
a *Grace Notes* course

Life of Christ 200

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Lesson 206

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Love Your Enemies

Matthew 5:43-48: “43 You heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor’ and, ‘Hate your enemy’. 44 But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you might become sons of your Father who is in heaven, because He rises His sun on the evil and the good and rains on the righteous and unrighteous. 46 For if you love the ones who love you, what reward do you have? Do not also the taxgatherers do the same? 47 And if you greet your brothers only, what greater thing do you do? Do not also the Gentiles do the same? 48 Therefore, you be mature as your Heavenly Father is mature.”

Luke 6:27-30, 32-36: “27 But I say to you who hear, ‘Love your enemies, do well to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 to those who strike you on the cheek, offer also the other, and from the one who takes away your shirt, do not withhold also your tunic. 30 To everyone who asks of you give, and from the one who takes what is yours do not ask for it back. 32 And if you love the one who loves you, what kind of grace is to you? For the sinners also love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what kind of grace is to you? The sinners also do the same thing. 34 And if you lend to the ones from whom you hope to receive, what kind of grace? Sinners also lend to sinners to receive their share. 35 Yet love your enemies and do good and lend expecting nothing in return and your reward will be much, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is gracious to the kind and ungrateful. 36 Become merciful just as also your Father is merciful.”

Introduction.

The Luke passage paraphrases and intermingles some of the things that have already been mentioned by Matthew.

This is important: we now come to some personal applications of the Establishment Code for the Kingdom. Luke connects them back to some other things we have covered.

The principle to love your enemies is intertwined with the previous comments about self-defense.

Not only are you to leave your defense with the Lord, but you are also to offer aid and comfort to your enemy.

This is a part of the Establishment Code for the Kingdom, and is not meant for the church age; let me tell you why:

The command to love everyone with virtue love is a dispensational constant. To desire the best for all men is obviously true whenever and wherever you live.

The command to love your neighbor comes from Leviticus 19:17-18, “You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.”

A neighbor would be anyone who is in one of your peripheries: at church, at home, at work, among friends.

The concept of neighbor does not extend far beyond the immediate periphery.

In reality, the English word ‘neighbor’ does not communicate the idea very well. The Hebrew word is RE’A, which is actually better translated as friend.

The command verb in the Hebrew is from AHAB, which denotes personal love. The virtue connotation is weaker than in HESED, but there may be something still there.

So you are to personally love your friends as you do yourself.

There is no doubt that this command from Leviticus has limits.

There is no specific command to hate your enemy. However, the Old Testament is full of passages that allow believers to “hate” their enemies.

David’s imprecatory prayers in the Psalms clearly show that he desires for God to wipe out his enemies!

Psalms 54: “Save me, O God, by Thy name, and vindicate me by Thy power. Hear my prayer, O God; Give ear to the words of my mouth. For strangers have risen against me, and violent men

have sought my life; they have no set God before them. Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the sustainer of my soul. He will recompense the evil to my foes; destroy them in Thy faithfulness. Willingly I will sacrifice to Thee; I will give thanks to Thy name, O Lord, for it is good. For he has delivered me from all trouble; and my eye has looked with satisfaction upon my enemies.”

In this Psalm, David wishes the worst upon his enemies.

Christ is not quoting when says ‘hate your enemies’, He is simply citing something that was a well-know Old Testament doctrine.

The Hebrew word is SANE’, which means to hate. According to the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, vol. II, p.880, SANE’ “...expresses an emotional attitude toward persons and things which are opposed, detested, despised and with which one wishes to have no contact or relationship. It is therefore the opposite of love. Whereas love draws and unites, hate separates and keeps distant. The hated and hating persons are considered foes or enemies and are considered odious, utterly unappealing.”

The Greek translation is misoj, which has exactly the same connotation.

In fact, there is an Old Testament verse which is a command to provide logistics to your enemy, Proverbs 25:21-22, “If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; for you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you.”

However, at the same time, on the battlefield you are authorized to take the life of your enemy. In that situation, you must go all the way in order to prevent your own demise.

The fact is, when you encounter your enemy on the battlefield, you wish the worse for him; you wish him to death.

When your enemy is in the field against you, you wish the worst for him - that he dies of disease before you ever face him; that his army retreats; that his nation surrenders.

In summary, ‘hate your enemies’ is the opposite of love, and is sometimes a necessity in the devil’s world.

The content of this passage is for the millennium; anyone who declares himself an enemy of another during that time will be handled by the Lord. There is no reason for hatred when perfect and timely justice exists.

Hatred is an expression of self-defense. Not that you should ever hate anyone, or seek to make anyone your enemy. But what if someone decides to be your enemy in spite of your application of Romans 12:18, “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.”?

An enemy is someone who hates you; even someone who wants to destroy you. Listen again to Paul in Romans 12:14, “Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not.” and verse seventeen, “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.” And again in verse nineteen, “Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay’, says the Lord.”

