

Location: First Baptist Church, October 22, 2023
Title: The Right Fight
(Theme: God reveals what our fight is about)
Text: *Matthew 6:9-13*

9 "Pray, then, in this way: Our Father in heaven, may your name be revered as holy. May your kingdom come. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one.

This prayer, of course, is one that we would all do well to practice as an outline for our prayers. As we take a few moments to consider this most well-known prayer that Jesus taught his disciples, we need to think about something that might not be apparent at first glance.

What might not be superficially evident here is the element of struggle that runs throughout the prayer. Consider the contrasting images we might envision if the prayer remained unanswered.

Jesus prays for the Father's name to be revered as holy in contrast to how this world and even some believers regard God's name. Struggle number one is ensuring that our lives show reverence for the name of God.

Struggle number two comes from the first: doing what we can to obey God's will on earth as in heaven. I'm sure that we all engage in this fight daily.

Thirdly, we fight to depend on God for our daily sustenance, whether physical, spiritual, emotional or whatever the case may be. It is a daily battle to

remain dependent on God alone to provide for our needs rather than trying to supply our own needs out of pride.

The fourth fight involved is something we also deal with daily. Seeking forgiveness from God and others and giving it to those around us is a constant in our lives, but it is vital to our lives of faith.

The fifth element of this prayer deserves some special attention this morning. Depending on your Bible translation, you will read this passage as deliver us from evil or deliver us from the evil one. The latter is widely accepted as the preferred reading of this text. Deliver us from the evil one.

Aside from the struggles implied in this prayer, we need to know what the fight to live lives of obedience is about. Many Christians have become experts at fighting, but it is often for the wrong reason or aimed at the wrong target. Sadly, many believers are adept at criticizing others or complaining about things in the church that do not satisfy their ideas of what the church should be like. We complain about carpet colours, argue over budgets, get impatient with one another, and say and do things that hurt fellow believers.

Let's admit it: believers can get caught up in some pretty ridiculous fights. I'm embarrassed and ashamed of some of my battles; perhaps you are, too. The worst part is we forget the war Christ called us to when we get caught up in these

struggles for our preferences. Look again at the prayer Jesus taught his disciples.

God summons us to the fight, that's certain, but we must engage in the ***right***

fight.

Our fight is about obedience and submission to the will of God, dependence upon him, and seeking and giving forgiveness. Let me ask, how is that battle going in your life and mine?

Therefore, as God's people, let us resolve today to think about the battles we may be waging. Some battles are worth fighting; many are not. May the Lord grant us all wisdom to know the difference and prepare for the fight to which God calls us. Amen.