blank on that one. I can just see John's disciples going up to John, "So, what do we pray?" He goes, "Repent." "Okay, so how do we do that?" "Repent of this, repent of that." "And anything else?" "No, no, repent." Because that fundamentally was the prayer that he was bringing people to pray. But in this text, we see really God's heart and what He wants you to wish for.

So, as we go through this, we're going to go through the passage itself, and then we're going to come back and we're going to maybe define exactly, "What is it I'm supposed to be wishing for as I'm praying?"

The prayer starts off this way in verse 2,

(Luke 11:2) “And He said to them, “When you pray...””

Now, there are words that we tend to jump over, and that's just one that we don't want to jump over. Because the word that He's using here within the passage, *“hotan,”* is actually at the time when you pray, or more specifically, while you are praying. The reason why I bring this up is this: We oftentimes think that this is a prayer in which we repeat. So, you memorize the prayer, you repeat the prayer, God's happy. No, listen to what He's saying, *“While you are praying, think these wishes.”* See, that's more what He's dealing with. In other words, in the act of your praying, obviously God doesn't want us to pray the same prayer over and over again. Paul will pray a prayer in Ephesians 1. It'll be a different prayer in Ephesians 3. And in each case, he gives a different emphasis. But in each case, you'll see the same quality of this prayer. And so, what you have is the intent behind the prayer that Jesus is describing. In other words, *“While you're praying, think these thoughts,”* is basically what we're dealing with.

“And He said to them, “When you pray, say:”

Now, we'll stop with the word "say". Once again, I know it sounds like I'm maybe getting over detailed, but "say" is the word "*legō*". But you have another word that is used when you're conversing, and it's "*laleó*". So, you have "*laleó*" and "*legō*". "*Legō*" is the word that's used here. The reason I emphasize that is this: If he used the word "*laleó*," it would have been focusing on the words that are said. "*Legō*" does not focus on the words, but on the intent. So, what He's saying is, "When you pray, have this intent when you pray." Do you understand what I'm saying? So, as you're coming to this, what you're dealing with is literally the characteristic, or the sentiment would probably be the best description. "*Legō*" actually makes reference to the sentiment and the feeling behind what you're saying. So, you're actually dealing with the thought and the feeling and the belief. You're not focusing on the words themselves as being the answer, but the intent of the words and the heart and the feeling behind what you're saying. So, "When you pray, while you're praying, think on these things. Let this be the intent of your heart. Let this be the emotions that you feel. Let this be the

desire of your heart while you're praying.” Simple enough.

“And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name...’”

Now, when He starts off with “Father,” once again, forgive me for being too detailed in it, but He's using a word that is what is called a possessive word. In other words, a personal possessive, which means that you're not just calling Him “Father,” you're saying, “my Father.” And what we're seeing in this is, He says, “Anytime you talk to God, you ought to have the emotion, ‘I'm talking to my Father.’” It's an interesting picture. I mean, who would have thought that the God of the universe, you could call “Father”? I mean, that's basically what John is saying in 1 John, right? “Behold what manner of love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God.” I mean, what an amazing thought that here we are and we're saying, “He's mine.” Now, in that, what He's emphasizing is, so because of that, your desire is to emulate Him. I mean, the Father, that's the position of the Father. To be like Him, to imitate Him, to emulate

Him, "I want to be like Him." And that's why Matthew 5 ends this way, "Therefore you're to be perfect like your Father." And the same thing is true in Ephesians 5, it'll start off, "Imitate your Father in heaven." So, the desire is because of admiration. I remember thinking, "Wow, I'm a pretty good dad," when the kids were little, because kids are looking up to me, "Dad, you're so wonderful," you know? I'm going, "This is easy," you know? Then they grow up, and you find out you weren't that great a father. So, what you have is ingrown within us, that there needs to be this sense immediately, with the simplicity of these. Jesus is going, "Look at Him like your Father. Want to be like Him." And in a way, as you start off that way, you're crying unto God, "I want to be like You." I mean, you're not going to call somebody your father and not want to be like him. The admiration is toward Him.

So, you start off with that sense of admiration, and you ultimately come to a place that fundamentally in which you say, "And I want Your name to be greater than any other name." To put it in simplistic terms, "My Dad's greater than anybody else. And I don't want anybody else

to be greater than my Dad.” The text is making reference once again, not to the words that you're saying, but to the way that you're feeling. And every time you come and pray, you should be feeling this way, “There's nobody like You.” I mean, “hollowed” means “not common.” The opposite of holy is common. So, “You're far greater than anybody else. There's nobody that even comes close. As high as the heavens, are Your wisdom, Your thoughts, everything about You. And I want You to be glorified.” That's your heart. So, you're coming into the prayer, not necessarily with, “I'm going to convince God what to think,” but you're coming into prayer going, “I know He knows far better than I do. I just want to be like Him, and I want His name to be proclaimed.”