In fact let’s take a longer look at this passage, since it is the only one in the New Testament with a command about our enemies: “9 Love is unhyprocritical. While abhorring what is evil, clinging to the good, 10 in brotherly love, being devoted to one another, in honor, leading the way for one another, 11 in diligence, not lagging behind, being fervent in spirit, serving in the lord, 12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, busily engaging in prayer; 13 contributing to the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality [while doing all these things] 14 bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with the rejoicing; cry with the crying. 16 While thinking the same about one another, not thinking haughtily but associating with the humble, do not become wise from yourselves. 17 While not repaying evil for evil, thinking what is good before all men, 18 if able from yourself, having peace with all men, 19 never taking your own revenge, beloved, but give a place for [divine] wrath, for it has been written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord. 20 But If your enemy is hungry feed him; if thirsty, water him; for doing this you will heap burning coals of fire upon his head. 21 I do not conquer by means of evil, but you conquer evil by means of the good.

The title of this discourse is ‘Love is unhyprocritical’. H) a)ga/ph anupo/kritoj.) It contains eight commands, and all are related to the theme of spiritual maturity.

The outline is as follows:

While doing the things of the Christian life, bless those who persecute you.

The Two Commands Related to Appropriate Emotion.

While having good relationships, grow spiritually.

While not taking your own revenge, give a place for divine wrath.

The Two Commands Related to Logistics for Your Enemy.

Conquer evil by means of the good.

This entire passage is about balancing your Christian life.

There is an internal aspect to your Christian life in the intake of doctrine.

There is an external aspect in the application of doctrine.

There is an internal aspect in your activities within the local and universal church; your friends and Christian fellowship.

There is an external aspect in your interaction with people who reside in the cosmic system.

Five of the commands have to do with the Christian’s relationship with those who reside in the cosmic system.

Bless and do not curse those who persecute you. In other words, ask the Lord’s blessings upon them; keep on desiring the best for them even though they are your enemy.

Give a place for divine wrath. Let the Lord do the discipline and never take matters into your own hands. This does not eradicate your Biblical right to self-defense.

Feed and water your enemies; in other words, if it is up to you, do not let your enemy die. Keeping your enemy alive means giving him a chance for repentance.

Conquer evil by means of the good. The good is Bible doctrine, and it is the means to conquering evil in your life.

Although revenge belongs to the Lord, self-defense belongs to you, and self-defense is the immediate context of this Sermon on the Mount passage.

In conclusion, if it is on the battlefield, you may be sure that you can do your duty with a clear conscience. If you or someone else is the victim of crime, and you can intervene so that the criminal is stopped with the appropriate amount of force, even lethal force, then you can do so with confidence that it is your civic duty.

Christ is clearly asking His listeners to leave self-defense behind anywhere.

The list of applications.

Love your enemies.

Do well to those who hate you.

So, if you have someone who hates you, do well to them. The Greek is quite simple: kalwj poieite. kalwj simply indicates something of passing value; something that belongs only to this world. In essence it is the fulfillment of the Old Testament command from Proverbs 25:21-22.

Doing well to your enemies means helping them when their life circumstances (usually through divine discipline) become difficult.

Bless those who curse you (see above).

Pray for those who persecute you.

This is an extension of the command to bless those who hate you.

This is one of the great gimmicks of the Bible. You cannot simultaneously pray for and hate your enemy. You must be in fellowship to pray for him, and if you hate him you are not in fellowship. So if you are to fulfill this command, then you must do so from a position of impersonal love.

The principle of divine provision. “so that you might become sons of your Father who is in heaven, because He rises His sun on the evil and the good and rains on the righteous and unrighteous.”

We are called to love our enemies so that we might become sons of our Father who is in heaven.

The sonship occurs because of imitation. Christ is calling us to imitate the character of God.

Imitation of God's character is a pretty good definition of spiritual maturity. In fact, it is the highest expression of love that any believer can make. Imitation of Divine character is the fulfillment of the greatest commandment.

The specific way in which we are to imitate divine character is in the category of impersonal love toward our enemies.

God rises His sun on the evil and the good and rains on the righteous and unrighteous. Sun and rain are both necessary for the growth of crops; they cause the crop to grow which allows all people to live.

The application of Proverbs 25:21-22 comes directly into view here. Providing logistics to your enemy in his time of legitimate need is a godly act.

This shows that you want your enemy to live; that you want him to have the chance to repent before God and follow you to maturity.

God is not willing for any to perish. He is not willing for any to be cast into the Lake of Fire. He is not willing for any believer to fall short of maturity.

But He honors free will! And when people are negative to His plan, it is a good thing to prolong their lives, unless those people are such a menace that His justice must act.

This applies within the laws of divine establishment. If the Mosaic Law demands the justice of capital punishment, then capital punishment it must be.

However, if someone is your enemy, and they have not committed a capital crime, then it is right to provide for their legitimate needs.

