How To Enter Into God's Kingdom

This will free you from life's problems in a powerful way.

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Taking The Journey
Into God's Kingdom

How To Enter Into God's Kingdom Where You Are Free From Life's Problems

Chapter One

It's All About Me

The truth is, we all want to live in a place where we can have peace and safety. We are all looking for a place where we can be free from pain and damage caused by such things as life's issues. We want a life that experiences pleasure and happiness without the fear of experiencing pain and death. The problem we face is, what is it going to take to get into such a place? It may surprise you, but, it comes through caring about others.

Some people only care about how they are being treated. They don't want to feel the needs and desires of others. They want peace and happiness in their lives but don't care about other's peace and happiness. Other people are perfectly satisfied with happiness that comes through other's sacrifices and sometimes even other's suffering and pain. As long as they can win, it doesn't bother them that others had to lose.

It's All About We

God doesn't have the opinions that we humans have. He knows what it is going to take to be free from life's problems and bring complete happiness and joy for *every* person. God is all about grace (giving people a chance to get His blessings and Kingdom even though they didn't do anything to earn it) and mercy (forgiving people for things that they deserve to be punished for). That means you are going to be able to receive healing from life's problems even though you can't do anything to earn or deserve it.

God is going to set you free from the mistakes you have made that caused damage and pain in your heart and life. Even though you have made some really bad mistakes, God is going to set you free without you suffering from any punishment for those things you did to others. Even though you may feel you deserve some kind of punishment, God's grace (a gift you don't deserve) is going to be applied to your life.

Who Do You Want To Be Like?

Before you can start on your journey toward becoming a citizen in God's Kingdom and being set free from life's problems, you will need to decide what kind of a person you are willing to become. God is all about freedom of choice. If you don't want what God has to offer, God gives you the right to reject it.

What if you aren't clear on what God is offering you? God is willing to allow you to "test drive" His provisions. In other words, you can allow God to give you a "taste" of all He is offering. You can experience the greatness of God and then decide whether or not you want to continue to give your life over to His way of living. You will only get one shot at testing God's way, God's truth, and God's life. But, He won't require you to make a final decision until you know whether or not you like His plan.

God knows you can't make a knowledgeable decision as to whether or not you want to live in His Kingdom unless you get a chance to try it out.

Freedom From Hurting Other People

In the process of gaining all the benefits God is offering, there are things you must be willing to give up. God requires that everyone *be willing* to give up things that hurt people. If you don't feel like you are doing something that hurts others but God does, you will have to *be willing* to give it up anyway. We have to trust that God knows what is best for everyone involved.

Freedom From Trying To Change Ourselves

You won't have to force yourself to give any of these things up. All you have to do is *be willing* to give them up. God will empower you to make the necessary changes. He will *never* force you to change. He will simply continue to try to convince you to give them up. Once you are *willing* to give them up, He shows you how to yield to His power to be set free from those attitudes and deeds. Attitudes and deeds are the foundational cause of your problems with life. If you are interested in finding out more, then let Jesus move you into the steps on how to enter God's Kingdom, so He can set you free from life's problems.

Did You Hear That?

Your first step in entering God's Kingdom and being helped with life's problems, is to have an ear checkup (spiritual ears, that is). Since you are still reading, you just passed the first part of the test. When you go to the doctor, they give you a physical examination. During it you are tested for various physical issues, so they can find out what is causing your problem. You were just tested on whether you have spiritual ears that hear God. Some people can't hear or understand spiritual things. Things like this make no sense to them. It is like speaking a foreign language to them. But, since you are still reading, you are ready for the next step.

Being Healed From Life's Problems Is Like Having Seeds Planted In Your Heart

You need to understand some spiritual principles; and, Jesus wants to explain them to you by using a field planting illustration. Jesus designed it to help you understand the spiritual examination He is giving you.

A guy takes a bag of seeds, sticks his hand into it, pulls out a handful of seeds, and scatters them over the ground. This method is called broadcasting. When it is used, seeds get scattered everywhere. It is impossible to accurately control where the seeds will land. Since the seeds aren't being individually planted in a specific spot, they tend to land on good and bad soil alike.

Learning Spiritual Principles

A parable is similar to an illustration. However, a parable isn't just an illustration; it is a system for taking some event, we see in the life around us, and use it to teach spiritual principles. At this moment, you are experiencing seeds of spiritual truth "planted" in your life. Jesus is giving you the truth about life and eternity and you are deciding what you are going to do with the information.

People have four types of reactions to having these truths from God planted in their life. Once you see which category you are located in, you will better understand what is causing your issues with life's problems. From there Jesus will be able to guide you into studies that bring healing and blessings from God into you. Let Jesus explain these four reactions.

