

Dave's Laptop

December 2, 2014

Without going over last Sunday's sermon altogether, my final four suggestions for "A Different Kind of CHRISTmas" were these:

- 1. Give generously to causes that Jesus cares about.** For example, **I encourage you to give no less to missions this month than you will spend on the person on whom you spend the most money for Christmas—including yourself.** Give to Global Missions through the Baptist World Alliance. Give to the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions through the Southern Baptist Convention. Give to the CBF Well Project for Ghana. Give to Help End Homelessness Howard County. Give to Mark Wakefield's Youth Ranch in Guatemala. *(And remember that according to the Bible, such gifts are to be over and above the tithe.)* **Whose birthday is it, anyway?**
- 2. Do your primary giving to family members on their birthdays, not at Christmas.** Focus your family's Advent experiences more on spiritual things than on consumerism and on toys and gadgets and clothes that will break, won't work, or won't fit.
- 3. Ask yourself whether your Christmas customs and behaviors are heart-felt or custom-driven, and then dump the things that are not genuine expressions of love.** Don't let the world—or other family members—squeeze your family into its or their own molds. Listen to your heart and follow your joy. You'll be glad you did!
- 4. Plan significant amounts of non-stressed, special time with people you love this month.** To paraphrase Jesus, "Christmas was made to benefit people, and not people to benefit Christmas" (Mark 2:27). At the end of their lives, nobody wants more stuff, but everybody wishes they'd spent more time with the people they love. We can fix that, and we can fix it *now!*

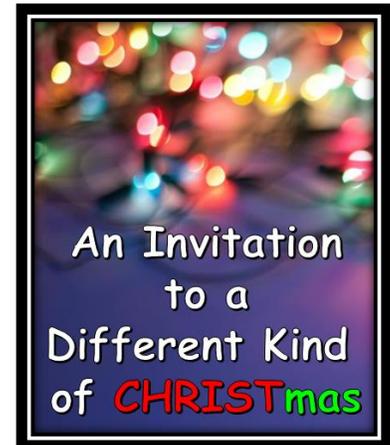
I want to follow up on the first point by giving you more information about the missions giving options I mentioned there.

Give to Global Missions through the Baptist World Alliance.

The BWA is CBF's primary ministry connection at the global level. A network of 173,000 churches in 121 countries, the BWA is truly global, just as CBF is. The BWA focuses on missions and evangelism, worship, religious freedom, human rights, theological reflection, and disaster response. You can give through CBF by marking your missions offering for the BWA, or you can give directly at <http://bwanet.org/give>.

Give to the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions through the Southern Baptist Convention.

CBF was founded by the Southern Baptist Convention, and Southern Baptists have one of the largest missionary sending enterprises in the world. The SBC International Mission Board has nearly 5,000 missionaries under appointment around the world,



Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

and the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions provides more than half of the funds to support this work. You can give through CBF by marking your missions offering for Lottie Moon, or you can give directly at <http://imb.org/giving/default.aspx>.

Give to the CBF Well Project for Ghana.

As you heard last Sunday, CBF is currently raising money to fund our fifth well in Ghana, providing a life-giving source of clean water that will support an entire village. You can help this vision become reality by marking your missions offering for “Ghana,” or “the Giving Circle.”



Give to Help End Homelessness Howard County.

As of July of this year, there were 379 homeless persons right here in Howard County, and 164 of those were children. HEHHC is a local non-profit whose goal is to purchase and provide permanent housing for these persons, one family at a time, through a replicable and scalable “housing first” approach that has real promise of making a real difference. CBF supports HEHHC in our budget, and I am a member of the Board of Directors. You can help our first house become reality by marking your CBF missions offering “HEHHC,” or you can give directly at www.hehhcinc.org.



Give to Mark Wakefield's Youth Ranch in Guatemala.

I've known Mark Wakefield for over 25 years—since he was a teenager. Appointed by the SBC International Mission Board to Guatemala, Mark refused later reassignment to another area because he believed God had not released him from his work with runaway street youths in Huehuetenango. So, Mark has become surrogate Dad to sixteen disordered young men, teaching them the life skills they need and leading them to Jesus. CBF supports Mark's Youth Ranch in our budget, and you can provide additional help by marking your missions gift “Youth Ranch.” I'm not aware of an online method to give to Mark, but you can send gifts to:

ZONA JUVENIL MINISTRIES
P.O. Box 862
Boiling Springs, NC 28017



You can learn more at www.youthranchhome.com or on Mark's Facebook page.

Whatever you choose, remember that the goal **to give no less to missions this month than you will spend on the person on whom you spend the most money for Christmas—including yourself.**

Dave



The Joshua Code: Fifty-Two Verses Every Believer Should Know

O.S. Hawkins (Thomas Nelson, 2012)

Week forty-six: The Model Prayer

“In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name” (Matthew 6:9).

