

LESSON 26

DIVINE INVITATIONS.

HO, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread ? and your labor for that which satisfieth not ? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me ; hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near : let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.—*Isa.* li. 1-3, 6-9.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.—*John* vi. 35–40.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.—*John* vii. 37, 38.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.—*Matt.* xi. 28–30.

They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sac-

rice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.—*Matt.* ix. 12, 13.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.—*Matt.* vi. 33.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.—*Matt.* v. 6.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.—*Rev.* xxii. 17.

PRAYER ENJOINED.

I.

AND he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith; And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the

other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other : for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased ; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.—*Luke xviii. 1-14.*

II.

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are : for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do : for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them : for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not unto temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.—*Matt.* vi. 5–15.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.—*John* xvi. 23, 24.

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.—*Matt.* xviii. 19, 20.

PRAYER ENCOURAGED.

BUT if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he sware unto them.—*Deut.* iv. 29–31.

If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; if my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.—*2 Chron.* vii 13, 14.

And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.—*Psalms* i. 15.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.—*Isa.* lxxv. 24.

And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?—*Luke* xi. 9–13.

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.—*1 John* v. 14, 15.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.—*Heb.* vi. 16.

BENEDICTIONS.

TO God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.—*Rom.* xvi. 27.

Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.—*1 Cor.* i. 3.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.—*2 Cor.* xiii. 14.

Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.—*Gal.* vi. 18.

Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.—*Eph.* vi. 23, 24.

The peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.—*Phil.* iv. 7, 20.

Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.—*2 Tim.* i. 2.

Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.—*Phil.* 3.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.—*Heb.* xiii. 20, 21.

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.—2 *Peter* ii. 2.

Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.—2 *John* ii. 3.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.—*Jude* 24, 25.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.—*Rev.* xxii. 21.

END LESSON 26