

# (Basics) 58. Praying for Our Spiritual Needs

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of praying for spiritual needs, particularly forgiveness and deliverance from evil, while acknowledging God's sovereignty and glory.*

**Duration:** 12:27

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:9

**Topics:** "Prayer Life", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of forgiveness and seeking deliverance from evil through prayer. He uses the parable of a servant who was forgiven a large debt but refused to forgive a smaller debt owed to him. The preacher highlights the need for believers to forgive others as they have been forgiven by God. He also emphasizes the need to flee from temptation and seek God's strength to overcome evil. The sermon concludes with a reminder to prioritize God's kingdom, power, and glory in our prayers.

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## Transcript

Today we are going to look at how God answers our spiritual needs if we ask Him in prayer, how He can deliver you from every evil influence and every type of evil in your life. In the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples to pray in Matthew 6, verses 9 to 13, we see first of all that Jesus taught His disciples to pray putting God's first, God's name, God's kingdom, God's will. And then, after that, He taught them to pray concerning their own needs, first of all their physical, material needs.

There is nothing unspiritual about praying that, because if you are not physically alive, how can we do anything else? So to be physically alive is important before we can do God's will. So He taught us to pray, give us this day our daily bread, the necessities of life. And then, we consider that in our last study, we want to go on to the second request for ourselves, and that is forgive us our sins.

And then, the third request for ourselves, deliver us from evil. See, we basically have two problems as human beings. One relates to our past, and the other relates to the future.

We can put it like this. In the past, we have done so many wrong things, and what we need is forgiveness. In the future, because of our corrupt nature, we may still do a lot of evil things.

And because of that danger, we need help from God to be able to overcome this evil in our nature, so that we don't do the evil in future. So we can say the first request concerns the past, and the second request concerns the future. And there are only two sides in our life, the past and the future.

So the first request here is concerning the past. Lord, I have committed so many sins. Please forgive me all my sins.

You don't have to make a list of all your sins. I think it is impossible for anyone to make a list of all the millions of sins he has committed in his life. We acknowledge it.

We acknowledge we are sinners. We have done so many things to displease God, and we are asking Him to forgive us, as we have forgiven our debtors. You see, that is the only condition.

When we come to the Lord and ask Him to forgive us, it is important that we ourselves have forgiven other people who have done wrong to us. Isn't that righteous of God to require that from us? Jesus told a story once about a king who forgave a man a debt, a huge debt, let's say one crore worth of rupees, a hundred lakhs worth of rupees. A man had a debt to a king, and the king forgave.

Now, to be forgiven one crore, a hundred lakh rupees, is a fantastic experience. A man will just jump for delight and shout for joy that he has been forgiven so much. And then Jesus said, that man went out into the street, jumping with joy and delight, and he met a person who owed him ten rupees.

And he caught him by the throat and said, you better pay up that ten rupees you borrowed from me, otherwise I will lock you up in jail. And he took him to court for the ten rupees and thrust him into jail. And do you know what the king said, what the king did when he heard about it? He called that first servant back.

He said, hey, come here, didn't I forgive you one hundred lakhs of rupees, ten million rupees, and you couldn't forgive another person ten rupees? Why was that? Well, now you have to learn a lesson, too. If you don't forgive other people, I won't forgive you. You get back into prison now, get into prison along with that other fellow, and you pay up your one crore or ten million, and he will pay you his ten.

And Jesus said, My heavenly Father will do exactly like that to you, if you don't forgive others. I want to tell you, dear friends, one of the greatest sins, one of the greatest, greatest sins found among Christians throughout the world today is the sin of an unforgiving spirit, an unforgiving attitude. And if you have that towards another person, that's the one place in the Bible where Jesus said, your own sin will not be forgiven.

And even if it was forgiven, God will remove that forgiveness and unforgive you. Have you ever heard of forgiveness? Yes, you have. Have you heard of unforgiveness, where God unforgives what He had already forgiven? That's the meaning of that story in Matthew 18.

The king forgave the servant and later on withdrew that forgiveness. And that Jesus said, My heavenly Father will do the same to you. See, not to forgive another person is such a serious crime in God's eyes that out of all these six requests in the prayer, you know the six requests, Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our sins, deliver us from evil.

