

I. Prelude to the Lord's Prayer

And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. (Matthew 6:7-8)

- A. When I read Jesus' words "... your Father knows what you need before you ask Him", I'm amazed at how much God loves us.
 - 1. If you were in the same room with someone and said their name, a decent person is going to turn and give their attention to you.
 - 2. Story: sitting and watching my kids (Mae, doing artwork, etc.)
 - 3. But the picture we see of God here is not just that He'll turn His attention toward us when we initiate. When we turn to speak to Him we find He's already looking at us and has what we need in His hands.
- B. Matt: "God is eager to hear from us because His goal is intimacy with us."
- C. This truth is SO important for us as context to the prayer Jesus is going to teach us.
 - 1. It says so much about Who God is, who we are and who we and God are together.
 - 2. This is how the King's people talk to their Father-King.

II. Pray then like this: "Our Father in Heaven," (Matthew 6:9a)

A. The Address: Our Father

- 1. It's so easy to rush past the first two words of this prayer, but do we understand how amazing they are?
 - a. Jesus invites us to call His Father, our Father. If you don't think God wants to be close to you, think again.
 - b. The religious elite of Jesus' day were very touchy about this. In John 5, when Jesus called God His Father, they wanted to kill Him.
 - c. But Jesus invites us to address God as "Father." This is an invitation to a closeness with God that no one in that day would have expected.

2. Our Father in Heaven

- a. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the Earth.
 - 1) God created what's up there: The abode of spiritual beings,
 - 2) And God created what's down here: The abode of physical beings (earthlings)
- b. This prayer is recognizing that God is the King of the realm that reigns above our realm.
- c. The Lord's Prayer is requesting that the High King of Heaven draw close and be sovereign over the affairs of Earth, that Heaven and Earth would overlap and that the Kingdom of God would invade the kingdom of man.

3. And now we enter Part One (of two sections): requests about the WORSHIP and REIGN of God:

B. hallowed be your name. (Matthew 6:9b)

2. We don't use the word "Hallowed" much. I love how the Christian Standard Version translates it: "Your name be honored as Holy."
 - a. In biblical times a name wasn't just your reputation or what you signed on a document. It was an extension of your very being as you interact with others.
 - b. Asking for God's name to be hallowed is longing for people to have a reaction of reverence and honor as they encounter God.
 2. Jesus' disciples want their Father to be worshipped above, beyond, and before they want anything else.
- C. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven. (Matthew 6:10)
1. Liminal Space: The already but not yet: expecting a baby, standing in a doorway. Those questions for which the answer is "Well, yes and no."
 2. In Matthew 4:17, Jesus commands people to repent because the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.
 - a. This means that the Kingdom of God has already arrived. How? Because JESUS came to Earth. Jesus is the embodiment of the Kingdom of Heaven.
 - b. But here, we see Jesus instructing His disciples to ask for God's Kingdom to come. This sets up that "already but not yet" tension that we see all over Scripture.
 - c. The Kingdom of Heaven has arrived but now must spread globally.
 - 1) It does not spread in the same way earthly Kingdoms do: Geographically and by force.
 - 2) No, the Father's Kingdom exists in every heart where Jesus reigns as King. Every single disciple of Jesus is themselves, and especially together, an outpost of the Kingdom of God.
 - 3) But Jesus' desire is that the Kingdom outposts of disciples spread globally so that as many people as possible call Jesus their King.
 3. Your will be done: This is also an "already but not yet" tension that is established by the contrast of two realms.
 - a. I mentioned earlier Genesis 1: there are two realms that God created:
 - 1) The heavens: The abode of spiritual beings
 - 2) The Earth: The abode of physical beings (earthlings)
 - b. But right now, there is a disparity between those realms with how the will of God is responded to. Two different cultures.
 - c. Story: sleeping over at friend's house in 4th grade (James)... Taco Bell, Movie. It was a totally different set of rules.
 - d. In Heaven, the abode of spiritual beings, God already reigns supreme. When He speaks, His angelic servants respond in immediate and joyful obedience.
 - 1) Doing the will of God is the culture of Heaven.
 - 2) It is not currently the culture of Earth.
 4. On Earth as it is in Heaven: This phrase, I believe, is attached to all three requests:
 - a. That God's name would be hallowed: On Earth as...
 - b. That God's Kingdom would come: On Earth as...
 - c. That God's will would be done: One Earth as...