We Must Have Ears That Can Hear God

Mat 13:3-9 (NIV) Then He [Jesus] told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. <u>He who has ears, let him hear</u>."

After Jesus finished telling the story about this farmer, He then explained the meaning of the parable (spiritual illustration). He took the events, that happen to the seeds, and compared them to the events that happen to people. Just like throwing seeds on all kinds of soil brings four types of results, so does telling the truth about God and His Kingdom to all kinds of people bring four types of reactions. As you look at the explanation to this parable, see if you can find *your* reaction to the good news about God's Kingdom in your life. Which one of these four categories do you fit in? Now let Jesus explain the meaning to you.

Mat 13:18-23 (NIV) Listen then to what the parable of the sower means:

No Understanding (No Ears To Hear God)

When anyone *hears* the message about the kingdom and *does not understand it*, the evil one [Satan] comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. <u>This is the seed sown along the path</u>.

You Have Spiritual Ears!

This is one reaction that some people have to hearing Jesus' message. This is the one you have already passed. *All* the words you have read, up to this point, would have been meaningless to you. Since you are reading and understanding (to some degree) the words you are reading, you have already passed part of the examination. Your reaction to the message concerning the Kingdom of God has been one of a certain amount of understanding. Congratulations! You have spiritual ears that can hear the words of God. Obviously, it would be impossible for you to receive healing from God, if you couldn't hear or understand a word He said.

I Don't See Why I Have To Do That

As you give the principles of Christianity a try, more and more information will be coming your way. Some information will come as a tremendous blessing to you. However, other information will point to an area of your life that you are not ready to experience a change in. Some people get to this point and decide they don't want to have *anything* to do with Christianity. Others go through some real struggles with it but are holding it up to God for further clarification and help. Still others try to strike a bargain with God and try to keep parts of Christianity and drop other parts. Others try to keep bad parts of their old life, while mixing it with Christianity.

Would You Help Me See Why I Have To Do That?

If, at first, you can't *understand* why God would require something of you, let Him help you *understand* the "whys" of it all. He won't force you; He will keep reasoning with you, *if you will keep coming to Him.* If you are willing to stick with God, because you know He has perfect reasons, He will start helping you to understand *why* He does what He does and why He requires what He requires. Your life's problems may have their roots in things you don't want to give up yet. Once you hear and understand, then you can decide whether or not you want God's power to give it up.

Chapter Two

People's Opinions

Ears That Hear Humans More Than God

Mat 13:20-21 (NIV) The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, *he lasts only a short time*. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

People Are Making Fun Of Me

This is reaction number two, of the four reactions people have to hearing the message on how to join God's Kingdom. Let's say you finish looking at all four reactions to the instructions on how to become a citizen of God's Kingdom and you decide to join God's family, you will be given a prayer to pray. It will be the prayer that Jesus gives us to pray which will allow you to "test drive" Christianity. God will give you a "taste" of all the wonderful things He has to offer. You will become a person who understands Christianity well enough to be able to decide whether or not you want to continue in it.

I Don't Know, You Tell Me What To Do

You could allow other people to make that decision for you. If you want to, you can let the criticism and social pressure of your non-Christian "friends" push you out of God's Kingdom. Another way of allowing people to make your decision for you is to become offended by other Christians. You could decide that if this is the way "Christians" act, then you don't want to have anything to do with it. Personal issues that have their roots in people, their opinions, actions, and words require a healing in the root cause. This condition is Jesus' explanation of the seeds that fell on shallow, rocky soil. Will you let people decide whether or not you go with Jesus?

I'm Getting New Friends

Other people's opinions can have quite an affect on how we believe, think, and act; but we don't have to deal with this issue alone. Jesus is going to be available for you to talk to Him (pray) and ask Him for His power to help you stick with Christianity, get help with life's problems, and help you enter into His eternal Kingdom.

Also, God has special places where you can find true friends who will encourage you to continue on your journey toward God's Kingdom. A good church is a place where people will accept you and help you stay the course. Their opinions will be encouraging and helpful.

You may be a person who has always been a people pleaser. This may be the one area where you have always had major problems in your life. If it goes against the beliefs of your friends, it may be like a rock down in your heart that resists anything that Jesus has to say. If you ask Him to break up that rock of resistance and heal your heart from going along with the crowd, He will! He will help you stand on your own two feet. He will help you stand up to all the social pressure and stay locked into freedom from life's problems. And, He will give you a determination of spending eternity with your heavenly Father.