“And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come.’”

And we've talked about this a number of times before, but the emphasis of “kingdom” is not a place, but it is a standard. “*Basileia*” is making reference to the standards of God, the way that God sees things. And if you think about it, everybody has their own ideas of the way things

ought to be. And that's why the world's in a mess, because everybody's kind of inventing what they think things ought to be. But our thoughts, when we're praying, anytime we're praying, we're thinking, “No, I just want to do it Your way. I want Your kingdom to come. I want Your rules to come. I want Your standards to come.” As Matthew will say, “on earth as it is in heaven. Thy kingdom come.”

Then He goes into verse 3, I like the way that it's worded here in Luke,

(Luke 11:3) “Give us each day our daily bread.”

“Give us day by day bread sufficient for each day,” is actually the way that it breaks down within the passage. Day by day.

And so, really what He's talking about within this is, you know, we've quoted from time to time the Proverbs, in Proverbs 30:8-9, which reads this way,

“... Give me neither poverty nor riches;
Feed me with the food that is my portion,

(Proverbs 30:9) That I not be full and deny You and say,
“Who is the LORD?”

Or that I not be in want and steal,
And profane the name of my God.”

The prayer in the passage is fundamentally saying, “You only give me that which will keep me close to You.” It's not saying, “I need to make sure that You feed me.” I mean, go to Matthew 6. It's very clear. He goes, “I know that you have need of these things. You know, I feed the birds. So, you think I'm not going to take care of you?” It's not a prayer asking for food. It's a prayer asking for just the right amount that will not allow me to disregard Him or put my trust in anything else. Just every single day. You know, I don't know what's best for me on any given day, but the prayer is worded in such a way that you're not looking so far down the road that you're just kind of figuring out; you're just kind of broad brushing it. He goes, “I know that maybe this day I should have less. I know that this day I should have more. You know what I need on any given day.”

When I think about Deuteronomy 8:2-3, God says, "I was testing you in the wilderness to know what was in your heart. Therefore I humbled you and let you be hungry, and that I fed you with manna." It's an interesting passage because what it's talking about is the fact that there are times that God lets us go without so that He might feed us a different way. And the reason for that is, that we have a tendency to begin to think that we did it or somebody else did it, and we give evidence of that. But when He shuts off those familiar realms and then feeds us in a way, we go, "Wow, that came out of heaven. He goes, "That's right. So, that's where stuff comes from. And that's what I've done." And He wants us to recognize this. And so, fundamentally, what the prayer is, God is saying, "While you're praying, I want you remembering, and I want you thinking in terms of 'God only give me...'" Because we'll oftentimes come with these grandiose prayers, and we go, "I want these really big things," and God goes, "That's not going to help you. That's not best for you today." And I've seen God's gracious hand so many times in not giving me things on certain days. Paul will say, "You know, I've had a lot, and I've had a little. I've learned to be content in

whatever condition I'm in.” There are times for both, clearly.

(Luke 11:3) “Give us each day our daily bread.”

Or literally, “Give us day by day the bread sufficient for each day.”

And then it reads,

(Luke 11:4) “And forgive us our sins...”

Which is clearly a prayer that we long to have. Forgive, once again, is that idea of sending away. If you've ever done something wrong, I think the one thing you want is for God just to forget about it. And here again, the word that is used is the same word that is used for divorce, which means to send away or divorce, or push away. And what He's fundamentally saying is, “Take my sins,” or as the psalmist will say, “Remove them as far as the east is from the west, to remember them no more.” So, think about that. Now, He directly connects that with our forgiving others. So, it's like God is saying, “If you really want to be forgiven, you have to want everybody to be forgiven.”

So, the way it reads is this,

“And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves...”

It's very interesting because it seems to be in the present active, which means we want to continually think in the terms of everybody's being forgiven with us. Can you imagine coming before God and going, “Just forgive me. Don't forgive anybody else.” And God goes, “That's not the heart that I'm looking for.” And remember, the disciples are going, “What do we wish for?” Remember, Peter goes, “So, how many times do I forgive?” And Jesus goes, “Well, let Me tell you a story.” So, He goes into the whole idea of, “Peter, wouldn't you want to be forgiven? And do you understand how unforgiveness destroys you? Unforgiveness destroys you.” And He talks about the demons that come in because of unforgiveness. So, how do I wish? Well, wish that everybody would be forgiven. God is not willing that any should perish. And certainly, you're not going to be antithetical to His desires, are you? Wish for this.

“... For we ourselves also forgive everyone...”

That's a great phrase, isn't it?

“... who is indebted to us...”

We're not going to hold on to anything.