5. We ask God that the culture of Heaven would overtake the culture of Earth, and by asking, we are requesting that He include us in this great work!
 6. And so this first section is Jesus inviting us into the mission of God: that our Heavenly Father would rule and be worshipped across the Earth.
 7. And now, in the second section, Jesus invites us to make personal requests to God.
 - a. And there's a reason that these requests come AFTER the first ones. It is because these requests are subordinate to and serve the purpose of the first ones.
 - b. The heart of a disciple should be growing to the place where we want the worship, Kingdom, and will of God to be a reality even more than our own personal needs and wants.
 - 1) This is not because God doesn't care about our personal needs. It's because He knows (and wants US to know) that His will happening on Earth IS our ultimate need.
 - 2) Having all our needs met in a world where God isn't on His way to set all things right is totally pointless. Like remodeling your house while a wildfire is two blocks away.
 - c. So when I pray for daily bread, forgiveness, and protection, I pray this under the umbrella of the worship and will of God.
- D. Give us this day our daily bread, (Matthew 6:11)
1. In the 1st century when this was written, it seems that most people in the world were paid daily to meet needs daily.
 - a. You didn't have a bank account where you were paid for two or four weeks of work. Your daily wage that was given to you at the end of the day was what you had to sustain your family just for the following day. A few days of illness could be completely disastrous for most of these people.
 - b. So this prayer was not just theoretical for much of its original audience.
 2. Also, for the Jewish people who heard this, that term "daily bread" would have been an immediate hyperlink to a very powerful image in their history: When God daily gave manna to the Israelites in the 40 years of wandering in the desert.
 - a. The story in Exodus 16: trust God daily for provision
 - b. God LIMITED their gathering: Only enough for that day (two days on Friday)
 - c. God not only provided enough for their consumption but provided a CAP on their consumption.
 - 1) And this is the part that I feel is VERY applicable to most Americans today.
 - 2) Not all of us, but many of us have enough to provide for many days in advance.
 - d. That being the case, this prayer isn't just asking God to supply what we need, but sometimes more importantly asking Him to set a LIMIT on what we CONSUME.
 - 1) When do we ever pray that God would give us the wisdom to know the limits of our consumption?
 - 2) Let me ask you a horrific question that will haunt the mind of every modern American Christian: "What if a portion of what is in your bank account, cupboards, pantry, and garage isn't for you?"

- 3) What if God has given to you but the ultimate address on that gift isn't YOU?
3. And so this request sets up a beautiful balance: "God, I trust You to give me enough for today. And I trust You when You say, "You've consumed enough."
- E. and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (Matthew 6:12)
- Something is broken at a very deep level in our culture. Most of us have lost touch with the reality that we need to be forgiven. The new "common sense" is that I'm fine. What I feel, what I think, what I do is fine if it fulfills me. I define what is good and bad for me and if something in my environment is in friction with that, then it is my environment that needs to change, not me. This can be very subtle and yet very destructive. It seems that we're losing the ability to see and say "I am wrong, I am broken, the problem is with me." And so every time we become unhappy, what do we do? We seek to change our circumstances rather than our sinfulness. The irony is that the problem will never be fixed and I'll never be happy because the problem is ME. Why is there so much division, anger, mental unhealth, and growing misery? Because we spend all our time trying to create our world in our own image rather than repenting of and being forgiven, HEALED, from our sin. I carry the problem with me and just transplant it into the new environment that I think will be the answer. No, the answer is the humility of recognizing my sin, repenting of my rebellion, and receiving forgiveness.
1. The sense of this request is this: "Father, look at how I've forgiven others and let that be the extent to which you forgive me"
 - a. So this request then is a prayer that I would be both forgiven and forgiving.
 - b. As a disciple of Jesus, there is no other way to be. How can I be a disciple of Jesus and yet withhold one of the most essential elements of His Gospel from others: Forgiveness!
 2. Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful for they will receive mercy." It is those who have truly been forgiven who can truly forgive.
 3. This is the only part of the prayer that Jesus gives further commentary on in verses 14-15:
For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
 4. Let's struggle with something together: Does this hit anyone else as sounding very conditional and works-based forgiveness?
 - a. I've struggled with this for years. All through the New Testament, the teaching is that we are not forgiven and saved by what we do but by the grace of God through faith.
 - b. So is this teaching of Jesus in contrast with that? I say an emphatic NO!
 5. Even Paul in the quintessential passage on salvation by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-10) affirms all that Jesus says here:
For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [Keep reading!] For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

