**Matthew 6:9-13**

I. Introduction

A. In this prayer we’re putting on Christ and his child-like faith in his Father

1. Jesus invites us to pray to God as Father (v. 9)

2. Jesus invites us into a God centered world (v. 9-10) with the heart of a child passionate for his/her Father’s honor in the world

3. Jesus invites us to come to our Father for our needs like humble, dependent

children (v. 11-13)

B. We need to maintain a child-like faith and avoid cynicism

1. Cynicism comes when we are disillusioned by the darker side of life, but it is a self-protective measure keeping us from fully engaging in life with God

2. Jesus calls us to a child-like faith that is fully aware of all the darkness of life but still trusts and hopes in God

II. Give us today our daily bread (v. 11)

A. A prayer for the daily necessities

1. “bread” is the most staple, basic food

2. “today, daily”: we’re called not to worry about tomorrow (Mt 6:34) but to simply trust God day by day

B. This reminds us of God providing daily manna for the Israelites in the wilderness and teaching them daily dependence

C. Proverbs 30:8-9: a prayer for a humble provision (neither great wealth nor great poverty)

D. What would it look like for us to pray this prayer in 2016 Orange County? Rather than spiritualizing it, how would praying this prayer shape our hearts?

1. It would foster gratitude and contentment

= For God’s provision for us that is far above and beyond daily bread

2. It would foster generosity

= It reminds us of those for whom daily bread is not always certain, and it helps release our grip on our excess in order to provide for brothers and sisters who need basic provision.

III. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors (v. 12)

A. We can confidently ask for forgiveness because

1. God is our “Father”

2. Christ died for our sins, and God no longer counts our sins against us (2 Cor 5:18-19)

B. “As we forgive our debtors”

1. Jesus always keeps a close connection between our relationship with God and our relationship with other people (see also Mt 5:23-24 for that relationship)

2. To not extend forgiveness to others is an indication that you don’t really understand the heart of the gospel (= the forgiveness of sins)

a. A non-forgiving heart is a big deal!

b. We must be absolutely committed to forgiveness (even while we recognize that the process of forgiving someone is often a complicated and ongoing process)

C. What would happen if we prayed this prayer every day?

1. It would greatly increase our relational intimacy with God

2. Many Christians don’t regularly acknowledge their faults before God, and they grow distant relationally as a result, even as they continue to go through the motions of Christianity

3. Confession keeps our hearts soft and close to God

IV. Don’t lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one (v. 13)

A. Why would we need to pray for God not to lead us into temptation?

1. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil (Mt 4:1)

2. God never directly tempts someone in order to entice them to sin

3. So God will allow us to be tested, but his purposes are always for our sanctification, while Satan’s purposes are for our harm

B. The world we live in is full of temptation

1. Imagine a road with houses of temptation on either side

2. Imagine having to walk through land that has hidden mines

3. We are in a spiritual battle and our enemy is very real (1 Peter 5:8)

C. This a humble prayer of dependence

1. We are saying, “Lord, we are not spiritual giants, so don’t test us. If left to ourselves we will fall, so protect us and keep us safe.”

2. Praying this prayer daily reminds us of our utter dependence on God

**Discussion Questions**

1. Consider the comments made about cynicism and child-like faith at the beginning of Sunday’s message. How do you respond to those comments? Is there is anything you would add to or change in that discussion?

2. We spent time praying together on Sunday. Which of the three prayers was the most impactful for you and why?

3. Consider the prayer for daily bread in v. 11. Read together Proverbs 30:8-9. Is that the proper perspective we should have about our wealth? If so what would an adequate amount of provision be, and what are the implications for how we live our lives today?

4. On Sunday it was argued that there is a close connection between regular confession and intimacy. Discuss that idea together. Do you think that is true?

5. Jesus encourages us to pray for protection from the evil one (v. 13). What should our awareness of and perspective on spiritual warfare be? How much should we think about it, and practically speaking what should we do about it?