

Luke 11:1-13

Pentecost 10; August 14 & 15, 2022

Last week, while on vacation in the UP of Michigan, we toured a copper mine that was called the Quincy Mine. It's located just across the river from Houghton, Michigan. Anyone hear of it? It was one of those things that looked interesting, but I had never heard about it. So, we decided to take a tour of it. Fascinating. You might not think of a mine being fascinating, but it was. The first shaft was drilled in 1848. It would eventually close in 1949. The first 10 years were not all that successful, but then they found a new vein of copper ore. By the time of the Civil War, Quincy Mine was producing about 45% of all copper that was being used in the United States.

Eventually, a second shaft would be drilled that would be nearly 1.2 miles deep and more than 9,000 ft long at a 56-degree angle. There would be 92 levels. Unfortunately, you can only go down to the 7th level because the rest of the levels are flooded with water. With a shaft that long, the work could be brutal. At the deepest point in the mine, the temperature would be 90 degrees. The upper levels would be in the 40's. If you would be working in the mine in winter, you could go from 90's to temperatures below zero on the service.

At the beginning of the mine, the drilling was done by a crew of three men. One would hold a drill bit, while the other two would take turns hitting it with a sledge hammer while the guy holding the bit would turn it about an 1/8 turn between swings. Once the hole was drilled about 4 feet, it would be packed with explosives and blasted. All this would happen with your primary source of light was a candle stuck on your helmet with some clay. You look at all this and think, "*how could they do this?*" This was hard work, but it also was very high skilled labor. If you were to survive in those mines, you needed to be taught how to do this brutal work or you would die. I'm sure that those less experienced miners would ask the more experienced miners: "*Teach us...*"

Perhaps, it is a little like how the disciples felt in our text for this morning as they approached Jesus and asked: "**Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.**" It wasn't that they had never prayed. The Old Testament is full of prayers. The disciples knew the WHAT of prayers, but not so much the HOW of praying. They would see Jesus go off and pray to his heavenly Father. As he returned from those times, they wanted what they saw in him. They wanted to treasure prayer as much as they saw in Jesus.

So, Jesus doesn't chastise them. He just simply says: "**Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.**" First of all, Jesus doesn't give them a list of tips to pray like: *Fold your hands, bow your heads...*" Instead, he wants them to not even think about themselves in prayer. He wants them to focus on the one to whom they are praying – God. He doesn't want them to think of God like some distant person who is just out there that they can't approach. Instead, he says, you begin by saying "**Father.**"

Do you ever remembering coming to your dad as a teenager and ask him for the keys to the car so that you can go out with your friends? How did that feel? Did you come there not quite knowing how he might answer – yes, no or wash the dishes? Did you feel a little timid when making your request? Jesus wanted his disciples to come to their Heavenly Father with full confidence knowing that God would hear those prayers. You see prayer isn't just to inform God of what we want in life like a small child writing a letter to Santa listing all the things that they might like for Christmas.

Our Father knows we need to trust Him with the stuff on our hearts and minds and trust him for our daily needs. He wants us to know that we can come to him with anything on our minds, and he will listen. He wants us to know that even though he is holy, pure and perfect. He can't wait to see us and hear us. He wants us to come to him and know that he will give us everything we need. He wants us to know that he's got this and you.

What is Jesus teaching us with these words? He wants us to know who he is. He wants to ask him for help to reflect his glory, his name and his dominion in our all our words and actions. He wants us to come to him and ask him for our needs – food for our daily lives, forgiveness for all the sins that we do wrong against him and strength to stand up to the temptations of the devil. That's what he wants us to do as we pray these words. Now we don't have enough time to speak

in depth of each of these requests in this prayer. However, let us just look briefly at each of the petitions in our Gospel Lesson.

“Hallowed be your name.” God is not asking us to make his name more holy than it already is. Instead, he wants us to ask him for help in reflecting that holiness from God to be reflected in every word from our mouth and every action of our hands. If we are honest, we have trouble doing that at times don't we? We are sinful selfish people by nature. The only way that we are going to be able to do that even a little bit is going to be with his help.

“Your kingdom come.” He's not talking about when he comes back on the last day of this world. He wants to rule in our hearts. He wants to setup his throne in your heart so that it is reflected in everything you do.

“Give us each day our daily bread.” In fact, in Greek, it is really only saying this day. That's hard for most of us to do because I don't think that there are many of us here who don't know where our food is coming from for tomorrow. In other words: *Give us today what we need for today.* He wants us to trust him. He's got our back.

“Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.” When you look at the payment of sin that was made on the cross for each of us, how can we not marvel? The resurrection of Jesus removes all our guilt from our backs. He wants us to see how he forgave us so that we can forgive others. That's hard sometimes, isn't it? It's hard to forgive people who may not even deserve forgiveness.

Finally: **“And lead us not into temptation.”** God will never lead you into temptation. Satan alone does that. Yet, God knows how hard it is to stand up to those temptations. The only way that we can stand up to temptation is with the help of God himself. We are asking God, *don't let me fall into temptations.*

Back to Quincy mine. As we were on the tour, our guide lit a candle and turned out the lights so that the area that we were standing in could only be illuminated by that one candle. Then he blew it out and kept talking for a while in total and complete darkness. Then he said that when he would turn the lights on again, we would see so much more than we saw before. It was true. Jesus wants us to see that he is THE LIGHT that we all need. Don't hesitate to go to him in prayer. He's listening. He's ready to answer your prayers in his time and his way that is perfect for you. Amen.