6. The grace of God not only Forgives us OUT of condemnation but also forgives us INTO the good, gracious, merciful work of God.
 - a. In these verses, Jesus makes it very clear that forgiven people are forgiving people.
 - b. Struggling with forgiveness is normative in the Christian experience, or else Jesus wouldn't be talking about it so emphatically. The struggle is not a problem.
 - c. But a person who has truly received and absorbed the gift of incredible grace will always have a bent toward extending that same grace.
 7. However, a stubborn unwillingness to have a heart, will, and actions bent toward forgiveness may be a sign that you have not actually experienced the forgiveness of God.
 8. A Kingdom citizen is one who feels the sting of offense, but has a heart that is oriented toward mercy.
 9. Forgiveness is a process and so in this part of the prayer we are asking for forgiveness and also asking God to mold our desire and will toward paying forward that mercy God has shown us.
 10. After dealing with past sins, already committed, the disciple of Jesus prays for protection against future sin. Future mercy (RT France)
- F. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (Matthew 6:13)
1. "Would God actually lead us into temptation if we didn't ask Him not to?" "I thought the Bible teaches that God does not tempt us!" (James 1:13)
 2. I think that is an understandable misunderstanding of what's happening here.
 - a. My view is that the way this is said is a literary device of contrast and emphasis.
 - b. The first phrase paints a picture of us moving toward temptation and the second phrase, in essence, says "No! Not that! Deliver us!"
 - c. By first suggesting the direction that we are all on, moving toward temptation, the request to deliver us FROM THAT is made more urgent.
 - d. But let's not miss the forest for the trees. What does this request say about the heart of Jesus' disciples – His Kingdom citizens?
 3. A Kingdom citizen gratefully accepts forgiveness, but prefers DELIVERANCE!
 - a. My heart should never be to pile on things I need to be forgiven for and then clear the slate every day.
 - b. Undoubtedly, because of my sinfulness, each day leaves me with actions in need of grace.
 - c. But my heart's desire is that when the opportunity to sin presents itself, that God would in His mercy deliver me AWAY FROM sin.

III. What do we do with this prayer?

- A. Do we just say it verbatim every day as a script for prayer?
- B. Or is it a model for prayer that teaches me the things I ought to daily pray about? YES TO BOTH!
- C. I think the beauty of this prayer being prayed in its exact form is that we can pray it together!
 1. Look at the grammar here: It's all plural! (Our and Us)
 2. How beautiful for the people of God's church to be able, in groups of two or groups of 200 be able to pray these words of Jesus together.

- D. And I also believe that in giving us this prayer, Jesus is modeling for us the most essential things the heart of a disciple will ask for.
 - 1. How this has worked for me is that most every morning, I will pray verbatim each line. But then I pause and I go “off script,” and deeply expand on each request.
 - 2. Give example
- E. All of this is about being **close** to our Father and **faithful** to His mission.



THE LORD'S PRAYER

MATTHEW 6:9-15

FEBRUARY 20, 2022 | PASTOR TRAVIS EDGERTON



FOLLOW UP FROM LAST WEEK'S LIVE IT OUT QUESTIONS

If your group met last week, was there anything you committed to doing after reflecting on Scripture during your group? Did you follow through with that commitment, what steps did you take (or not take), and is there any way we can help?

GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER (USE JUST ONE OR ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS TO CONNECT AS YOU START YOUR CONVERSATION)

1 How would you define a healthy prayer life?

QUICK REVIEW (OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO SHARE WHAT MOST STOOD OUT FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

Looking back at your notes from this week's message, was there anything you heard that caught your attention, encouraged, challenged, or confused you?

DIG DEEPER (OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURE OR COMPLEMENTARY SCRIPTURES FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

1 Someone read MATTHEW 6:9-10.

⁹ Pray then like this: "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven.

Jesus had just been teaching His disciples about the wrong way to pray in Matthew 6:5-8; then He turned to teach them about the right way to pray. Jesus began His instruction on prayer by teaching that prayer begins with a focus on the person of God. Before we talk about our agenda, we should focus on addressing God with closeness and praising Him for Who He is.

How do you typically begin your prayers? Why might Jesus be teaching His disciples (and us, by extension) to address God as "Father?"

Next Jesus taught us to pray to God – both His Kingdom and His will. The Kingdom of God is God's rule and reign in the hearts and lives of His people. The Kingdom of God is a reality in Heaven now and will be for all eternity.

What can help us keep a Kingdom focus as we pray?