The issue of eternal reward, "And if you love the one who loves you, what kind of grace reward is to you? For the sinners and taxgatherers also love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what kind of grace reward is to you? The sinners also do the same thing. And if you lend to the ones from whom you hope to receive, what kind of grace reward? Sinners also lend to sinners to receive their share. And if you greet your brothers only, what greater thing do you do? Do not also the Gentiles do the same?"

Christ now turns to the issue of heavenly reward - the portfolio of reward for the mature believer.

He says that if you only love those who love you, and do good to those who do good to you, and lend to the ones from whom you hope to receive, and greet your brothers only, then you have no grace reward.

The grace reward comes from a combination of Matthew and Luke. Matthew says *misqon*, which is the Greek word for reward, or even profit or wages, while Luke says *xarij*, which is a grace gift.

The combination of these two is good. It tells us that the reward comes from the grace of God, and that without the grace of God, the reward would not be ours.

Think about it. It is His salvation, we only choose it; it is His word and Spirit, we only choose to learn and apply it.

Without His initiative and provision, our efforts at spiritual growth would be for naught.

Even with the concept of reward - that we earned the reward - we must humbly acknowledge that we earned through appropriating divine power, and divine truth.

It is God's system of merit; it is His system of thinking; it is His system of power.

What kind of reward do we have if we only love those who love us? Well we can fill the blank with the answer 'none'. Christ employs the word *poia* to signify this. It means literally, 'what kind' as a sort of question.

Imitating sinners and taxgatherers and unbelievers is certainly not an imitation of God. When we extend our virtue love only to those who love us, we imitate all the occupants of the cosmic system.

Invisible Impact of Christians

Matthew 6:1-4: "1 Be careful to not practice your righteousness before men for them to observe. For if not, you do not have a reward from your Father who is in heaven. 2 Therefore whenever you practice mercy, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so they might be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, they possess their reward. 3 Now you, while practicing mercy do not let your left hand

know what your right is doing, 4 so also let your mercy be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.”

Outline.

Introduction: the command of prohibition.

The bottom line: reward in heaven.

The reward is what they seek - they seek lowly things.

The attitude and practice of the Secret Service.

The reward for Secret Service.

An implication of public service: God cannot see in secret.

Exposition.

Translation, v.1: “Be careful to not practice your righteousness before men for them to observe. For if not, you do not have a reward from your Father who is in heaven.”

The verse begins with the present imperative verb *prosexete*. It means to ‘take hold of something’, ‘to grasp a concept’, or ‘to exercise care’. The present tense tells us that Christ intends for the action to begin immediately if it is not taking right now, and to continue on into the future.

The verb *poiein* translates as ‘practice’. This is the present infinitive, and it is the complement of *prosexete*. It completes the thought. So the practice of righteousness is in view here.

Christ has just completed a discourse on the practice of mercy toward one’s enemies. This could be one practice of righteousness; there are many others! And it is worthwhile to note that righteousness is a practice.

The motivation for the practice of righteousness is never approbation from men. Their opinions do not count in the long run.

You never do something out of the motivation of wanting others to see it. That is not the attitude of the mature believer.

If you practice righteousness for the purpose of gaining approbation before men, then you do not have a reward.

Translation, v.2: “Therefore, whenever you perform an act of mercy, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues

and in the streets, so that they might be glorified by men; Truly I say to you, they have received their reward.”

This verse does not say ‘give alms.’ The church moneymongers must have translated this one. The phrase is *POIES ELEEMOSUNEN*.

1. The verb *POIES* is the present subjunctive, and it shows a potential action. “Perform,” “enact,” “practice,” or “do” is proper for this verb. Since it focuses on a single act, practice is out. Because of the verb with which it is coupled, perform is right.

ELEEMOSUNEN is the abstract form of ‘mercy.’ ‘Merciness’ would be right, if there were such a word in the English. A similar phenomenon is *DIKAIOSUNE*. *DIKAIOS* is ‘righteous,’ while *DIKAIOSUNE* is ‘righteousness.’ It is little more abstract.

So this word is not a specific word at all, but one that is quite abstract and purposefully vague, because an act of mercy can find application in a very broad spectrum. To make this one specific act of mercy is wrong. A translator would only do so if he had an agenda.

You are forbidden to sound the trumpet before you as you do acts of mercy.

This is a method of advertising in the ancient world. You sound the trumpet before you as you go around town selling your wares.

This is a really poor marketing technique, as it brings attention to the one doing the act, and not attention to God.

The primary realm of impact is angelic. When you perform an act of mercy, it is for the object of your mercy, and for the angels to see. The observation of men who are not rightfully involved is not important at all.

The hypocrites advertise because they want to be glorified by men.

This naturally implies that God is not important to them. This is a really poor set of priorities.

A hypocrite is an actor, someone who puts on a face for the crowd, but who is in reality a totally different person.

Television interviews of actors and actresses are especially interesting because you get to meet the real person, and not the person in the role.

A hypocrite wants to be perceived as a holy person, and is compelled to display his righteousness in public, so that the public knows.

Anyone can do the outward form of the righteous act. The outward form of the righteous act does not always reveal the heart of hearts.

In fact, the desire for approbation within a righteous act almost always reveals a hypocrite.

The hypocrite has received his reward, and glory from man is the balance in full.

APECHO means to receive the balance in full from a debt.

So the hypocrite who gets glory from men receives the balance in full of his reward.

Heavenly reward is so much better than what paltry things that we get on this earth. The things of this earth will all pass away, but God has a system of eternal reward that will be ours forever.

The hypocrite may be a believer; and as such he has his eternal salvation. But the rewards above and beyond that are exceptional beyond imagination, and worth the tradeoff for lack of recognition now.

Translation, vv.3-4: "But while you are doing an act of mercy, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your act of mercy might be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret might reward you."

Christ employs a genitive absolute at the beginning of this context in order to make some form of contrast. The genitive absolute is a grammatical construction that has no connection with the rest of the sentence. It is employed to show dissonance or disconnection of thought. Sometimes it is a foreshadowing of evil; at other times it makes an ironic statement; and still others it shows that something's is unusual or infrequent.

Here the genitive absolute shows the disconnection between doing good and the desire for approbation.

The left hand is the sin nature; the right hand is the soul in fellowship with God. You are to do your

works without allowing any involvement on the part of your sin nature.

Therefore, you must do your good works with no profit at all to your sin nature; there can be absolutely no payoff there.

God the Father is the only one who must see your acts of mercy. He is the only one who counts, because He is the one who gives the true and lasting reward.

Matthew 6:5-8: "5 And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray after they have stood in the synagogues and on the corners of the wide streets, so that they might show off to men. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But you, whenever you pray, go into your private room and after shutting the door pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you. 7 And while praying do not babble like the Gentiles, for they assume that in their many words they have an answer. 8 Therefore do not be like them; for your Father knows what needs you have before you ask Him."

Christ paints this image of the hypocrites. They go with much pomp and circumstance to the synagogue or the corner of the wide streets, and they stand like no one has ever done before. They stand up with a flourish, as though the act is a pronouncement in itself.

And after they have stood, they pray, assuming everyone should listen. They love the public nature of their prayers, and every prayer is a sample of excellent praying, full of holy language.

They have their reward in full: public adoration. They will have to dwell on that approbation for all eternity, and feed from it, for it will be the sum total of their reward there.

But Christ says that prayer is between you and God, and that you should go to a private room, your refuge, and there offer your prayers in secret. God is in secret; pray to Him in secret, and He will reward you. And that reward is one which will last forever.

Christ's second exhortation about prayer has to do with meaningless repetition. He warns against babbling like the Gentiles do. The word is

BATTALOGESETE, and it means to speak repetitively without purpose. It means to babble on endlessly about meaningless things.

It describes an attempt to pester God until He gives in out of exasperation. The image is of a five year old endlessly pestering his parents. But of course God has integrity.

The Gentiles assume (DOKEO) that with many words they have an answer. This is a wrong assumption.

The final principle should be obvious, but many Christians miss it: God knows what you need before you ask. You do not need to keep reminding Him of it.

The Lord's Prayer

“9 Therefore you pray like this: “Our Father who is in heaven; let your name be sanctified; 10 Let Your kingdom come; let Your will be done, as in heaven so upon earth; 11 Give to us today our logistical bread, 12 and forgive us our debts as we ourselves also forgave our debtors; 13 and do not bring us into testing, but save us from the evil.”

Introduction:

1. Dispensational constants are those elements of the portfolio of grace assets which are available in every dispensation.
2. Dispensational variables are those elements of the portfolio of grace assets which are not available in all of the dispensations. They may exist in one or more, but not all of them.
3. This prayer is for the disciples of Jesus Christ at that time. Remember, He is revealing His millennial kingdom to them, and so this prayer is going to feature certain dispensational variables related to their situation. These will not apply to us directly.

There are similarities of conditions that make some elements of this prayer agenda relevant to our own dispensation, and we will note them when appropriate.

Christ makes this prayer an emphatic command. He adds the personal pronoun HUMEIS to the present imperative PROSEUCHESTHE, and it comes out, “You pray...”

1. The inclusion of the personal pronoun is a contrast on the preceding bad examples of prayer. The logical conjunction OUN also points to what has gone before. Christ is saying, “on the basis of what has gone before, you do something different.’

The present tense of the imperative indicates that this prayer is to be a regular part of the disciples’ lives. The iterative present aspect emphasizes the regularity of the prayer.

The adverb HOUTOS concentrates on similitude without the necessity for exactitude. In other words we are to pray like this, but not exactly like this.