Can you imagine standing before God and He goes, “You want your sins forgiven?” And you go, “Yeah, that'd be great.” He goes, “So, you think you can let go of all this stuff?” “Oh, no, they can have it. It doesn't matter to me. I forgive everything.” God goes, “Okay, you're forgiven.” What a wonderful picture that is.

It goes on and says this,

“... And lead us not into temptation.”

This is probably one of the most confusing and debated phrases in the prayer itself, in which many people have come up with a lot of different perspectives of this. The interesting setup of this is the whole concept of leading. And the question is, would God lead us into temptation? I just want to remind you, turn with me to James 1, and you'll be reminded that this would not be true.

James 1:12 reads this way,

“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

(James 1:13) Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.”

So, unless that's not clear in that particular passage, James is very clear about that.

(James 1:14) “But each one is tempted...”

You go, “How did I get so tempted?” And in this particular passage, James is very clear. You think it's the external forces. You know, it's that old phrase, “The devil made me do it.” You think it's the external forces that made you do it. Nobody made you do it. You were tempted because you were drawn to it. You're never going to be tempted by something you don't love. So, the only reason you're tempted is because you want something that “thing” represents.

“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

(James 1:15) Then when lust has conceived...

Or literally taken hold of you. It's actually using a prison term where you're caught and put in prison by the lusts that you have are by your own desire.

“... it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

So, you're drawn away; you're lured away.

He actually uses the phrase there in verse 14, “when he is carried away,” you're drawn away, you're lured away. By what? And he says, “By your own desires.”

So, as you come back to this passage, it's very clear that it's not God leading us into temptation. Now, what's also interesting about this word is that the word that He used, “*eispherō*,” is a word that makes reference to being in something; led into something. And so, it seems as if He's making reference to that his prayer is, “I don't want this to be in me, the temptation.” You know how temptation can be out there, but then you open the door and it becomes in you? That's your lust and your cravings.

There's a lot of temptations out there, have you noticed?

A lot of temptations. You don't have to let them in. In other words, you don't have to long for them and bring them in. And it seems to me that the passage is making reference to, you know, "Literally keep temptation from entering into us, keep me from being led by the temptation." In other words, "Don't let it get a hold of me," as James will make reference to. "I don't want to have anything to do with it. So, I don't want to be possessed by the temptation."

In every case of these things, what Jesus is doing is actually granting these disciples exactly what they wanted, and that is what to wish for. So, let me kind of break it down to you in maybe a little bit simpler terms. What is it we should wish? And you could kind of put it in the category of, "What should be my want-tos?" And I would say the first thing is, as you come before God, "I want You to be my Father. I want You to be the One I emulate. I want You to be the One that I imitate. I want You to be the One that I admire more than anything else. I want You to be my Father." And it really is the claiming. Let me just say this, too, that the phrase in the text gives

reference to passive imperative, which means simply this, that this is something I'm wanting to happen. I'm not giving God the name "Father". I'm not giving Him the name "Holy". That's not what I'm doing. What I'm saying is, "I want You to be my Father. I want You to be holy in my life." See, so you're not designating Him as that. He is. He is what He is. So, your designation isn't going to help or hurt. But this is you wishing. So, "I want You as my Father."

Then it goes on and says within the passage, and fundamentally in this, in case it's a little bit confusing, "Father, help me to be like You in everything." So, let's run through an example. So, you're coming and bringing a prayer before God. How do you start off? "God, I want to do this like You would do it. I want to imitate You in this."

Let's go back to Matthew 5, which will show you the text that will give a kind of reference to this, and the reason why Matthew would use the term "Father". We'll pick up in verse 43.

(Matthew 5:43) "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.'

(Matthew 5:44) But I say to you, love your enemies..."

So, I don't know, your neighbor, somebody you don't like. Somebody did something to you. You're coming before God, and you're going, "Okay, God, I'm bringing this neighbor to you or this person I don't like. What do you want Me to do?" And God says, "Remember what I want you to wish for." So, let's read.

"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

(Matthew 5:45) so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

So, you come to God in prayer, and you go, "God, take this neighbor out." Well, that's obviously not the prayer. That's not the sentiment; that's not the feeling that we're going through. So, I don't think He's going to answer that one.

It goes on and says,

(Matthew 5:46) “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”

(Matthew 5:47) “If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?”

(Matthew 5:48) “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

In other words, complete, and mature. Think this way.

And so, as you start off any prayer, you want to be thinking, “Father, help me to be like You in whatever decision this is that I'm bringing before You. And ultimately, I want Your name highly exalted above every name.”