According to the Bible, the disciples asked our Lord to teach them to do only one thing. After living with Him for three years, traveling over all Galilee and Judea, and eating hundreds of meals together, they only asked to be taught one thing. They never asked Jesus to teach them to preach. They did not ask Him to teach them to evangelize or to heal the sick. The only thing they ever asked Jesus to teach them is recorded for us in Luke 11:1. They requested, *“Lord, teach us to pray.”*

The disciples were smart enough to know that this was the secret of His life. They had seen Him on many occasions slip away from them into the mountains to pray. They had observed Him on occasion praying all through the night. They saw Him pray before every great undertaking and after every great accomplishment. They knew that if they could master prayer, they would then know how to preach, how to evangelize, and how to do any of the other necessary tasks of carrying out their mission and calling in life.

Perhaps there is no other prayer that has been recited by as many people, at as many times, in as many places, as this prayer—commonly called “The Lord’s Prayer.” However, it is often referred to as the “Model Prayer.” The Lord’s Prayer is found in John 17, where we have the record of His high intercessory prayer for us on the eve of the Crucifixion. This prayer, found in Matthew 6:9–13, is a model and guide for our own prayer life. It contains a prayer for God’s glory and a prayer for our good.

A PRAYER FOR GOD’S GLORY

This prayer begins with the element of **worship**: *“hallowed be Your name”* (Matthew 6:9). The word *hallowed* means “sanctified; that which is set apart.” The name of the Lord is unlike any other name. It is holy. Jesus taught us here that prayer is to be entered into with a reverent and worshipful attitude as though we are coming to a King.

The prayer also includes the element of **witness**: *“Your kingdom come”* (v. 10). There is a kingdom of grace and a coming kingdom of glory presented to us in the Bible. When we pray this prayer, we are praying for those around us who have never entered God’s kingdom of grace by being born again. We are also joining those saints of all the ages who have looked for our *“blessed hope”* and His *“glorious appearing”* (Titus 2:13). Jesus is coming again to set up His glorious kingdom. Thus, we join John, as he prayed from Patmos: *“Even so, come, Lord Jesus”* (Revelation 22:20).

This model prayer for God’s glory also entails the element of the **will**: *“Your will be done”* (v. 10). In a previous chapter we heard our Lord praying beneath those ancient olive trees of Gethsemane’s garden, *“not My will, but Yours, be done”* (Luke 22:42). Jesus taught us here that we cannot come to God in prayer with a selfish spirit, bent only on our way and our will. We must come to Him humbly in a spirit of submission, joining Jesus in praying, *“Your will be done.”*

A PRAYER FOR OUR GOOD

The remainder of this model prayer consists of our personal petitions that result not only in God’s glory, but in our own good. We ask for **provision**: *“Give us this day our daily bread”* (v. 11). We are dependent upon our heavenly Father to meet our basic needs of life. We cannot approach Him with an independent spirit of self-sufficiency. It is also important to note it is “daily” bread at issue here. One of the reasons many believers fall by the wayside is that

they forget this point. The manna fell daily in the wilderness and was only edible on that day. What we take in today of the Bible, the Bread of Life, sustains us for today. As we ask God for provisions, remember He supplies “daily bread.”

There is also a petition here for **pardon**: “*forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*” (v. 12). Thus, we come to God in prayer with a penitent spirit and not just a dependent one. We cannot come to Him with unconfessed and unforgiven sin in our lives. Once again note that every word of this prayer is there for a reason. We are asking God to forgive us “*as we forgive our debtors.*” But do we really mean this? We need to think deeply about what we are praying here. Some are prone to say, “Well, I will forgive her, but I won’t have anything else to do with her.” Is that really the way we wish for God to forgive us? Think about this the next time you pray this model prayer.

We also find a petition here for **protection**: “*And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one*” (v. 13). We need God to lead us. He will never lead us to do wrong. There is a difference between the temptations of life and the trials of life that come our way. Trials often come from God to teach us to stand; temptation comes from the devil to cause us to stumble. We need God’s leadership and deliverance in our daily lives.

We begin this prayer by saying, “*Our Father*” (v. 9). The foundation of all true prayers is in these first two words of the model prayer. If you cannot say “*Our Father,*” you will never have an effective prayer life. And you cannot say “*Our Father*” unless you have been born into His family by trusting in His Son for the forgiveness of your sin and the gift of eternal life with Him.

“*Our Father.*” Yes, we are not beggars cowering down at a back door looking for a handout from some cosmic benefactor. We are God’s children, seated at His table, making our requests known to Him (Philippians 4:6). No wonder we are invited to come with boldness to His throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16). Prayer has a twofold purpose: it is for God’s glory and our good.

As you memorize this verse, meditate on the fact that this is but a pattern for our praying. Jesus never actually told us to pray this prayer. He said, “*in this manner, pray . . .*” (Matthew 6:5). It is but a model for us to follow as we join the apostles in asking, “*Lord, teach us to pray.*”