

Letting THE LORD'S PRAYER look at us

A thought-&-discussion starter for one session of Christian adult education

AVAILABLE: The Lord's Prayer Thinksheets (3211, 3215, 3216) distributed, one after each Bible presentation, at Craigville Theological Colloquy XXI (June 12-16, 2004)

OPENING PRAYER: (conflating Mt.9.6b-13 & L.11.2-4 in paraphrase):

"Heaven Father, may we sanctify your Name. Your Kingdom come: your Will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us each day the food we need. And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. (For the Kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever.) Amen."

+ + +

1 No question starts from nothing, from zero. When a disciple of Jesus asked him how the disciples were to pray (L.11.1, a request for guidance in how to pray: "Lord, teach us to pray"), what were they assuming? Write here three assumptions:
(1)

(2)

(3)

2 When & where did you learn/memorize the Lord's Prayer?

3 Last week, how often did you pray the Lord's Prayer? How often should Christians pray it?

4 As you study the RSV of the Lord's Prayer, what themes do you find? Comment on their order. Any essential prayer-themes missing?

Matthew
Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of trial,
but rescue us from the evil one.
(For the kingdom and the power and the glory are
yours forever. Amen.)

Luke
Father,
(same)
(same)
Give us each day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
(same, but period)

Write the themes:

Any essential prayer-themes missing?

5 Twice daily, design genius Buckminster Fuller put himself to sleep by playing successively with the sounds of the Lord's Prayer. "Lectio divina" (Latin, "divine [holy] reading") prayerfully-meditatively plays with the successive senses in the Lord's Prayer.

ASSIGNMENT (for during the session, or later): Write your lectio divina (first) as free prayer using the Lord's Prayer themes, then (second) using each successive phrase in the Lord's Prayer.

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3222

Willis/Loree Elliott

From: "Willis/Loree Elliott" <elliottw@comcast.net>
 To: <confessingchrist@yahoo.com>
 Sent: Sunday, October 10, 2004 8:06 AM
 Subject: Re: Luther's denunciation of "the righteousness of works"

Carl, Will, Don--

- 1 Our mitzvah usefulness begins with our answering "No" to DB's question "Are we of any use?" (A mitzvah is something unselfish done that would have been left undone had there been no awareness of & intention to serve God ["Hallowed be thy Name"]. The radical theocentricity of the Lord's Prayer is at the heart of our Lord's radicalism: only mitzvah [plural of "mitzvah"] are of any use (i.e., usefulness to "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth....").
- 2 As to your last question, Will, we're doing nothing useful (in the sense above) without "acknowledging sin and seeking forgiveness"--which means that precisely that action is the first useful thing we can do. But since it's only one theme in the Lord's Prayer, we're of little use if we neglect the other themes.
- 3 Carl, the context of DB's "Are we of any use?" is important. Was he momentarily uttering a very human cry of despair? Or was he calling for deeper-wider self-examination? Or (I think) both? Retrospective: What mitzvah did I do / fail to do yesterday? Prospective: What mitzvah do I intend today? (Today, I'm teaching a session [Thinksheet:] titled "Letting the Lord's Prayer look at us." One way the Lord is looking at us is through the prayer he gave us. He condemns "eye-pleasing" servants, who serve only when their lord is not looking. Our Lord is never not looking.)
- 4 Will, "following Christ" is mitzvah living in NT light to whatever where. Don's Elton Trueblood quote is on the mark: "Faith is not belief without proof, but trust without reservation." In 1941, I heard him give the lectures which became the book ALTERNATIVE TO FUTILITY. Non-mitzvah living is futile (on which I like Richard Niebuhr's RADICAL MONOTHEISM).

Grace and peace--
 Willis

----- Original Message -----
 From: Carl Rasmussen
 To: confessingchrist@yahoo.com
 Sent: Saturday, October 09, 2004 2:24 PM
 Subject: Re: Luther's denunciation of "the righteousness of works"

10/10/2004

Will:

Bonhoeffer famously posed the question "Are we of any use?"

Are we?

Shalom

Carl

>>> WILL@PCOU@aol.com 10/7/2004 9:20:34 PM >>>

Carl, Willis, et al;

When "the reality of God is shown to be the ultimate reality" (Bonhoeffer), then what? To tell the truth, Bonhoeffer left me a little cold. Now, I'm not a great reader, but I couldn't figure out where he was going. "Follow Christ." OK, where? We never get an answer to that. Is Christianity solely concerned with acknowledging sin and seeking forgiveness for it, or should we be doing something useful?

Will Hinkley

This page reproduces some Net correspondence this morning. I hadn't intended it to be p2 of this Thinksheet. I've made it so because the Lord's Prayer pervades my posts here.

10/10/2004