These are the six requests in this prayer. Out of the six requests, Jesus picked out one and emphasized that at the end of the prayer. You know which one that was? This one of forgiving others.

He repeated like this in verse 14, Matthew 6.14. If you forgive men their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you don't forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. Think of that for a moment.

If there is somebody on earth whom you have not forgiven, your heavenly Father will not forgive you. Impossible. You will not go to heaven.

That's impossible. You cannot go to heaven if you have not forgiven everybody on this earth. Please remember that.

There is no entry into God's kingdom without forgiveness of sins through the death of Jesus Christ. But that forgiveness will not be given to you if there is one human being you have not forgiven. So let's ask the Lord to forgive us.

And as we do it, let's forgive every single person who has ever wronged us in our whole life. Release them. Say, Lord, just never mind that you can't forget the evil.

God doesn't ask you to forget what people have done. He only asks you to forgive them. That's with a simple word.

Say to the Lord, Lord, I forgive that person and that person and that person. I'm not going to hold it any more against them, whatever they have done. Then we can go to the next prayer.

Lord, don't lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Lord, help me to run away from temptation. Give me strength.

Don't try to act like a brave person. The Bible says, flee from idolatry. Flee from youthful lusts.

Don't put yourself in the place where you can be tempted unnecessarily. No, run away from it. Lord, please help me.

Don't lead me into situations where I face things which are too much for me to handle. But deliver me from all evil. From every type of evil, Lord, deliver me, especially the evil of sin, the corruption that is in my own nature.

Please deliver me from it. And Lord, all these things that I ask are for Your glory and for the honor of Your name. For Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory.

He concludes with that and says, It shall be so. But let's look at that last request for a moment. Deliver us from evil.

Again, not just me. It's me plus my fellow believers. Deliver us from evil for the sake of Your kingdom, for the sake of Your glory.

Lord, Your name is so dishonored when Christians who take Your name do evil. So deliver us Lord from evil, from everything that dishonors Your name. Deliver us.

See, here is an acknowledgement that I cannot deliver myself. Just like I cannot earn forgiveness, God has to forgive me. I cannot deliver myself by self-control or by determination or any such thing.

I am asking God, who is the only one who has got power to deliver, to deliver me. Lord, deliver us from evil. We acknowledge that You are the only one who has got the strength to deliver us.

The devil is too strong. The lusts in our flesh are so strong. The lust of my eyes is so strong.

My tongue is uncontrollable, Lord. This anger is too powerful. But deliver us from anger.

Deliver us from the lusting, from lusting with our eyes. Deliver us from bitterness and wrong attitudes and from telling lies in our place of work. Lord, the pressure is so great sometimes, but deliver us.

Your power is able to do it. And then the prayer concludes as it began with God. The Bible says, God is the first and He is the last.

In this prayer too Jesus taught us to pray. When you finish, acknowledge that the kingdom is God's, that power is God's. Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory.

It is the prayer of a humble man who acknowledges that God is everything and He is nothing. O God, Yours is the kingdom, Yours is all the power that can make us live as we should be living, and Yours is all the glory. In other words, when You have done these things and answered our prayer, we won't take any credit for it to ourselves.

We won't pretend that we did it. It was Your work and we give You all the glory. It's Yours.

And then that last word, amen. That's a Hebrew word which means, It shall be so. It's an expression of faith, just like the prayer began with a help to faith by praying, Our Father who loves us, who art in heaven, Almighty Sovereign King, Ruler of the universe.

It concludes also with an expression of faith. Amen. It means, Lord, everything that I have prayed, I believe it will be so.

It is going to take place exactly like I have asked for. I believe that Your name is going to be honored and Your kingdom will come, Your will will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and You are going to provide us our need, You are going to forgive us our debts, You are going to deliver us from all evil, and Your name will be glorified. So when we conclude any prayer with the word amen, it means more than just a little signal to everybody that the prayer is over.

It's a very meaningful statement. We are saying thereby, I believe it shall be so, exactly like this brother prayed, I am saying amen. It shall be so.

It's an expression of faith. Now we don't have to repeat this prayer every time we pray, but Jesus had prayed in this way, verse 9, which means all our prayers should begin with being centered in God, should be an expression of faith, and conclude with giving God the glory and an expression of faith that God will answer our prayer. May all our prayers be like this in future.

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