Hence, the rote recitation of the Lord’s prayer is directly against the intent of Christ.

In this prayer He gives His disciples an agenda for prayer, a general outline of how they should pray when they do pray.

Any prayer which is repeated from rote is going to lose its meaning over time. The vitality of your prayer life depends on whether you make this work.

The first part of the agenda is the address.

1. The person addressed is God the Father, and this is certainly a dispensational constant. You should always pray to the first person of the godhead.

Christ locates the Father in heaven. This is an intriguing addition, for it describes Him as entirely apart from us with regard to space. It also functions to distinguish Him from our earthly fathers.

So here is the perfect example of the principle of protocol. You must put the correct address on your prayers.

The second part of the agenda is about spiritual growth.

1. Jesus says, “let Your name be sanctified.’

The verb is HAGIASTHETO. It is in the aorist tense, and it is an imperative verb. So this is a command, and since it is in the third person singular, it is the imperative of entreaty, which designates a polite command.

The verb itself is HAGIAZO in the lexical form. It means to “sanctify,” or “make holy.”

It may denote what God the Holy Spirit does in His baptizing ministry at salvation: positional sanctification.

It may denote the process of experiential sanctification, which comes through the intake and application of Bible truth.

The verb is passive, so that the subject receives the action of sanctification. The subject is TO ONOMA SOU, “Your name.” God’s name always represents His very essence.

So the translation is “let your name be sanctified.”

This is a prayer for people to make God’s name holy in their hearts. There is only one way that this can come about, and that is through spiritual growth.

Spiritual growth occurs through faith perception of the truth. God’s name is made holy in our hearts only because of the truth resident there.

Therefore a conclusion:

This part of the agenda may include all aspects of the grace portfolio related to spiritual growth.

You may pray this prayer for yourself, or you may pray it for another. It is equally effective, and guaranteed to work.

We can never order God to sanctify His name apart from the volitional decisions of those involved; we may pray for everything else.

This is the greatest and most important prayer that you can pray for yourself or anyone else. Spiritual growth is your number one priority.

The third part of the model prayer is related to the kingdom of God.

1. Again there is an aorist imperative of entreaty, this time from the verb ELTHETO.
2. So there is a polite command regarding the kingdom of God and its arrival.

This refers to the second advent of Christ - the millennial kingdom.

You should know that the arrival of the kingdom of God is not contingent on our prayers. God alone knows the day and the hour, and that time is set. We cannot change the unchangeable decree.

Yet, the time is hidden from us, as it was from them. Christ charged His disciples with the content of this prayer, even though they would not see His kingdom in their lifetimes.

But Christ did not and does not know the day nor the hour. It is not a cruelty to include this prayer.

Some prayers orient the believer to the will of God, and place them in the right frame of mind to wait for Him. We have seen this, and this is also the case here.

The phrase “let Your kingdom come” is like saying “when You see fit.”

Now we play the waiting game during our lives in the same way. We do not know the time of the rapture, for the day and the hour are hidden from us.

10. But we too can orient to the sovereign wisdom of God; we too can humbly place ourselves at the mercy of His perfect timing. This one applies just as well to us as to the disciples.

Next is a contingency: “Let Your will become as in heaven so upon earth.”

1. The aorist imperative of GENETHETO comes out as “let your will become...”

This is the verb GINOMAI, which depicts the entry of something previously unintroduced. It is usually something totally new and even unique.

The will of God is the expression of His sovereign and perfect volition.

But God has chosen for the freedom of creature volition, and therefore His will is not always done.

Created beings often do not choose for the right, which makes this prayer valid.

But that is not all. This portion of the prayer is contingent on what has gone before. If God’s kingdom does not come, then let God’s will become.

Added to this is the phrase, “as in heaven so upon earth.” This calls for a mirroring. In heaven God rules supreme. The creatures who live there,

angels and saved men, are completely submissive to His will.

Now this also is a legitimate prayer for us in this dispensation. We desire for God's will to be done in the lives of His creatures.

7. This is the companion with the first part of the agenda: "Let Your name be sanctified."

Those who sanctify God's name do His will. This too may become a prayer about the availability of grace assets, but is mostly a reminder of responsibility.

The ensuing part of the agenda has to do with logistics.

1. The aorist active imperative verb DOS is this time a direct command. There is no polite entreaty here.

The adjective EPIOUSION gives further description to ARTON, bread. It defines the exact type of bread.

The adjective is a compound of the preposition EPI and OUSIA, which denotes physical property or existence.

The result of this compound is "for existence." And so this is a matter of physical existence.

You have a right to demand of God the basic necessities for existence. Because you are a creature, He is responsible for those things.

You must of course be willing to work for the access of these necessities, but God is responsible for the work, so that you can access those necessities.

This does not have to do with above and beyond logistics. Rather, just the physical necessities. Since the fall of man, these things must be worked for in some manner, but they are nonetheless available.

