

“Thy Will Be Done”: Learning How to Invite God to “Guide Me” Through Life Matthew 6:9-10

Today we begin to look at the third petition of the Lord’s Prayer.

This petition that we all know is: “Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven”, can become for each of us, a time when we actually invite to God to guide us through life.

Could there be anything greater in life than to have God Himself, walk us through each day? Can you imagine a better way to live than that?

When we pray this part of the Lord’s Prayer, we are inviting the Lord to: Guide Me.

How to invite the God of the Universe to lead us through life is our focus today:

LEARNING HOW TO INVITE GOD TO “GUIDE ME” THROUGH LIFE

One of the most amazing descriptions of our God is that He wants to be our Shepherd.

The Bible opens with Genesis, and Jacob’s life fills half the book, from Genesis 25-50. In Jacob’s final days he made an astounding confession. Please open there with me to Genesis 48:1-4, 15-16 (NKJV):

Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, “Indeed your father is sick”; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. 2 And Jacob was told, “Look, your son Joseph is coming to you”; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed. 3 Then Jacob said to Joseph: “**God Almighty** appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, 4 and said to me, ‘Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.’ 15 And he blessed Joseph, and said: “God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, **The God who has fed me** all my life long to this day, 16 **The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil**, Bless the lads; Let my name be named upon them, And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.”

What is astounding is that the word used in Jacob’s testimony of God’s faithfulness for all of his 147 years of life was that the Lord had been his *ra’ah* (Hebrew word for “fed and led as a shepherd”).

Think about what that means:

Jacob testifies that the Lord was his shepherd, that had guided, led, protected, blessed, and accomplished His will through Jacob’s life. Despite all of Jacob’s personal struggles, deceitfulness, deception, fears, and failures: God had faithfully guided, blessed, used, protected, and lovingly forgave him. Wow, that is an amazing testimony.

THAT IS PSALM 23 LIVING

Now, if you plugged into an electronic Hebrew word search engine, guess where else you'd find this very word from Jacob's testimony in Gen. 48:15, also being used?

Yes, just what you thought: in Psalm 23. With Jacob's words still fresh on your mind, look back once more at what he said. Maybe even underline "the God who has fed me", and jot a note to yourself (same word as Psalm 23). Now, turn over to Psalm 23.

This is perhaps one of the most comforting, encouraging, assuring passages in the Bible. This passage is so often used in hospitals at the bedside of those who are ill, in hospice rooms of those who are nearing their earthly life's end, and in funerals of those who have departed.

But think of it today as an amazing enlargement of Jacob's testimony, given to us by God through David. God is an amazing Shepherd. He took care of Jacob for 147 years, and now we see David's testimony for his 70-year lifetime. But David expands what God can do to these six verses of pure delight to all who hear them.

To help us get these truths of what God wants to do in our lives, soaked deeply into our souls, join me as **we stand** and read aloud this most precious Psalm.

Psalm 23 (NKJV) The Lord is **my shepherd**; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. 3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.

Pray

As we are seated, think of what we have just read in both Genesis 48 and Psalm 23:

GOD WANTS TO GUIDE US THRU LIFE AS OUR SHEPHERD

David enlarges the concept of God as Shepherd to mean a personal shepherd:

God can stay through life with us,

God can supply our every physical need,

God can satisfy the deepest emotional needs of our soul,

God can secure us through the gravest of dangers, and finally

God can safely walk us to our eternal dwelling place that He has built just for us.

Wow, that is quite an arrangement!

AS SHEEP WE NEED SHEPHERDING

One of the more vivid images of the Holy Land, and the world of the Bible is the image

of a shepherd and his sheep. Most people are riveted to the sight, and always love to stop and watch the scene of a flock grazing, or in motion being led by their shepherd.

Shepherding is simple: sheep are helpless, weak, and needy; and they learn to follow, trust, and obey their leader.

The Lord our Shepherd, we are His sheep. One of the greatest ways we affirm that we are His sheep is when we follow Him. Following Him can start with an earnest longing, distilled into the prayer from our innermost being: “Thy will be done”.

Desiring God to Guide Me is the essence of our daily walk.

Walking with God is the best way to live: He offers endless pleasures.

GOD HAS GIVEN MANY DETAILS ABOUT HIS GUIDING SERVICE

Here’s what God offers:

God is Himself the Guide:

Psalms 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

God has Specific plans for our route:

Psalms 25:4 (NKJV) Show me Your ways, O Lord; Teach me Your paths.

God Wants To Show Us The Way:

Psalms 32:8 (NKJV) I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.

God Warns About What We Miss If We Neglect His Leading:

Psalms 81:12-16 (NKJV) So I gave them over to their **own stubborn heart**, To walk in their **own counsels**. 13 “Oh, that My people would **listen to Me**, That Israel would **walk in My ways**! 14 I would soon subdue their enemies, And turn My hand against their adversaries. 15 The haters of the Lord would pretend submission to Him, but their fate would endure forever. 16 He would have fed them also with the finest of wheat; and with honey from the rock I would have satisfied you.”

