

# EXCERPTS FROM

JULY - SEPT 1991

# THE LINK

North Road Chapel (Evangelical)

BIDEFORD

## Internet Edition

AFTER THIS MANNER....PRAY YE  
(A Study in the Lord's Prayer)  
PART 15

This article brings us to the final section of the wonderful prayer given by Christ to His disciples as a pattern around which they should mould their prayers. What lessons have been set out, what an area covered! In this concluding article a brief re-cap might be helpful.

First the preface was considered - "OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN." God's eternal Being, and our link of relationship with Him through grace, which immediately indicates that only God's true children can pray after this manner. His dwelling place - heaven. The One that inhabiteth eternity, Who sits upon the throne of the universe - supreme.

Following the preface came the petitions - seven in all, the first three GODward, the remaining four MANward. In this was seen a resemblance to the tables of stone. The HALLOWING of God's name and the holding of His Person in reverence. "THY KINGDOM COME" a fervent desire, first for the establishing of the kingdom of grace in the heart with the resultant longing for the ultimate kingdom of glory. "THY WILL BE DONE." To the revealed will of God His children are to be obedient, and to His secret will submissive.

Then came the MANward section. "GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD." In all our material needs, and for the supply of them, we are not to look to secondary causes but to the prime cause - "the Father of lights." The next petition concerned the FORGIVENESS OF SINS, that enormous debt, both original and actual sin, all wondrously forgiven through grace, for Christ's sake. We in turn are to forgive others. Not that we can equal God in this, nevertheless we are to imitate Him, being willing and ready to always put matters right with our fellows.

The last two petitions brought us face to face with the great adversary and to his subtle and malicious attacks, and how we should ever pray "LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION," that is, be kept from areas which are

particularly dangerous. "DELIVER US FROM EVIL." This should ever be our great concern, Christ has called us to holiness. He wants us unspotted from the world. This summarizes the ground which has been covered.

After having given such a wealth of instruction in petition our blessed Lord concludes with a glorious doxology. "FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER. AMEN." From this we are to learn that petition and praise must always go together.

In this doxology there is an inseparable link with all that has gone before. The making mention of the eternal power and majesty at the end is as a plea for the granting of all that has been asked. It is as if the one praying concludes by saying, "Thou, O Father, hast the POWER to do all this." The Apostle Paul is seen to end his prayer precisely after this manner in Ephesians 3:20-21. "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

By this we learn that not only has God the power, He is also unchanging, His perfections are for ever and ever. The God of heaven is immutable. "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mai.3:6).

When the child of God comes before his heavenly Father relating and rehearsing God's holy perfections, and extolling His "fearful and glorious Name", that Christian is engaging in worship of the highest order, and it is an exercise which we should all cultivate. The Scriptures abound with examples of such ascriptions of worship; two of the most glorious are to be found in Paul's letters to Timothy.

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Tim.1:17).

"...The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; Whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to Whom be honour and power everlasting, Amen" (1 Tim.6:15). Are not these majestic words uttered

by the Apostle a perfect example of a man moulding his prayer and worship according to the pattern set out by his Lord and Master?

We who by virtue of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit, have the kingdom of grace set up in our hearts. The kingdom of God is within us now. Through sovereign grace we form part of a kingdom which cannot be moved (cf. Heb.12:28). "Our conversation (or citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil.3:20). When He comes we shall be immediately transported into the kingdom of glory, a kingdom prepared for us from before the foundation of the world (cf. Matt.25:34). This is an everlasting kingdom, but who is responsible for it? Who has commenced this good work, and who will complete it? It is the KING ETERNAL Himself. We are never to forget this in our praying. When ye pray, say "Thine is the kingdom", we are ever to acknowledge this in God's presence and magnify Him for His grace.

In this model prayer our Lord teaches us to come to God as our Father; this is how the prayer commences, and we are to come to Him in this intimate way in full assurance of faith. Nevertheless we are also taught by Christ that we must never forget that He is still the invisible God, "He dwelleth in light unapproachable." When ye pray, say "Our Father which art in heaven." He dwells in eternal light. Human eyes would be blinded by His transparent brilliance. Deity dwells in unapproachable splendour. Daniel said: "The light dwelleth with Him" (Dan.2:22). "God is light" (1 John 1:5) as Paul prayed he spoke of this majesty; in his communion he said - "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see."