Worldly Cares

Ears That Hear The World More Than God

Mat 13:22 (NIV) The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but <u>the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth</u> choke it, making it unfruitful.

I Just Don't Have Time For God

This third reaction is all about you and what you consider most important. You can kind of see how you are going to be reacting to this issue right now. If you find yourself to be a worrier about life's problems most of the time or someone who is concerned about getting, spending, and saving a lot of money most of the time, you may have found the root cause for your suffering and pain. But, just because this is a problem in your character doesn't mean you *have* to stay this way. But, it isn't something you change; it is something you ask Jesus to change.

God Is Giving You A Powerful *Want* Inside You

Once again, Jesus and other Christians are available to help you win this battle. The difference between a person who gets healed from life's problems and one who stays defeated, is *desire*. We all experience the pressure of life's problems and money issues from time to time. Even mature Christians, must deal with them. A person who will *continue* to lose at their battle against life's problems and a *Christian* who will *eventually* win, is one who receives a powerful *wanting* to do, think, feel, and say good things. This powerful *wanting* will enable you to learn, understand, and change into a person, free from the things that are causing you life's problems.

Wanting Is Good Enough For God

What God is looking for, in your heart, is *desire* to feel, think, do, and say the right things. If you desire (*want*) to live the right things, Jesus will keep working with you until you win. But, if there comes a time when you cease *wanting* to do, think, feel, and say good things, you will fail to win against life's problems and forfeit your rights to "test drive" Christianity. If you try out the benefits of Christianity and *decide* to not be a member of God's eternal family, God will honor your decision.

You Are Always Free To Choose

If, after you become a Christian, you decide that you don't *want* to be a part of God's Kingdom, it will be a final decision. You would, at that time, have full knowledge concerning the things of God. You "tasted" all of the wonderful provisions of God and made a *knowledgeable* decision. In other words, you had the necessary facts and made your decision on the basis of those facts. At that point, a person wouldn't be able to blame God for not healing them here on earth or blame Him for what happens to them in eternity. They knew what they were doing and decided that they didn't want what God had to offer them.

We are, however, praying for you that, that never happens to you. The most important thing for you to *know* is that God *wants* to heal you from life's problems and He *wants* you to spend eternity with Him in His Kingdom. *But*, the decision has to be yours. You are in charge of your life and can get His power, by letting Him help you be a good person to yourself, those around you, and to Him.

How Many Times Can I Mess Up?

All of us Christians have struggled with people's opinions, worries about the pressures and problems of this life, and the temptations that come concerning wealth. However, none of this has the power to *force* you away from God's help. No matter how many times you fail, as long as you continue to *want* Jesus' help to give you the proper perspective concerning the issues of life, you will get it.

God will <u>never</u> give up on you, as long as you never give up on Him.

You may make a lot of mistakes; but as long as your "want" is pointed in the right direction, God will *not* consider you as having failed Him or His plan for your healing and your life. He will keep giving you His provisions and will be willing to seal you inside of Christianity, so He can give you all its benefits. He *will* heal you from life's problems, as long as you keep *wanting* His help, provisions, and power. You just have to allow Him to set you free from the *causes* that life's problems have their roots attached to.

Chapter Three

Produce A Crop

Ears That Hear God More Than People's Opinions And Worldly Cares

Mat 13:23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who ***hears* the word and *understands* it. ***he produces a crop***, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.**

God Can Help You Be Like This

We hope and pray that you will be this kind of person. We are asking God to help you react this way to His good news message, about the Kingdom. We are asking Him to give you a heart that is receptive to His message. We are asking Him to help you allow it to grow in your heart until you not only become a Christian; but you share your life successes and healing from life's problems with those around you. Ask God to give you a "good soil" heart.

1. Pray that He will help you be healed from problems with *understanding* this message about His Kingdom. Which is the condition like the harden path where people walked on it.

2. Ask Him to protect you from allowing other *people's opinions* to affect how you react to His message concerning His eternal Kingdom. Which is the condition like the area of ground where rocks were just under the surface of the ground.

3. Give Him permission to heal your heart concerning the *problems and pressures of this life* crowding out His message. Ask Him to help you stay focused on what it is going to take to be ready to enter into His Kingdom when the time comes. Let Him change your value system and help you prize eternity over money, power, prestige, and positions.

4. Pray that God will so heal your heart that you *decide* to stay with Christianity all the way to the end of your life here on earth. Ask Him to help you to be one of His best children. Pray that you would not only produce a "crop" of friends who have also become Christians; but that you would be one who produces one hundred times what was sown in your heart.