The way that it's put in Matthew in an earlier state, of course, we know that in Philippians 2, God gave Christ the name above every name because of His selflessness and because of His sacrifice. But when you go in there, He says, “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify God in heaven.” So,

“Lord, I'm making plans to do this.” What should be your sentiment? “God, above everything else, I want Your name to be elevated in what I'm doing.” You hear the sentiment coming in as you're praying the prayer? These are the thoughts that you have.

As He goes on, He says, you ultimately are praying, “Thy kingdom come.” You're praying for, “I want Your standards of righteousness to reign and to rule in my life and the decisions that I make.” So, when you're making a decision, you're thinking through Scripture. What is the right thing to do according to God? Now, that's why the phrase is, “Thy kingdom come.” Thy standards come. We're not trying to figure out, well, you know, I mean, every man is right in his own eyes. But we're asking you to think in terms of, how does God see right? So, “Help me to do what is just and what is right, what is true, what is healing.” Because really, if you don't do things the way God does in this particular scenario, you're not going to bring true healing, and you will not bring true peace. It's impossible for you to do that.

I was thinking about the passage in 2 Peter 3:13.

It reads this way,

(2 Peter 3:13) “... we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.”

That's what we're looking for. And when you consider the new heaven in Revelation 21:4, here it is: No more death, no more mourning, no more crying, no more pain. Read a little bit further, because in 21:8 it reads, no cowards, no untrustworthy, no abhorrent, no immoral, no drug dealers, no covetous idolaters, and no liars.

So, what are you wishing for? And you know, there are times that even oftentimes when we're praying, we're lying to ourselves. I mean, that's why Scripture says, “Don't be deceived. God is not mocked.” Why would he say, “Don't be deceived”? Because you deceive yourself. “I'm doing God's will.” I don't know. Really? You might want to open the Bible and find out. So, you know, your desire above everything else is, “I don't want to compromise. I don't want to make concessions. I don't want to appease. I just want to do what is right in this situation, what is glorifying according to Your standards, not according to mine.” And certainly, that is a thought

that should be in all of our heads and all of our minds as we begin to make decisions. And then as you go on in your prayer, “I want only that which will keep me close to You each day to be given to me. Don't give me anything more. Don't give me anything less. Lord, give me what is necessary for that day that makes sure that I won't be hindered in my walk with You in any way. So, Lord, I'm just trusting You day by day. Please only give me those things that will keep me close to You.” Once again, you have to be thinking about it. So, when you come to God with a request, what are you thinking about this request? Sometimes we pray for silly things, “God, do You want me to do this?” But the sentiment behind, “Lord, do You want me to do this? Do You want me to buy this? Do You want me to go to this place,” or whatever, is, “Don't let me go someplace that will draw me away from You. Don't let me have something that will draw me away. Stop me.” You're literally praying that as you go on, “I want only that which keeps me close to You.”

And then as it goes on in the prayer, the thought of our mind, the sentiment on our hearts is, “I want everybody

to experience Your forgiveness. I mean, that should always be there, so please give what is best to everybody.”

We were talking about Abraham and how he was learning how to make intercession, even for the Gentiles, so to speak. And, you know, God wants good for everyone. We think in terms of our own little circles, but God wants good for everybody. And sometimes those people that offend us or do something wrong, we almost become their enemies and see them as our enemies of our family. And God says, “Pray for them, too.” And that needs to be your heart no matter how offended you are by a particular individual. When you're coming before God, your sentiment, your thoughts need to always be there, “I want everyone to experience this.” And then last of all, I want You to keep me from anything that would draw me away from You.” So, not only, “Don't give me something that would hinder my walk with You, but I want You to keep me from anything that might tempt me or draw me away from You.” Because the whole goal is, “I want to do whatever is necessary,” and quite frankly, you're giving

God license in that last phrase. You're giving God license to do whatever is necessary to keep you from ruin. When you just give that simple phrase, "lead us not into temptation," what you're saying is, "Don't let anything lead me into ruin," which it might be not only you, but those around you. "Don't let me be an agent of ruin." And that's a pretty intense thought and sentiment when you think about it, because what God is literally saying in that is, "You've got to be willing to have Me come in and pull you away." And sometimes that can be pretty intense. But that should be the desire of your heart. And so, all the way through, what we have is a format of intent or desire that should be in every prayer. When you pray, whenever you pray, while you're praying, you need to be thinking these things.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your word as You begin to direct us into Your thoughts. Lord, as we come before You, even today, Thy will be done; Your standards be lifted up; Your name be glorified in everything that is said

and done. This is what we pray. And we know that if this is true in our lives, that there will be peace, there will be hope, and there will be love that will certainly be ruling in our lives and hearts.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. Perhaps you've been praying wrong. Perhaps it's not about the list of words that you memorize, but perhaps the sentiment behind what you're praying. Talk to God today. Turn to Him in simplicity, and say, "What do You want me to wish for?" He'll tell you.