Moses desired to see the intrinsic glory of the eternal God, but God said to him: "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And He said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see Me and live" (Ex.33:19,20). "No man hath

seen God at any time" (1 John 4:12). The world is full of Him, the entire universe exhibits Him. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork" (Psa.19:1). But this is not to see God - only do we see what He hath wrought. All creation gives us the evidence THAT God is, but it does not reveal WHAT God is. The fulness of His glory and Person will never be fully known by His creatures, for He is limitless. Even in the kingdom of glory which awaits us we shall not fully comprehend Deity. As endless ages roll on so might our appreciation increase yet never shall we come to an end of our discoveries of the greatness and power of God, for "His greatness is unsearchable" (Psa.145:3). When ye pray let it be after this manner says Christ; ever be mindful of His greatness, and express it before Him. Remember, too, that God is for ever and ever. This thought also was picked up by the Apostle in his doxology: "Who only hath immortality." Immortality means deathlessness. The Triune God alone is immortal, and this is because He is impeccable - that is, unable to sin. "God cannot be tempted with evil" (James 1:13), it is an absolute impossibility. Mortality and death is on account of sin, therefore because God is impeccable - entirely incapable of sinning He is deathless, eternally so. This is why He is so frequently referred to in Scripture as the living God, He is deathless. 'With Him is the fountain of life' (cf.Psa.36:9). 'He is life in Himself' (cf. John 5:26) that is by essence - not something imparted to Him. God only has immortality in this sense.

True it is that sinless angels are immortal; resurrected saints will all put on immortality at the last day, but that immortal life is derived from God and bestowed by Him. He alone is the fountain of it.

If we pray after this manner and are truly in the spirit, our thoughts will soar far beyond earth, indeed we should be in the heavenly places in very truth. The abounding life and future immortality will so attract us that spontaneously shall we cry out "THY KINGDOM COME." The effect of true worship will ever be that of drawing us nearer to God, and creating a greater longing for heaven.

Worship is that for which God looks the most from His children, indeed Christ said 'He seeketh it'(cf. John 4:23). That sincere veneration of the heart which exalts Him is that for which God waits.

Worship includes prayer, praise, service, thanksgiving and adoration. Whilst there are similarities yet are there differences. For example, praise comes easier than does adoration. An illustration of the difference between praise, thanksgiving and adoration can be seen in the marriage relationship.

The marriage relationship is the most sacred and wonderful union which man can know upon earth; God intended that it should be, for its very institution was to set forth the intimate bond between Christ and His Church. So the analogy now to be drawn is entirely Scriptural. A wife may thank her husband for his care, his provision, his protection, and all his concern for her. Indeed she might on occasions speak in high praise to others of her husband's consideration and unflinching love. That is PRAISE. But that is all pertaining to what the husband has DONE and continues to do for his wife. Certainly a very commendable attitude, indeed right; for no wife or husband should ever take these things for granted within the marriage relationship, or fail to give each other thanks and express constant appreciation. Nevertheless if a marriage partnership does not go further than this it is far more cold and formal than God intended it to be. In the privacy of the home there are to be moments of tender affection when they tell each other of their abiding love. When they not only say 'thank you', but as the husband expresses his love to the wife, she responds by telling him, that to her, HE is wonderful, that he is SUPREME above all others. Her very life is entwined with him, she deeply loves and reverences his PERSON. How different is this from thanksgiving and praise.

This illustrates worship at its highest. This is that which the Father seeks - ADORATION - and it is an aspect which should never be missing in our prayer and communion with God for it is included in the pattern given to us by

Christ.

This aspect has very great relevance to the Lord's Supper. Here we should be concerned with the PERSON of our Lord rather than the blessings which have come to us through Him. Whilst we might well give thanks for all the benefits which we in Christ possess; and praise Him for all that He has done, but if our spirits rise no higher than this, then the ordinance has not been to us that which Christ intended. We are to come much nearer to Him than to just give thanks. In Biblical language we are to tell Him: "My Beloved is mine, and I am His" (Song.2:16). 'He is the chiefest of ten thousand' (cf. Song 5:10). "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power" (Rev.4:11). "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev.5:12). 'Thou art the blessed and only Potentate the King of kings, and Lord of lords' (cf. 1 Tim.6:15). Thou art the "King eternal" unto thee be honour and glory for ever and ever.

This is how WORSHIP is to be comprehended, for this is according to the pattern given us by the Great Head of the Church Himself when He said, Pray after this manner, saying: "THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOREVER. AMEN."

