

Your Problems ... God's Answers

"God's Answer to My Inferiority"

Matthew 6:9

- I. Today we start a new series of sermons that will focus us on the Lord's Prayer in a new way.
 - a. Four years ago, I preached a series of sermons on these same verses.
 - b. We spent 6 weeks exploring different truths about prayer that we find in this Prayer.
 - c. Today [and for the next group of Sundays] we're going to look at the prayer in a slightly different way.
 - i. This is often called Jesus' model prayer ... meaning a prayer that shows us what a prayer should include and what we should say.
 - ii. Some treat it like a recipe, it has everything you need to put into your prayers.
 - iii. In fact, Jesus prays this in response to his disciples question, "Teach us how to pray."
 - d. It's also a model prayer because it shows us how well God understands our problems and provides answers for everyone of them.
 - i. Let's face it – life is full of problems. There are a lot of things that cause us to struggle.
 1. Some of them are our fault – we create our own mess.
 2. Some of them are things that just happen – stuff beyond our control.
 - ii. No matter what our problems are ... our life of faith says that God has answers.
 1. When we come up short and struggle – God can make up the difference.
 2. God has already anticipated everything we need.
 - e. So the Lord's Prayer is a litany of our problems.
 - i. And a showcase for God's answers to those problems.
 - ii. No surprise really ... this is a God who we believe will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. {Phillipians 4:19}
- II. Let's start today by looking at the opening line of the Lord's Prayer – "Our Father who art in heaven ...;" and God's answer to our inferiority.
 - a. There isn't much question that we have a real problem with feelings of inferiority. We just don't think too highly of ourselves.
 - i. One way to gauge that is to look at the number of books published each year that want to help us feel better about ourselves.
 - ii. Self help books = 145,000 + on Amazon alone!
 - b. We think so little of ourselves that selling our soul on eBay has become a pretty common occurrence.
 - i. Soul 1 = \$1.00
 - ii. Soul 2 = \$500.00
 - iii. That's right folks; my immortal soul is being auctioned off to the highest bidder. I'm selling my sole just like Bart Simpson sold his sole to Millhouse on the Simpsons. Why am I doing this you ask? I want to explore the questions that arose to me after watching that episode of the Simpsons.
 - iv. We think so little of ourselves that we'll sell our souls because it looked like a good idea on the Simpsons.
 - c. We put up a good front sometimes, but all our bravado is a thin mask covering up our fear that we're not good enough. That somehow we just don't measure up.
 - i. In Deuteronomy 7:6 God says that we have been chosen "to be his people, his treasured possession."
 - ii. But we don't treat ourselves like treasure.
- III. God has a different opinion of you. God said, "This is very good."

- a. In Genesis 1, each day of Creation God surveys all that He has made and says, “It is good.”
 - i. In verse 31, God looks at human beings (man & women) and says, “It is very good.”
 - ii. All of creation is good, but only after God creates human beings are things “very good.”
 - iii. There is something special and unique in God’s eyes about us.
 - b. A couple of words that are significant ...
 - c. Father [Gr. = *abba*].
 - i. *Abba* = “daddy.” A close relationship.
 - ii. It shows the depth of our connection to God – that’s the difference between father and daddy
 - iii. God has answers to our problems because God loves us deeply and “gets in close” to us.
 - d. Our = MY.
 - i. God claims us, but we also claim God.
 - ii. My father ...
 - iii. You have value to you father – Deuteronomy 32:10 says that God regards us, “as the apple of his eye.”
 - e. You are near and dear to the Lord’s heart.
- IV. Your value doesn’t come from what you do.
- a. Face it; there is nothing you could do to make yourself valuable to God.
 - b. You already are valuable to God – God takes great pleasure in you.
 - i. His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the power of human legs; the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love. {Psalm 147:10-11}
 - 1. Who has the Lord’s pleasure?
 - 2. The Lord delights (takes pleasure in) the ones who love Him.
 - ii. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— {Ephesians 1:4-5}
 - 1. Why did God send Jesus Christ to redeem us?
 - 2. Because he takes such great pleasure in us!
 - c. Your value doesn’t come from what you do.
- V. God says, “Your value comes from our relationship.”
- a. Genesis 3 describe a scene of Adam, Eve and God walking together in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day.
 - i. Can you imagine? Taking a walk with God? Everyday?
 - ii. That relationship is something God wants as much as you want.
 - b. A relationship with God – like any relationship – requires an investment of time.
 - i. It also requires a commitment to the relationship.
 - ii. No relationship happens by accident.
- VI. When you become God’s child – you matter!
- a. So you need to start living like you matter.
 - i. You need to start treating yourself like the treasure God knows you to be.
 - ii. For the sake of your relationship, you need to start treating yourself like something of value.
 - b. If something is not valuable – it’s cheap. And there are so many ways we treat ourselves like we’re cheap.
 - c. We treat our bodies like they’re cheap.
 - i. We overeat. We smoke.

- ii. We drink too much alcohol. We drink too much caffeine.
 - iii. We fill our bodies with so much junk!
 - 1. A random study of umbilical cord tissue of children born in US.
 - 2. Over 200 toxins in their systems at birth (mostly carcinogens).
 - iv. We don't sleep.
 - 1. Most adults average 5-6 hours.
 - 2. We need 7-8 hours.
 - 3. 5-6 hrs. is equivalent to losing a full night of sleep a week.
 - v. We over work.
 - 1. We are working more hours per week now than ever before.
 - 2. Most Americans work 50-60 per week; an alarming number work 70 +.
 - 3. We don't even leave our desks anymore for lunch.
 - 4. Productivity declines after about 52 hours to the point that its counterproductive.
 - d. We treat our minds like they are cheap.
 - i. Americans read Romance Novels more than any other kind of book: 64 million people a year. 40% of all fiction books sold in a year are romance novels.
 - 1. Nothing wrong with a little diversionary reading, but too much is too much.
 - 2. And guys, 30% of romance novel readers are men.
 - ii. This week I saw an online posting where the writer bragged that he was in his 40 and hadn't read a book since High School!
 - 1. There's too much to learn to simply stop growing.
 - 2. Filling your mind with nothing is still treating it likes its cheap.
 - iii. I could go on about TV, music, the internet.
 - 1. There are plenty of opportunities to ignore our value and reinforce our sense of worthlessness and inferiority.
 - 2. But God wants you to know that you matter – and he wants you to act like you matter.
- VII. Begin to treat yourself like you have value.
- a. I was talking to a guy today – morbidly obese, health problems, diabetes.
 - i. I asked what he was going to do.
 - ii. He shrugged and said, "It is what it is."
 - b. God expects more than that from you and you are too valuable for that.
 - c. Take control.
 - i. Over food: lose the weight. Quit smoking. {20 pounds/less Coke}
 - ii. Of your schedule.
 - 1. Sleep! Man what a difference this makes. {Retreat – the first few days you just sleep.
 - 2. At work. Leave when you can. Quit obsessing. {I wish I'd have spent more time at the office} The Myth of Quality time.
 - iii. Of your mind.
 - 1. GIGO = garbage in; garbage out.
 - d. Here's what I'm doing.
 - i. Losing weight.
 - ii. Sleep by 11.
 - iii. 45 hours.
 - iv. Mind = Read devotionally. Read to learn. Read to clear my mind not clutter it.