Let God deliver you from the *causes* of life's problems. They are like hardened ground, rocky ground, and weed infected ground. They are a hard, resistive heart, a heart that cares more about people's opinions that what God thinks, or a heart that is more concerned about the cares of this world than about God and His Kingdom. Let God crowd them all out of your life.

Chapter Four

The Prayer That Empowers You To Enter God's Kingdom

The Key To God's Eternal Kingdom

In Matthew (the first book of the New Testament) chapter 6, verses 9-13, Jesus tells us how to ask God for the privilege of entering His Kingdom and live there forever:

Jesus said in **Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV): <u>This, then, is how you should pray</u>: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."**

Okay now, let Jesus break this prayer down, so you can understand what it is you are asking from God, your heavenly Father. It isn't a magical set of words like "open sesame" and the doors to the Kingdom of God open to you. It is designed, so you can ask God to let you into His Kingdom. You let Him cleanse you from all spiritual disease (sin).

God wants you to understand what it is you are asking for. As you ask Him for the things in each sentence, it has to be what you *really* want for your future here and in eternity. These words *are* the requests that *must* be made, in order for you to enter God's Kingdom. But, do they represent your desires and wishes? Let Jesus take these very important words and help you see if you are willing to make them your prayer to God, your heavenly Father.

The Prayer Jesus Is Giving You To Pray

Mat 6:9-13 This, then, is how you should pray:

This prayer contains the issues and requests that you *must* pray in order to enter into God's Kingdom. There are a lot of other prayers that Christians use that work to some degree. But, Jesus gives us the best prayer we can pray. You are going to be starting off a life of talking to your heavenly Father, asking Him to heal you from all the causes of life's problems, and start asking for His help in living a new life as a new person.

If you ultimately decide to make God your heavenly Father and live the Christian life for the rest of your life, then this prayer incorporates the main requests you will continue to have on a daily basis.

Take a look at the first thing you need to pray:

Our Father in heaven,

Our

You will notice that this prayer includes others besides yourself. It starts off with "our" rather than "my." From this moment on, you will start becoming concerned with not only your problems but others as well. You will start to care about your and their problems here on earth and your and their eternal life too.

God will help you grow in your knowledge of how important it is to make Jesus your Lord and Savior. You will be learning how vital it is to allow Him to help you with your life's problems. You will see the importance of Him helping you spend eternity with Him. As you learn how important it is to enter God's Kingdom, Jesus will help you start feeling a desire for your friends to make the same decision. As God starts healing you from life's problems, and as you learn how important eternity is, you will start to see how important it is for your acquaintances. If it is that important for you, then it is that important for them.

Father in heaven

This is the place where you decide to accept God, as your heavenly Father. If you will open your heart and give Him permission to cause you to be born again, you will be His child and He will be your Father. When you call Him your heavenly Father, that is you giving Him permission to make you His child. If you are willing to be made His child, then simply call Him your heavenly Father. Just tell Him that you want Him to be your heavenly Father. He will cause you to be born for a second time, but, as His child.

This will be a spiritual birth that will take some time and study to understand. When you were born as a baby, you had a lot of things to learn. But, for now, all you have to understand is that by becoming God's child you will gain all the rights and privileges of entering into His Kingdom. *If you are willing, then go ahead and say:* **"**My **Father in heaven."** And, then include all those you want to also make Him their **heavenly Father** by saying: **"Our Father in heaven."**

Hallowed be Your name,

Hollowed

Your heavenly Father is pure. He has excluded all lying, cheating, stealing, hatred, murder, and evil from His being. He *is* love, truth, life, and the way to purity. The thing that makes His Kingdom such an awesome place to spend eternity is the quality of its God. You will soon find that God is perfect. If you allow Him to really show you the full reasons behind all of His principles and systems, you are going to be completely impressed with Who He is. But for now, all you are being asked to understand is the fact that God is honest and generous. He did what you asked.

If you say these next words, you are acknowledging that you are accepting the fact that He is going to give you things you do not deserve (grace). You are also accepting the fact that He is not going to let you be punished for the things you do deserve to be punished for (mercy). *If you can appreciate to some degree these two gifts, then say:* **"Hallowed be Your name."**

Your kingdom come,

Kingdom

Before you can enter into God's Kingdom, God's Kingdom must enter into you. That won't make a lot of sense at first. But, just be patient with the concept and it will gradually come clear. The thing to understand is, God's Kingdom is only going to be as great as the people who live there. If there are murders, thieves, cheats, liars, and bullies there, then it is going to be a lot like what we have here on earth. As you invite God's Kingdom into you, then you are agreeing to yield to His Kingdom rules, laws, and commandments. To do this, you must *be willing* to allow Him to empower you to live the right, good, and righteous way.