W.H.Molland

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#### EVANGELICALISM

This is a theological term which is fast losing its meaning and needs re-defining and emphasis. Evangelicalism is the belief in the full inspiration and infallibility of Holy Scripture, and its supreme authority and sufficiency concerning doctrine, salvation, and holy living. Evangelicalism is the acceptance of all the counsel of God. It has nothing to do with a freer form of worship, but everything to do with the reverent worship of God in spirit and in truth, and an entire absence of ritual, gimmicks or any extra-Biblical practices. There are many today who claim to be evangelistic but in no way should they be recognised as evangelical.

FESTAL DAYS AND THE LAW OF GOD  
PART 6

Is the celebration of Festal Days such as Christmas and Easter a violation of the law of God?

In these articles we are now coming to the heart of this matter of Babylonish religion. Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord (dealt with in Part 5) established a religious kingdom. His name means REBEL. He renounced allegiance to God, and resisted established law. Issuing from this false religious system are many gods and goddesses whose names are familiar throughout history, many of whom are mentioned in Holy Scripture. Among them is ASHTORETH the mystery goddess identified with the planet VENUS. She is the goddess of sex, sensual love, and fertility, and is also spoken of as the queen of heaven. BELTIS, ASTARTE, ISHTAR, and EASTER are all one and the same; the term used depending upon what language one speaks.

Attention has already been drawn in previous sections to passages of Scripture referring to the ancient Babylonish worship of the queen of heaven with father, mother, and children all engaged in frenzied activity to celebrate this mystery queen with cakes, drinks, and goodies. This pagan ritual over the generations gradually infiltrated into the ranks of God's people and eventually became so entrenched that they saw nothing wrong in it, although it was clearly blatant IDOLATRY (cf. Jer.44:17-25). So blind had Judah become, and so infatuated with the celebration that they "saw no evil" (verse 17) and they defiantly affirmed their intention of continuing by saying: "We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out our drink offerings unto her"(verse 25).

Not only do the Scriptures make mention of heathen deities with which His ancient people had become contaminated, but also many references are made to "high places", "groves" and "green trees" (cf Deut.12:1-2; 1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 17:10; 2 Chron. 28:1&4; Jer.3:6). All this was a part of Babylonish worship and idolatry,



and these observances were in great prominence during the days of the Old Testament prophets. People living at that time would have been fully acquainted with all the detail and paraphernalia of such celebrations; we, some several thousand years later and living in another part of the world are not so familiar. Nevertheless as the Scriptures stated, Nimrod would become great in the earth, so great that all nations without exception would become affected by this Babylonish worship. Although Britain over the centuries has been by tradition (nominally at least) Christian - in contrast to say Moslem or Buddhist beliefs, in no way can she claim to be free from or unidentified with this pagan idolatry. The trappings and remnants of BAAL and ASHTORETH are all around us today. They are in the Churches and Chapels of almost every denomination, and alas in the homes of men and women who profess the name of Christ. Sadly these folk do not realise it, and sadder still if one endeavours to tell them they will not believe it. In fact they will quickly reply - "That is your opinion" and one is immediately branded as extreme and eccentric.

At this point more detail must be brought in concerning the actual festival of Christmas, what does it really mean? We take the word itself first - CHRIST - MASS. The word Christ may well be understood by us, but do we appreciate what the word MASS means?

The mass is a blasphemous custom practised by the Romanist. When a Romanist priest consecrates the wafer and cup, he is supposedly crucifying Christ afresh, and the elements then become the ACTUAL and LITERAL body and blood of Christ. A person partaking of the wafer is said to actually partake of the flesh of Christ having within him the Person of Christ; the wafer having saving value, whether the person is living or dying in sin. Ask a practising Romanist if he has received Christ, and he will say yes, I partook of the mass last Sunday morning. That is not Scriptural we say, it does not line up with the Bible - no it does not! But where did it come from - did the Romanist invent it? The answer is, Rome did not invent it, she only adopted and modified it.