With the use of EPIOUSION, this concentrates on physical logistics alone. The rest we have covered. Again, this applies to church age believers equally.

Following the necessary logistics is the prayer for forgiveness: "and forgive us our debts, as we also forgave our debtors."

1. This is actually a tricky little portion of this model prayer. The tenses are real important, as are some of the lexical issues.

There is a logical progression in this prayer that is not commonly a part of your English translations.

The first part is easy enough: the aorist active imperative APHES is a direct command of God.

The indirect object of the verb is "us." We are the benefactors of God's forgiveness.

The direct object is "our debts." Although it is literally "debts," it is the debt of sin which is the subject of the prayer. Christ simply uses "debt" as a metaphor for sin. In Luke's parallel passage, Luke 11, it is certainly HAMARTIA, and so that clears up the issue once and for all.

You may demand forgiveness from God, since your debts have been paid by the death of Christ on the cross. You don't have to beg and plead; it is not necessary to do penance. The debt is completely paid in full, and forgiveness is promised to those who confess their sins.

But there is even more here.

(1) The forgiveness of this verse is contingent on whether we forgive others.

(2) It can be rightfully translated, "since we forgave others."

(3) The most important part of this is the aorist tense of the verb APHIEMI. Its form here is APHEKAMEN, and it is a kappa aorist MI verb.

(4) The aorist tense in the indicative mood portrays past action, so it is definitely dependent on our past forgiveness of others.

(5) Now this is the picture. We may demand forgiveness from God if we have forgiven others.

(6) But if we have not forgiven others, then we remain out of fellowship from Him, and so there is no effective forgiveness.

(7) Holding a grudge perpetuates sin indefinitely. You may confess that sin, but if you continue to hold the grudge you are right back out of fellowship again.

The Final Element, "and do not bring us into testing, but save us from the evil."

1. The aorist subjunctive of EISPHERO plus the negative adverb ME form a strong prohibition directed toward God.

Although there are several degrees of prohibition, and this is only one short of the strongest. This is strong language indeed to direct at God.

EISPHERO itself has an interesting lexical history:

From Liddell & Scott:

To bring in or contribute, as a description of cooperative effort.

To pay the property tax, again in the collective sense.

To introduce, especially of political measures.

To make a proposition, or to nominate someone.

From Kittel:

Convey a message (bring it into the building).

Bring a sacrifice into the temple for offering.

“Bring” something somewhere, in a very generic sense.

4. PEIRASMON is the direct object of EISPHERO.

In the secular record, it means:

To try or test someone out of distrust.

To test the lines of the enemy with a probe.

In the Biblical record, it means:

Genesis 22:1-19, God tests Abraham (LXX).

This is where God commands Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac.

Abraham proves himself faithful, even unto the sacrifice of his son.

He has a vital identification with the sacrifice of God, because God would have to go through with the same ordeal.

Abraham’s love for God was therefore tremendous. Very few men have equaled this identification.

It is abundantly clear from verses one and twelve that this test came directly from God: “Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham... ..for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

Psalm 139:23, David asks God to test his heart (LXX).

Verses 23 and 24 read this way: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.”

This is a request to examine David’s soul. The parallelism in verse 23 is decisive. The first

So this requests of God a searching and an examination by testing. An examination by adversity so that any flaws might be discovered, and then eliminated.

1 Corinthians 10:13, temptation or trial as external to man: “No temptation has taken you but human; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”

There is no such thing as superhuman temptation. God does not allow this.

With the temptation you do receive, there is always a way out...

If you believe in this, then you will certainly begin to perceive its function. You have to learn, however, to look for it.

Here God is presented as one who allows temptation, and restricts temptation, and provides a way out of temptation, but Who does not tempt directly.

James 1:2-4, external temptation or trial:

“Consider it all joy, my brothers, whenever you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have a finished product, that you might be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.”

This concentrates on the human perspective of testing, and makes no reference to God at all.

The verb PERIPIPTO depicts someone falling into a difficult situation, and this is certainly the case from human perception. Our trials seem to have a random nature from this point of view.

So in this important verse on temptation there is only a concentration on the proper mental

attitude, without looking at the issue of divine involvement in temptation.

James 1:13-14, internal temptation - the sin nature. Temptation emphatically not from God: "Let no one say while being tempted 'I am being tempted from God.' For God is not the author of evil, and He Himself tempts no one. But each one is tempted while being dragged away and enticed by his own lust"

Now this gives an entirely different picture of temptation. It portrays the source of temptation as the lust that is endemic to each human being.

This lust, translated from EPITHUMIA is apparently the sin nature.

The sin nature provides an impulse toward sin, enticing and dragging away the individual by making sin seem attractive.

The rationale given is that God is not the author of evil.

A summary & conclusion on the first half of the final element.

God tests us to see if we fear Him.

It is legitimate to ask God to test you, so as to eliminate flaws.

There is a distinct difference between the trial and the temptation to sin.