God Uses His Word To Lead Us:

Psalms 119:105 (NKJV) **Your word** is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

God Leads Those Who Revere Him:

Proverbs 3:6 (NKJV) In all your ways acknowledge Him, And **He shall direct your paths**.

God Offers Peace To Those That Follow Him:

Isaiah 48:18 (NKJV) Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

God Has Amazing Plans for those He can Guide Continually:

Isaiah 58:6-14 (NKJV) “Is this not the fast that I have chosen:

Social Justice: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke?

Compassionate Ministry: 7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh? 8 Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

The End of Prejudice: 9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' "If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, 10 If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday.

Christ-like Living: 11 **The Lord will guide you continually** And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. 12 Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In. 13 "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the Lord honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words,

Spiritual Delights: 14 Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; And I will cause you to **ride on the high hills of the earth**, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken."

God Leads us to a Pathway Filled with Hope:

Jeremiah 29:11 (ESV) For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

THY WILL BE DONE INVITES GOD TO LEAD ME

Jesus came to reveal God the Father and allow people to come to know and follow Him.

Matthew 6:9-10 (NKJV) In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. **Your will be done** On earth as it is in heaven.

Those who come to know God as Father, and then surrender to His control, have the amazing privilege of going through life guided by God.

The Lord as our Shepherd has stated many benefits He offers to those who follow. Before we go we need to each ponder two things: what have we understood from God's Word today, and, how will we respond to God.

FOUR SPECIAL WAYS GOD WANTS TO LEAD US TODAY

Before Communion, why not do a self-checkup of your spiritual health and fruitfulness. Remember, the healthier we are the more fruit God can produce through our lives.

Here are some simple truths, and some application questions. First, turn with me to John 4:23-24, as we see that:

GOD WANTS TO LEAD US INTO GATHERED WORSHIP:

Here is what God has stated. God seeks our worship, He collects our worship, and He keeps our worship right in front of His Throne:

John 4:23-24 (NKJV) But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Then Jesus said, He actually walks around the gathered churches to see who is there, sacrificing their time to gather with His Body and offer the worship that ONLY the gathered church can offer. Note Jesus doesn't refer to individual believers in Rev 2-3 (the universal church), but to specific gatherings of Biblical, New Testament churches (the local church). Jesus Christ is looking to see that we are gathering as a local church.

Rev 1:13, 19-20 (NKJV) and **in the midst of the seven lampstands** One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. 19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. 20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and **the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.**

Knowing Christ visits, examines, and looks at the dedication of each of us gathered today at this local church, is the strongest motivation I know of.

I want to please Him as I come, as I serve, and as I offer my adoring worship to Him.

I am an ordained Baptist minister. Over the years I have seen some in ministry seek to exert pressure to prod people into more regular attendance. The only thing they seemed to be able to do was exert external pressure, where the Scriptures portray is declaring the truth of the Scriptures, and then praying for the powerful, internal conviction that only the Spirit of God can produce.

Do you plan your schedule around the gathering of the Body of Christ? Or do you fit it in when possible? The answer to that question reveals whether you are seeking first what God wants, or what you want.

Do you feel excited to be here at church and close to the Lord, with a heart tuned and already filled with Spirit-prompted worship, or are you distant these days from all that, and you even feel kind of far away from God this morning?

GOD WANTS TO LEAD US TO SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP:

There is something God has designed to take place when local churches gather, it involves believers encouraging each other. Listen to what God wants to guide us into each time we gather:

Heb. 10:24-25 (NKJV) And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one

another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Do you love to meet with other believers and share what God is doing in each other's lives, or can you hardly remember the last time your life was fruitful? Do you feel far from joy and peace, victory and blessing?

In fact, do you secretly hope that no one gets too close this morning and asks you personal questions while you are here?

GOD WANTS TO LEAD US TO PERSONAL DEVOTIONS:

Another amazing element God wants to lead us toward each day is meeting with Him in our time of personal devotions. Listen to this offer:

Rev. 3:20 & Matthew 4:4 (NKJV) Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Can you hardly wait to get started in our study of God's Word this morning, and feel the same way each day of the week in your personal devotions, or does your Bible feel as heavy as lead when you pick it up?

GOD WANTS TO LEAD US TO ETERNAL MINISTRY:

Here is one final desire that God expresses for us. He wants to lead us each day to invest in eternal things:

1 Cor. 6:19-20 (NKJV) Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Are you a conscious investor in ministry, looking for more ways to use your time and spiritual gifts to serve the Lord, or do challenges for you to jump in to serve and speak up for Christ bother you a bit, and even push you away?

Do you sometimes wonder if you'll get any reward in Heaven, and just hope that you'll get there? Has the zeal you once knew dried up, and become a far off memory?

WHAT DOES GOD OFFER & WHAT WILL WE DO?

This petition that we all know is: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven", can become for each of us, a time when we actually invite to God to guide us through life.

Could there be anything greater in life that to have God Himself, walk us through each day? Can you imagine a better way to live than that?

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