

Lead Us Not into Temptation, but Deliver Us from Evil

PSA Sunday, March 6, 2011

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Let us pray. God, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of all our hearts and minds be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord our strength and our redeemer, Amen.

The bass player. The keeper of the low end. In a band, the bass player is usually best friends with the drummer, together forming the essential rhythm section necessary for music. I like to think of this as the base of a pyramid, forming the foundation for the melody and vocals. So, when I'm listening to a song in the car, or actually playing an instrument, I find myself focused on the rhythm. In fact, I contend that I could probably hum or whistle the rhythm for any song that I've heard more than once. It's just sort of a natural connection that I make with the music, unlike the melody that most people remember. But I probably couldn't tell you what most song's I've heard are about. I realized this as I was driving one day. I was cruisin' down the highway with the windows down and the music turned up loud. When the song "Warehouse" came up on my iPod, words came out of my mouth and I sang along, but I realized that for the 10 years I owned this particular CD, I didn't know what the song was about. I had a literal meaning, a surface level understanding of the words, but this distraction by the rhythm section kept me from ever focusing on and absorbing the thoughts and feelings conveyed by the lyrics.

Over the last few weeks, we've been on a journey to better understand the Lord's Prayer; the way Jesus taught his disciples to pray. We've broken it down into sections to focus on individual verses. And each week, we have discovered that these words are full and rich with meaning; it's been an opportunity to focus on and absorb the thoughts and feelings that Jesus is trying to convey in addition to a surface level understanding of the words.

So let's begin this morning with a quick review of the verses that we've covered.

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name"

Yes, we come before God claiming God's glory and goodness, but we also acknowledge our membership in a larger community, the children of God

"Thy Kingdom come"

Yes, we look towards heaven and its promise of eternal life, but we also acknowledge that it is God's Kingdom we seek, and this is something that may not always be intuitive

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Yes, we place God's will above our own and accept the vulnerability that accompanies that submission, but we also acknowledge a trust in God as we accept the call to obey God's will – to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God

“Give us this day our daily bread”

Yes, we recognize a God who provides for our personal, physical needs, but we also acknowledge that God intends for all of His children to be fed and trusting in God means responding to God’s call to go out and feed God’s people

“And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors”

Yes, we recognize that we should offer and accept grace and forgiveness, but we also acknowledge that the source of all forgiveness, grace, and mercy is in the Resurrection of our savior Jesus Christ.

Yes, it is important have a literal understanding of the prayer, to express reliance upon God, to affirm that He is listening, but when saying this prayer we must couple that reliance with an understanding of what it means to be in a relationship with God and to live as Christ’s disciples.

So that brings us to this week: lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil...