

INTRODUCTION

1. Two essentials to take note of

- a) Faith in God
- b) Practice of Faith

2. Faith

- a) Be sure it is genuine
- b) Be sure it is growing
- c) Be sure it is good if not great

3. Practice

- a) This is about practical application
- b) Faith that is real will find its expressions

PART I

THE PRACTICE OF ALMSGIVING (CHARITABLE DEED)

1. It starts with concern for the poor

Matthew 6:1-4 Cf. Deuteronomy 15:7-18

- a) Those who are poor
- b) Open your hand wide to him
- c) God will see and He will bless (reward)
- d) Charitable deeds encouraged

2. Danger highlighted

- a) Giving to draw attention to self
- b) Self-glory
- c) No blessing

THE PRACTICE OF PRAYER

Matthew 6:5-15; Cf. Psalm 4, 5

1. Danger highlighted

- a) Hypocrisy
Self-glory
- b) Vain repetition
Wrong understanding of how prayer works
- c) No blessing

2. Personal Prayer practice

- a) Praying in secret
- b) Communion with God as Father
- c) Blessing

3. The Lord's Prayer

- a) Not to be used as "repetition"
- b) Example of how to pray

4. Elements of Prayer

- a) Our Father in heaven
Address God as Father Romans 8:15
- b) Hallowed be Your name
 - i) Be conscious of the holiness of God's name
 - ii) have a high regard for His name
- c) Your kingdom come
 - i) Prayer about God's kingdom
 - ii) May it grow
 - iii) May it come to the hearts of people

- d) Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven
 - i) Understanding God's will
 - ii) May it be fulfilled Cf. Matthew 26:36-46
 - iii) Heaven's angels would obey swiftly
 - iv) May we, on earth, have the same kind of heart of understanding
- e) Give us this day our daily bread
 - i) Consciousness of God's provision
 - ii) Seeking the Lord's grace to provide
- f) Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors
 - i) Forgiveness to be sought from God
 - ii) Forgiveness to be practised (forgive others)
- g) And do not lead us into temptation
 - i) This is a plea
 - ii) Temptation is to be understood as "testing"
 - iii) Pray that we may not be tested
 - iv) The answer is up to the Lord's will
- h) Deliver us from the evil one
 - i) Recognition of the involvement of Satan
 - ii) We may pray that God would deliver us from him
- i) Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.
 - i) Conclude dwelling on the greatness of God
 - ii) His kingdom
 - iii) His glory

iv) Amen “So let it be!”

5. An important note

- a) On the matter of forgiveness
- b) We have to practise forgiveness
- c) If we cannot forgive people, how can we expect God to forgive us?

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD

1. There were many “Feasts of the LORD”

Leviticus 23

- a) Sabbath
Leviticus 23:3
- b) Passover/ Unleavened Bread
Leviticus 23:4-8
- c) Firstfruits
Leviticus 23:9-14
- d) Feasts of Weeks
Leviticus 23:15-22 Cf. Acts 2
- e) Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah- New Year)
Leviticus 23:23-25
- f) Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)
Leviticus 23:26-32
 - i) Sabbath of Sabbaths
 - ii) 25 hour fast
 - iii) Most holy day in the Jewish calendar
- g) Tabernacles (Succoth)
Leviticus 23:33-44 Cf. John 7:37-39
- h) Purim
Esther 9:18-32
(A lesser festival)

i) Hanukkah
Zechariah 10; Cf. John 10:22 Feast of Dedication
(A lesser festival)

2. Only 3 were highlighted:

- a) Passover/ Unleavened Bread Deuteronomy 16:1-8
- b) Pentecost (Feast of weeks) Deuteronomy 16:9-12
- c) Tabernacles Deuteronomy 16:13-17

THE PRACTICE OF FASTING

There was only one Feast that required Fasting
The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) Leviticus 23:26-32

1. Day of affliction of the soul
2. Day of repentance
3. Day of fasting

ADDITIONAL FASTS

1. Added by Jews after the Fall of Jerusalem
 - a) Fasting in the 5th month (Fall of Jerusalem) Zechariah 7:3
 - b) Fasting in the 7th month (Assassination of Gedaliah) Zechariah 7:5
2. Claims of merit for fasting Zechariah 7:1-5
3. Rejected by the LORD Zechariah 7:4-7
4. What God desires
 - a) Not fasting
 - b) But obedience Zechariah 7:7

DANGER HIGHLIGHTED

1. Hypocrisy Matthew 6:16
2. Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican Luke 18:9-14