You *must* be set free from certain wrong, bad, and evil attitudes, thoughts, feelings, words, and deeds. To be an asset to God's Kingdom and all the people there, you need to be changed. You can't change these things in you; but Jesus can. He can get you ready for His Kingdom and eternity by putting the character and principles of His Kingdom in you.

Qualify Me For Your Kingdom

If you are *willing* to allow the character and principles of God's Kingdom to enter into your personality and emotions, then then tell Him you are. Step-by-step you are making a series of requests to your heavenly Father, God. When you say, **Your Kingdom come**, you are giving Him permission to put all the things His Kingdom stands for inside you. You are asking Him to let His Kingdom come inside you and make you into a person who is good enough, healthy enough, and clean enough to be a citizen of His Kingdom. *If you want God's Kingdom to be placed in your heart and life, then say:* **"Your Kingdom come."**

Qualify Others For Your Kingdom

By using the words "our" and "us," in this prayer, you are also asking God to bring His Kingdom into the hearts and lives of all the people on this planet. This prayer, the Lord gave us, isn't a selfish prayer; it is a prayer for you and everyone else. It is teaching you to always want everyone else to receive all the good things that happen to you.

Another thing you are praying for is that God will:
* Speed up the process of giving everyone the good news message about His Kingdom.
* Allow them to try it out.
* Give them time to make a knowledgeable decision.
* Allow them to make their final decision.
* Give everyone the eternity they have chosen to have.

For those who have chosen God and His Kingdom, they will spend eternity with God in His Kingdom. For those who have chosen to exclude God from their life here, they will spend eternity without God. That is an eternal hell. Living without God's presence is a literal hell. But, it isn't God's fault nor is it your fault that they are going to experience this. You are praying for them and God is answering your prayers and giving them all the information they need to make the right decision. *If you want God's Kingdom to come into the hearts and lives of the people in this world, then say:* **"Let Your Kingdom come into the hearts and lives of all who are willing to accept You."**

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Will

The reason there is so much suffering on earth is because people are being allowed to do what they want to. God is giving us a complete picture of what life is like, when people are free to do anything they *want*. You have been running your life with God-give freedom of *will*. You have chosen to be the way you are, the way you think, the way you talk, and do the things you do. Your will has been in charge of your life.

If you are completely satisfied with your life and the way you are running it, then you will not want to say this prayer. God's *will* is pure, fair, gracious, merciful, and sinless. If you want to *use* people for meeting your financial, sexual, physical, and emotional needs, then you won't be ready to ask God (pray) to let His will be done in your life as you live here on earth. You must be *willing* to ask Him to make these Kingdom changes in your philosophies, thoughts, feeling, words, and deeds.

This Is How To Have World Peace

People are constantly talking about world peace. They wear peace symbols on their clothes and as jewelry. And, they talk about having a peaceful society; but, they don't do what it takes to have peace.

Many of them want peace to come to them but don't want to do what it takes to allow peace to flow out of them to others.

They want to continue to exercise their free will. But, they want you to limit your behavior, so they can have peace around them. None of us want to be the only one who is being peaceful, loving, and kind, while being mistreated by everyone else. If you ask God to put His will in your life, you are going to need to ask Him to also do His will in the lives of the rest of the people on this planet. They need what you are getting.

Right now, at this moment, heaven is in perfect harmony and peace, while being one of the most exciting places in existence. If God's will starts being done on earth just like it is currently being done in heaven, true peace, harmony, and love will come into this world. How is that going to happen? One person at a time.

The Bible makes it clear that everyone isn't going to allow God's will to be done in their lives. But, many will. The more people become Christians, the more God's will, will be done on earth as it is being done in heaven. *If this is what you want for you and the people of this earth, then say these words:* **"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."**

Chapter Five

Give us today our daily bread.

Daily Bread

Sometimes we do things we are not proud of, as we try to get our daily needs met. We can spend every waking moment trying to make sure all our needs are fulfilled. Life can become a rat race, as we labor to make enough money to pay the bills. Those who haven't allowed God to be their heavenly Father are responsible for all their needs. If they are going to get anything, it must come through their own efforts. There aren't enough hours in a day for them to reach their goals. Even those who are rich, are driven by deep desires for more. They can't hoard enough things to make them happy; and they can't spend enough money to satisfy the craving.

Everyone Is Hunting For Joy And Happiness.