The principles of the mass go right back to BAAL, ASHTORETH, THE SUN GOD, and THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN. The offering of unbloody sacrifices were deemed to be acceptable to this female goddess as has been seen from the writings of Jeremiah 600 years B.C. concerning the cake and drink offerings. That would be well nigh 1,000 years before the Romanist Church existed. It was to the queen of heaven - the supposed mother god that these offerings were made. This is the source of Rome's adoration of Mary. The mass in origin is rank heathenism. They may say in these days of ecumenical fervour that the Lord's Supper is akin to their mass, in NO WAY is this the case. The two are totally different in origin, meaning, and practice, yet Christ has been put into the idolatrous and blasphemous mass. In the pagan festival of December Christ and the mass have been joined. So-called Christianity and Babylonianism have been brought together and the term coined for the unholy alliance is CHRISTMAS, and a festal season has been brought into Christianity to celebrate this blasphemous union. In this, with but very few exceptions, all Christians are guilty before God. It is an appalling state of affairs; ask almost any Christian man or woman - What is Christmas? The reply will be, a day set apart in honour of the birth of Christ. Ask the further question - Where are we commanded to set aside a day for this, what Biblical authority have we for such a festival? The strange silence which follows will invariably be broken by such words as - 'well I think it is a good idea, it is an old tradition, it does remind people in some sort of way that God's Son came into this world. What is more it is a happy festive time, it does keep the family together, it gives the children a good time etc. etc.'

It is indeed a sad reflection upon Christianity if Christians have to resort to a Babylonish festival to remind them of the incarnation of the Son of God. Further, is a day which has its origin in heathen idolatry necessary to keep our families together? Are there not an abundance of national holidays when families can assemble? The interest and happiness of the children should ever be

the concern of their parents, but let no Christian parent think that God is well pleased with their deception and over indulgence to their children during the weeks of December, when ridiculous amounts of money are often spent; this latter feature in itself being a very bad example to the children.

These articles are written with a heavy heart and with a tremendous feeling of guilt on the part of the writer who up to recent years himself celebrated these festivals and gave recognition to them in the pulpit. This has been confessed before God, and publicly before the people, for it was wrong, grossly wrong, yea blasphemously wrong. God in His mercy forgives, nevertheless the past influence which one has had upon others cannot be remedied. None who are aware of the idolatrous nature of these festivals should continue or even play upon the fringe. This is a black and white situation, there is no half way house. Festal Days should have no place among God's true children.

Does Derby day mean anything to us as Christians? Of course not we say, that is horse racing - it is of the world. But supposing Christianity was in some foolish way incorporated into the Derby, and it was made a national holiday and celebrated by Christendom, then should we all join in? Certainly not we reply. Then WHY should a HEATHEN FESTIVAL DAY which has been so-called Christianized in such a grotesque and bizarre manner be so special to Christians? This may be somewhat hypothetical, nevertheless it is fair reasoning.

How is it that we have been so naive, for no one ever has, or ever can, prove that Christmas or Easter is Christian? Neither will anyone who has any knowledge at all, ever challenge the fact that these days are TOTALLY PAGAN in origin.

Consult any religious directory, expanded dictionary, or encyclopaedia and the plain facts are stated that these festivals are pagan and have their roots in heathendom. Alexander Hislop's book 'THE TWO BABYLONS' is recognised as being the classic work on the subject, it has been reprinted eight to ten times, it is a mine of information

on the subject and circulated in many countries. Never on any point has this great work been refuted. The question must be asked in view of all the evidence, Biblical, historical and secular, WHY THE IGNORANCE? Can the true believer hide behind the screen of 'I DID NOT KNOW!' The writer speaks to his own heart in this, as he addresses the reader, WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN. The very fact that the world falls hook, line and sinker for Christmas should be sufficient to alert any discerning Christian that it is not of God, for the unregenerate never seek the things which be of Him - never! Do they rush and strive to keep the Sabbath, the one day which God does require men to observe? Do they flock to hear God's Word preached? They certainly do not, they will not come near; yet they ALL will join in and sing carols at Christmas. What a mockery of the Almighty God!

But, some argue, we were brought up this way, our parents and our grandparents made much of it. Exactly! At this point reference must again be made to the second commandment - "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me" (Ex.20:4,5).

In previous sections of this study it has been established what an image is - a principle or practice carved out of man's mind. An imaginative EXTRA in the worship of God. That is INIQUITY, and any such iniquity carved out, or invented and practiced by the fathers WILL BE visited upon the children. Succeeding generations will follow the tradition and pattern set by their forbears.

Young people are also addressed in this, for children can understand what is here stated as well as their parents, it is as clear as daylight if only it is faced honestly. Then take your stand you younger ones, and if challenged boldly say in your school and amongst your friends - "THIS IS PAGAN it is breaking GOD'S LAW, these

trappings are all a part of heathen worship, they have nothing to do with Christianity, I refuse to be a party to it and so be guilty of perpetuating this grievous thing and passing it on to yet another generation." Do not be like the children of Judah who said: "But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil" (Jer.44:17). Dare any who now have had light given to them still say: "But we will certainly do whatsoever our fathers have done"?