The trial or test in life is something that God may bring directly, as in the testing of Abraham, or it may be something that He allows, as in 1 Corinthians 10 and in the book of Job chapters 1 and 2.

h)

These trials are an opportunity to demonstrate your love for Him.

Both the illustration from Job and that from the life of Abraham confirm this with clarity.

The book of James doesn't care whether God brings the test or He allows it; what really matters is our mental attitude during the test.

The temptation to sin is entirely separate from the trial. The trial of the believer is adversity within the setting of the angelic conflict; the temptation to sin comes from the sin nature, and is an impulse against God.

God could never place within us an impulse to sin; He allows it as a part of the angelic conflict, but He is the author of good and righteous acts.

Satan is the author of sin; he is responsible for the sin nature.

God tests people; their sin nature tempts them to sin.

When God tests you or allows you to be tested, He is looking for good within you, and giving you the opportunity to show your love for Him. During this time you may be tempted by the sin nature, but He always provides a way out of the temptation.

So when Christ prays this forceful prayer, you should understand that He is concentrating not on the test or the trial, but on the temptation to sin.

This prayer is 100% compatible with the verses that we have studied. God does not lead us into temptation; Satan and his minions do.

This prayer does not negate our desire to undergo testing as an opportunity to display the truth in our souls back to God.

The second half of the verse is the flip side.

It begins with the strong adversative conjunction ALLA. This represents a very strong way to contradict what has preceded. So, instead of leading us into temptation...

The aorist middle imperative verb RUSAI communicates a direct command toward God. The command is for deliverance.

This is not an eternal salvation word per se. Rather, it conveys a deliverance from physical or moral danger.

The preposition APO plus the genitive here indicates separation, and is translated "from."

The definite article really is quite significant. It gives exact identity to a noun. The word it modifies is PONEROU, and this is normally an adjective. The problem here is that the genitive case form is identical in both the neuter and the masculine, so it is impossible to tell whether this is "the evil thing" or "the evil one."

However, there is a way around this. Satan is the head of the cosmic system. If it says "the evil

thing,' then we could conclude that this was the cosmic system and its destructive influences.

If on the other hand it says "the evil one,' it hardly matters, because it stands for Satan and all He represents.

Both "lead us not into temptation' and "but deliver us from the evil' say much the same thing.

Temptation leads to the cosmic system.

There are two items to the conclusion:

1. The general force of the prayer.

This prayer contains imperatives of entreaty and imperatives of command.

This prayer shows remarkable force considering that God reigns sovereign over us.

Christ encourages His disciples to pray with force and boldness, even to the sovereign God.

We can pray like this because of two things:

Therefore, get in the habit of praying forcefully when you are confident that the matter is within His will.

2. The agenda given by Christ.

The address is to the Father.

Spiritual growth issues for yourself and for others.

The operation of grace assets.

The function of undeserved suffering.

Praise and worship - the expression of your desire to see Him face to face and many more such expressions of praise.

Evangelism.

This includes grace assets, like common grace.

This includes divine intervention through circumstances and discipline.

This includes human instrumentality for the gospel.

Forgiveness, which comes through confession.

Preservation from temptation, but not from testing.

"9 Therefore you pray like this: "Our Father who is in heaven; let your name be sanctified; 10 Let

Your kingdom come; let Your will become, as in heaven so upon earth; 11 Give to us today our logistical bread, 12 and forgive us our debts as we ourselves also forgave our debtors; 13 and do not bring us into testing, but save us from the evil."

The non-ending. "For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen."

This ending is not a part of the original autograph of the Bible.

It was popular in the early (3rd to 7th centuries, AD) Syriac and Coptic translations from

If it gained reception that late, it was not for a legitimate reason. It did not come from the lips of Christ, and He never intended it for us.

Christ's explanation of forgiveness:

Translation: "14 For if you forgive men their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; 15 But if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions."

1. The Greek third class conditional sentence contains an if... then clause that represents an uncertain fulfillment. Generally the fulfillment of the "if" depends on the function of human volition.

Each of these verses is a third class conditional sentence. The first is positive, while the second negative.

So if you forgive (and it is your choice to do so) then you will receive forgiveness from God; if you do not forgive (and it is your choice to do so) then you will not receive forgiveness from God.

The word for "transgressions" is PARAPTOMA, and it generally describes sins against God. Even when someone sins against you, ultimately it is an offense against God. This should help you in the realm of forgiveness.

And when you sin against someone else, it is still up to God to forgive you. He is the one who restores fellowship through the power of the Spirit.

Probably the major hurdle that most have about this passage is the relationship between this forgiveness and salvation forgiveness. There is none. This concentrates on the temporal forgiveness, not eternal forgiveness.

Temporal forgiveness is God's forgiveness of Christians in time. Eternal forgiveness is that permanent forgiveness related to salvation.