Different people pursue joy and happiness in different ways. But everyone wants to be happy. If you choose to pray this portion of this prayer, you will be asking God to start directing you into His system for getting your needs met. If you are willing to give Him permission, He will place joy and happiness in you, so you will be happy no matter what is going on in your life and the world around you. You will have what everyone is seeking without having to pursue it. From that moment on you will be getting your needs met; and it won't be because you are trying to get them met so you can be happy.

God will help you get your needs met and will bless and prosper you. However, you will already be filled with joy and happiness independent of all those blessings. *If you are willing to start letting God influence you as to which job you will take, what positions you will accept, and how much time you will spend working, then pray these words:* **"Give us today our daily bread."**

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

I try not to hurt people

You, like all the rest of us humans, have done things that have hurt people. In some cases, you didn't mean to, in others you did. There have been times when you couldn't identify with other's situations and you said and did things that damaged them. There have been times, when you were insensitive to their needs and problems. They tried to reach out to you and you couldn't or wouldn't help. God calls this behavior sin.

The thing is, everyone has contracted the spiritual disease of sin. We hurt people because we are damaged ourselves. God understands that we can't help ourselves. He knows we are going to continue to hurt people because we have all contracted the spiritual disease of sin. He knows that, if left alone untreated, sin is going to keep on making us worse. No matter how hard we try, we are going to mistreat ourselves and more and more people.

What Upsets God?

God isn't upset with the fact that we sin. The Bible says that He responded to our condition with love. At a time when we were all infected with this sin disease, He demonstrated His love for us by dying for our sins. Let this Scripture speak to your heart concerning the deeds you have committed against yourself and others.

1 John 4:9-10 This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world <u>that we might live through Him</u>. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an <u>atoning sacrifice for our sins</u>.

God says pretty much the same thing in the book of Romans.

Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were <u>still sinners</u>, Christ died for us.

God isn't going to judge anyone because they are a sinner; He is going to judge them because they have a way of being set free from sinning against themselves and all the people around them and they won't accept the cure. By praying this prayer that Jesus provided, you are accepting the cure.

Forgive

As we also have forgiven our debtors: With the principle of forgiveness, you are facing two issues:

- First, you are asking God to forgive you for all the bad things you have done to yourself and others, whether you did them on purpose or accidently.

- Second, you are being asked to forgive all those who have hurt you.

If you have problems with being willing to forgive *all* those who have hurt you, then spend some time asking God to help you forgive them. Jesus will be showing you more Scriptures that follow this prayer, as He tells you how important it is to forgive all who have hurt you.

Debts

This word is being used to describe all the things that you have done to hurt people and all the things people have done to hurt you. It is also talking about all the money and things people owe you that they aren't able to repay. If you pray the words "Forgive us our debts," God will forgive you of all your past, present, and future sins.

Every bad thing you have ever done against yourself and those around you *will* be forgiven by God, if you ask Him to with these words. The main requirement, however, is that you do the same for those who have sinned against you. Some people have said things to you that they should apologize for. In other words, they *owe* you an apology. Others *owe* you money or things they have taken or borrowed from you. If they can pay you back, let them. If they can't, forgive the debt. If they can apologize for all the bad things they have done to you, let them. If they can't or won't, forgive them anyway. Why?

We Owed A Big Debt

Jesus had to give His life in order for you to be able to be forgiven of your debt. If there had been any other way, God would have done it and protected His Son. But, there was no other way. With our little brains we may think we could have found some other way. We might think that we didn't need this sacrificial death. But, if God, Who knows everything, decided there was no other way for our spiritual disease to be cured, then I believe there was no other way. Since Jesus paid such a heavy price for you to be forgiven, He is asking you to forgive others of the debt they have created with you. If you need more time praying for the strength and desire to forgive others, then take your time. **If you are ready, then go ahead and pray this portion of the prayer. Say: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."**

Chapter Six

And lead us not into temptation,

Lead

Here we are asking God to take leadership in our life; and we are asking Him to not lead us into things that would cause us to sin. Since God is a good God, why would we need to ask Him to not lead us in the direction of temptation? There are two ways for people to learn life lessons. The best way is for us to give God permission to teach us the things we need to know without us having to learn the hard way. But, some of us are pretty hard headed. We have to learn some things by going out and committing sins and paying the consequences.

We Must Be Able To Be Lead

Jesus wants us to be teachable, so He can just tell us things. He wants you to ask for the power to get His new training information into your life. But, some just can't learn things the easy way. God is committed to honoring your decisions and to maintain your God-given free will. So, He lets us be led into tough situations, where the temptations to do wrong are strong. God will never tempt us to sin. However, He will allow us to go our own way for a time. During that time we will experience what it is like to start running our own life again. It helps us see how important it is to allow God to do His will in our earthly life like it is done in heaven.