The minister of the lively oracles of Truth has to be faithful to God and not hedge; these practices are to be relinquished, not partially but utterly, for they are idolatrous. Dare we continue and so carry the responsibility to the judgment day by giving CONTINUITY of iniquity to succeeding generations? God holds us responsible for the perpetuity of His law, and to check any departure therefrom. Necessity is laid upon the minister in this matter to state boldly, for the subject is nothing less than Babylonish idolatry.

The Church of Jesus Christ is NOT to copy the heathen, neither are individual Christians or families to identify with pagan practices. "Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the Lord your God" (Lev.18:4). God is the great Lawgiver, we take our commands from Him. His rulings and ordinances are not to be amended by men. Christians are not to incorporate into their worship, or yet their homes, any of the customs or manners of the heathen. In this there is no question of Christian liberty. For a Christian to speak of liberty of conscience on such matters as are before us, is to completely destroy the authoritative mandate of the Almighty God. Yet are God's children heard to say, 'I know that Christmas is pagan in origin, but it is not pagan to me!' 'Christmas is what you make it.' 'I keep CHRIST central in Christmas.' Not one of these statements

is valid or will stand a Biblical examination. Basically such statements are but excuses, because Christians do not want to be counted fools for Christ's sake. What these folk are trying to imply is that they will celebrate Christmas, but will do it right. If Christ be put into the setting of an idolatrous pagan festival how can it be celebrated in the right way? The God of heaven will NOT be placed within the trappings of heathendom. Putting Christ into Christmas may sound very pious to the unenlightened, but to any who know the Word of God, to put Christ at the centre of Babylonish idolatry is a most blasphemous thing. Christ has NO PLACE in these festivals. "Thou shalt not do so....What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deut.12:31,32). This is a categorical word from the Almighty, not to BRING IN any outside innovations, or LEAVE OUT any fraction of His holy commandments.

This is no easy path, and to stand against such deeply entrenched traditions may well present problems. There is the scorn of the world, the pressures from relatives, the misunderstanding of friends, the unbiblical liberty of the professing Church, but God's help and strength is always sufficient for any and every situation. However we have FIRST to determine in our minds that by His grace we will be obedient and THEN God manifests His power and undertaking. To such He says: "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight" (Isa.45:2). But never can such a promise apply to those who have a foot in two camps.

To be continued

W.H.Molland

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Extract from 'YOUTH-ISM AND THE CHURCHES' by W.J.Seaton

"He who touches the youth and children of evangelicalism touches the apple of the eye." Nevertheless, we feel that after almost thirty years of "youthism" in the churches, it is high time that the Lord's people began to face up to reality, and, above all things turn back to the Word of God which they are so keen to tell people they believe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION  
ANNUAL BIBLE CONVENTION

SATURDAY 20 JULY 1991 D.V.

3.30 pm AFTERNOON SERVICE  
5.00 pm TEA  
6.00 pm EVENING SERVICE

SPEAKER: MR.D.G.MILLAR (WOLVERHAMPTON)

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The 'DRIVE-IN' Church Services will commence D.V. on Lord's Day 14 July at 6.30 pm and will continue up to, and including, 1 September.

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Our sister Mrs Elsie Smith, who has been incapacitated and living in a Residential Home for a number of years, was called into the presence of her Lord early in April at the age of 93 years. Due to the kindness of her friends and brethren in the fellowship she was regularly at the services, and was even present both morning and evening two days before she died. A good representation of relatives and friends assembled for her funeral on 11 April 1991.

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On Friday 14 June, in her 35th year, our Lord called Home our dear sister, Mrs. Margaret Wort. This followed a very distressing illness during which our sister was given an unwavering faith in her Lord and Saviour. Her calmness of spirit and tranquillity of heart was most marked and evident to all those who visited her. The Church at North Road has lost a most gracious and faithful member.

Her husband, Mr. David Wort (Deacon), Samuel aged 5 years and Matthew aged 3 years have been bereaved of a godly and devoted wife and mother. To them, the members of North Road Chapel extend love and Christian affection, and by our prayers and practical help we shall endeavour to support in every way in the days which lie ahead.

We also assure the wider family circle of our sympathy and prayerful concern in this time of great sorrow.

"What is your life?

It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." James 4:14