1 John 1:9, Hebrews 10:22, and many other New Testament passages treat this subject more thoroughly.

Essentially (see doctrine of fellowship), when we sin, even as Christians we go out of fellowship with God; when we confess that sin, God restores that fellowship.

10. However, when we hold a grudge, we perpetuate the sin, so that confession does no good; we go right back out of fellowship again.

11. The perpetuation of other sins apply equally. In other words, you continue to be out of fellowship when you perpetuate a state of sin.

12. So that, if you perpetuate a state of immorality, you will not receive an effective forgiveness.

13. Failing to forgive someone is a state of sin against God; it is holding a grudge. It perpetuates sin, and you cannot re-establish fellowship until that state of sin is eliminated.

14. It is God's character to forgive; sin is falling short of God's holy character; if we fail to forgive, we fall short of God's character.

15. When someone sins against you, they go out of fellowship; but you also have the opportunity to do the same. When sin goes from one person to another, it can be contagious.

16. You must understand that their sin was paid for at the cross, and that enables you to completely forgive them. It is not you who is paying for that sin; Christ already did.

17. It is impossible for anyone who holds a grudge to fulfill the plan of God. You must be at least in fellowship to do so.

Fasting – Christ's Comment

Matthew 6:16-18, "16 But whenever you fast, do not become like the gloomy hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces in order to appear to men while fasting; truly I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you while fasting anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you might not appear to men while fasting but to your Father

who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

Christ begins with the indefinite adverb of time HOSAN: 'whenever.' He recognizes that they have a choice to fast.

It is 'whenever you fast.' There is no mention of a compulsory fast here, because the fast was not ever a part of the ritual system of Israel.

2, But it was recognized by Christ as a legitimate option. He does not say 'stop fasting.' Rather, He regulates their mental attitude for fasting.

The prohibition is a comparison with the gloomy hypocrites.

The adverb HOS compares similarities between two things. So this is a prohibition against becoming like someone else.

The verb is the present imperative of GINOMAI, which describes something as coming into being. This imperative of prohibition warns us against becoming something that we are not. Since it is a present imperative of prohibition, the action extends indefinitely into the future. It is like saying 'keep on not become like them.' A real equivalent would be 'never become.'

The word for 'gloomy' is SKUTHROPOI. It can be sad, angry, sullen, or gloomy, or really any of their synonyms. It is always related to negative facial expression. The point is, the hypocrites put on a face that is negative. Gloomy seems to fit well, because it matches the sacrificial nature of the fast.

Now the disfigurement comes from the word APHANIZOUSIN, which means literally 'to make unrepresentable.' This is not a literal disfigurement, but the disfigurement that anyone can do. It is making faces. They make unrepresentable faces so that they might appear to men while fasting.

Yet, fasting is not about how you appear before men. The purpose is not to impress men with your sacrifice before God. In fact, the purpose is not to impress God with your sacrifice.

Fasting was never intended as a sacrifice. It was a mini-Sabbath; the setting aside of food for a better concentration on God.

Therefore, if the attitude in fasting is that God will be impressed, it is anti-grace attitude. God is not

ever impressed with what we bring to Him; He is rather impressed with our appropriation of His grace. Fasting could never fit into a grace system.

And the idea that man is impressed with fasting and sacrifice is even more hideous.

The ones who fast have their reward: approbation before men. But that is all the reward they will receive. The present tense of APECHOUSIN limits the reception of the reward to the present time. There is no future here.

There is much greater reward for those who have God's grace. It exceeds the emptiness of human approbation by a million-fold.

How empty is any pursuit of lust! Whether approbation or money or stimulation or blood or emotion or power.

There is never satisfaction in lust. There is always satisfaction in the reception of divinely appointed reward, because God is a fair judge.

The proper fasting procedure: anoint your head and wash your face.

This is the ancient equivalent to looking your best. Anointing and washing would be the proper primping for a hot date in ancient Israel.

But this is curious, because it says that you are to do so not to appear before men, but before God in secret.

So there you are, all ready for a date with God, looking your best during your time of fast. The reason is simple: fasting is not a sacrifice! Instead,

it is a celebration because it is a time of concentration on God.

And we do have our own parallel during the church age. Whenever you go to study the word of God, or go into secret to pray, you should never put on a public display as though you are making great sacrifices for God. <long sigh> I am going to listen to a tape now.

Your reward is based on what you do before God, and not at all what man might think of that. At some point you have to develop the self-esteem necessary to break free from what people think.

a. This is the point where your love for God exceeds your love for man. Where what God thinks is more important than what man thinks.

b. You must arrive at a place where the thoughts of God are normative for your life, and not the thoughts of man.

c. You may appreciate the thoughts of man insofar as they reflect divine character, for not for their own merit.

The result of the proper fasting attitude is that God will repay you.

What God pays is infinitely better than anything that man or the devil can offer.

God is greater than man; His reward is greater than man.

Therefore, this is a vastly superior reward system.