Stay Away From The Source

Let Jesus show you an example: God wants to completely deliver you from life's problems. If He provides you with the principles and the power to stay away from certain things that are the root causes of life's problems, but, you decide to go ahead and involve yourself in them, you are doing it on purpose. You know better; but instead of praying and asking God to help you make the right decision, you go ahead on your own strength and expose yourself to things that bring life's problems back into your life.

Do You Really Want To Go There?

Because of your stubbornness, you are allowed, by God, to experience new temptations to be involved in struggles with life's problems. God would rather that you just learn how to avoid these temptations through prayer. But, since you *chose* to learn this lesson the hard way, God's leadership allows you to enter into temptation.

The thing to keep in mind is, you could have prayed and asked God to "lead us not into temptation." And, He would have protected you. This request will always be available for you to use. But, it must be used on a case-by-case basis. When you find yourself being faced with the opportunity to get involved in things that cause you to go back to having issues with life's problems, pray this prayer and it will save you a lot of pain.

Temptation

The temptation to do the wrong or evil thing is strong inside us. Addictive pleasure comes our way, when we yield to temptation. We get pleasure from simple things such as talking about someone or bawling them out. It is hard to explain why we get pleasure out of hurting people's reputations or feelings. But, it can be traced back to the spiritual disease of sin. The sin disease pushes us toward making ourselves look good at other's expense.

Other sins involve us hurting ourselves. Drug and alcohol abuse tears away at our body and brain. Why we would sin against our body and hurt our own life is quite a puzzle. We need this prayer to help keep us from hurting ourselves and others. *If you are ready to be set free from yielding to these and other temptations to hurt yourself and those around you, then pray this portion of this prayer. Say:* **"Lead us not into temptation."**

But deliver us from the evil one.

Satan

Most of the pressure you are experiencing to do bad, unloving things to yourself and the people around you, comes from the evil one, Satan. Not only that, most of the bad things that happen to you come from him. The bad "luck," difficult circumstances, and temptations to sin typically come from him. This is usually an easy portion of the prayer to pray. Most of us want to be delivered from the evil one. *If this is your heart's desire, then go ahead and pray this portion of the prayer. Say:* **"Deliver us from the evil one."**

When you pray to be delivered from the evil one, you are asking God to not only deliver you but to deliver all the other people on earth from him. Because you prayed: **"Deliver us from the evil one,"** you are including them in on your prayer. This always keeps you from praying this prayer selfishly. It helps you pray for you and also pray for everyone else. If they will receive God's answer to your prayer, their life will become as meaningful and blessed as yours will become.

Chapter Seven

You Are Now Ready To Start Trying Christianity Out

Congratulations! You have just asked your heavenly Father to make you a citizen in His Kingdom. He is now ready to start answering your prayers, as you begin your life as a Christian. This will be a time for you to try it all out and see if you want to become a permanent member of His Kingdom.

We and Jesus are committed to helping you experience all the blessings and provisions of God. The main problems you will run into have been covered in the four reactions people have to God's good news about His Kingdom. If you need to go back there and read over them again, it might be a good idea. If you run into other problems, Jesus will be providing you vital resources on this website. Follow the guidelines provided for getting the help you need.

They Don't Deserve To Be Forgiven

One big issue is covered by Jesus right after the prayer He gave you to pray. He is saying that our forgiving others is mandatory to the forgiveness our heavenly Father provided us. To be a permanent Christian, sealed by His Spirit, and secure in His protection and love is going to require that we forgive everyone. First, you need to forgive those in your past who have hurt you. Second, you need to continue to forgive all who hurt you from now on.

You Can Help Me Do The Impossible

If you have *any* problems in the forgiveness area, do not neglect them. You cannot be forgiven without forgiving everyone past, present, and future. But, don't let this frighten you. Just keep asking for your heavenly Father's help with your attitudes. He knows this can be very hard for you. He isn't asking you to forgive without receiving His power-forgiveness. This is something you need to constantly be praying about. Don't stop asking, each day, until you have complete victory in this matter. Here is the main issue you need to start praying about.

Mat 6:14-16 For *if you forgive men* when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But *if you do not forgive men their sins*, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Once again, if you have any problems forgiving someone, stay in prayer with God, each day, until you get the power from Him to forgive them. This is one thing that is really important to God. This issue isn't optional. Your relationship with your heavenly Father is based on this attitude. Keep praying everyday about it until you get the victory over all lack of forgiveness.

What's Next?

You now have the power and permission, from God, to start living your new Christian life. You are now a Christian with all the rights and privileges of a child in God's family and a citizen in His Kingdom. The Lord's prayer *caused* you to be born again. Jesus is now going to take you into the two things you need to start doing in order to begin living the Christian life. God has opened your spiritual eyes and empowered your mouth, so you can start doing those things Christians do. This is because they are excited about their new life. Here are the two things you now have power to do, as your beginning steps inside Christianity.

1. **You must tell others that Jesus is your lord.**
2. **You must believe that God raised Jesus from the dead.**

These two things couldn't be required of you, until you prayed the prayer the Lord gave all of us to pray. That prayer put some powerful equipment in your heart and life. You may not feel any of it; but it is there. The first requirement comes from your mouth. You must start telling your friends, relatives, and associates that you have accepted Jesus as your *Lord*. Ask God to help you to be proud to be a Christian. Ask Him to help you never be ashamed of the fact that Jesus is your Lord. Here is what the Bible says about the process of being saved, born again, and being a Christian.

Rom 10:8-13 But what does it say? "<u>The word is near you</u>; it is in your *mouth* and in your *heart*," <u>that is, the word of faith</u> we are proclaiming: That

1. **If you confess with your *mouth*, "Jesus is Lord," and**
2. **Believe in your *heart* that God raised Him from the dead, you *will* be saved.**

For

1. **It is with your *heart* that you believe <u>and are justified</u>, and**
2. **It is with your *mouth* that you confess <u>and are saved</u>.**

As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame." For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses <u>all who call on Him</u>, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord *will* be saved."

Chapter Eight

How To Believe That God Raised Jesus From The Dead

It is impossible to be a Christian, if you don't believe that God raised Jesus from the dead. All of your power and success in the Christian life is going to come through Jesus. Your ability to resist the difficulties with life's problems, all your hope for eternal life, and your citizenship in the Kingdom of God is based on life after death. If God didn't raise Jesus from the dead, then you have no reason whatsoever to believe that you will be raised from the dead. You can't call on a dead God.

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. That means that when you call on Him, He will answer you and empower you to live the life of a citizen of God's Kingdom. Later it will be easy for you to know that Jesus has been raised from the dead. You will experience all kinds of miracles from Him that will *prove* His being alive. But for now you just need to consider a few truths about humans.

Our Spirit Can't Die

We are all going to live forever *somewhere*. Our bodies die; but the spirit person, that is the real you, is going to keep on living. Jesus never ceased to exist. Even though His body died on a cross, He, as a Spirit being, continued to live. You can't kill a spirit. All you are being asked to believe, is that the Father put Jesus' Spirit back in His body. You aren't being asked to believe that Jesus ceased to exist and the Father made Him exist again. Can you believe that God raised Jesus from the dead?

Can you believe that after Jesus' body was killed, God was able to bring it back to life by putting Jesus' Spirit back in it?

For us who now believe that God can do anything, it is an easy concept to believe. Mature Christians have not needed to consider that issue for a long time. They have experienced so many miracles and have had such an intimate, close relationship with Jesus that they *know* He is alive and doing His powerful work among us. But, for you to eventually become a permanent Christian, you have to confess with your mouth that Jesus is your Lord; and you have to believe that God raised Jesus from the dead in order for you to be saved for eternity.

The main issue is that you don't give up, if you find yourself struggling with this concept. Jesus will be helping you to keep growing spiritually, so you will be able to experience miracles in your issues with life's problems. As you experience these miracles, you will grow in your knowledge that Jesus is alive because God raised Him from the dead. You will soon *know* for a fact that Jesus is your living Savior and is hearing and answering your prayers.

Conclusion

Spiritual growth classes have been prepared for you that will use the power you now have through salvation (your new life) and help you be healed from life's problems. In **wctlc.com** you will find powerful help to assist you in your journey into a life of victory here and into eternal life in God's eternal Kingdom. We are praying for you that these Spiritual Growth studies will bless and strengthen you and help you totally commit your life to God.

A Prayer For You To Always Pray For Yourself And Others

Jesus' people are praying Ephesians 1:17-23 for you. It contains such vital requests before God that it has been converted into a prayer for you and those around you. As others pray it for you, please join them by praying this modified prayer for yourself and your friends.

I *keep asking* that the God of my Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may *give me* the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, *so that* I may know Him better.

I pray also that the eyes of my heart may be enlightened *in order that* I may know the hope to which He has called me, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and His incomparably great power for me, who believes. Jesus, help me see, know, and understand the hope, the riches, and this power.

That power is like the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him Who fills everything in every way. Jesus, I ask that I would receive a full revelation and vision into all this power that is available to me; and, I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

It would be good for you to pray this prayer for yourself and those around you regularly.