2 Someone read MATTHEW 6:11-13.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread, ¹² and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Why do you think Jesus taught us to pray for daily bread rather than a pantry full of food?

We pray for physical needs. The phrase “daily bread” literally means we’re to pray for perishable things, those things we need for that day. Jesus is not opposed to food that will keep for months, but the larger my stockpile, the easier it is for me to trust my possessions instead of the One Who provided them in the first place. Forgiveness is another aspect of prayer. Confession is agreeing with God about the sin in our lives. By confessing, we’re agreeing that we see the behavior as God sees it and that we are in need of His forgiveness and strength to break free from it. Finally, we pray for protection. Vs 13 is a request for protection, for the ability to stand strong in the face of temptation.

Respond to this statement: When we’re centered on God’s mission, it’ll change the way we pray as well as what we pray for.

How have your experiences with prayer influenced your ability to trust God?

3 Someone read **MATTHEW 6:14-15.**

¹⁴ For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵ but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Through the New Testament, the teaching is that we are not forgiven and saved by what we do but by the grace of God through faith. So is this teaching of Jesus in contrast with that? NO! Even Paul in the quintessential passage on salvation by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-10) affirms all that Jesus says here. The grace of God not only forgives us out of condemnation but also forgives us into the good, gracious, merciful work of God!

Followers of Jesus are a forgiven people, who, in turn are to be a forgiving people. Why is it such a struggle for us to forgive others who have wronged us?

What do these verses (along with vs. 12) teach us about forgiveness?

When have you seen the power of forgiveness change lives?

LIVE IT OUT (DISCUSS HOW YOU CAN LIVE OUT THE TRUTHS YOU JUST OBSERVED IN SCRIPTURE)

1 How is prayer ultimately an act of trusting God? Are you trusting God, as seen in your prayer life?

2 Take some time to pray the Lord’s Prayer over each other. As you pray together, be open to hearing from the Holy Spirit to lead you into repentance or praise. Did God reveal anything to you that you need repentance of or something you need to surrender to God? Were you led to praise God for anything specific? If it beneficial to the group, feel free to share.

3 If what we looked at tonight in God’s Word is true, what needs to change in your life right now?

CLOSING PRAYER

If you have not already done so, take some time to share needs and praises to your group so that you can pray for one another, both during your group and throughout the week.

NEXT WEEK: MATTHEW 6:16-18

Take some time before Sunday to pray that God would use this message and the truth in His Word to transform the minds and lives of those who hear it. Remember to take good notes so you are ready to add to the discussion your home group will have!

PRAISE/PRAYER REQUESTS (TRY TO HAVE ONE OR A FEW PEOPLE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME)

Use this space or the back of this paper to write the requests and find a way to share those with the group so you can be praying for each other during the week.

TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME: Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request or praise during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next request or praise.

PRAY MORE THAN ONCE: If your group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one should be required to pray.

KEEP PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE: Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group.

How to Use this Discussion Guide

This guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create a healthy environment for Gospel community, growing in friendship, and becoming like Jesus together. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, please review the guide before your group meets to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel the need to ask every question during your group discussion. This guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help your group grow in Gospel community. In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead. We are praying for you too!

Visit cpmodesto.org/groupleaders to download the sermon discussion guide every week. Not in a Home Group, but want to be in one? Visit cpmodesto.org/homegroups and use the Home Group Finder!

COMMENTARY

MATTHEW 6:9-15

6:9. By commanding His disciples to pray like this rather than simply "pray this," Jesus demonstrated that this prayer was offered as a model rather than to be recited (v. 9). "Your name be honored as holy" suggests that Jesus expected His disciples to live righteous lives that honor rather than profane God's name (5:16; Lev. 22:31-32). This is an important precondition for successful prayer. God is the ideal Father—all-loving, all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful, and always present with us. At the same time, He is in Heaven, which tells us He is greater than we can comprehend; so we approach Him as our Father with due reverence. "Our" implies that Jesus intended this prayer to be a model for prayer for when disciples gather as a group.

6:10. "Your Kingdom come" (v. 10) could be translated "Your reign come." The Kingdom has come in the hearts of all who have submitted to Jesus as Lord. It also is coming as more people yield their hearts to His reign. The Kingdom will not have come fully, though, until Jesus returns and establishes it absolutely and forever. To pray for the Father to see that His will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven frightens some people. Heaven is the only place free of sin and its painful effects. We should daily pray for the future coming of God's rule in which He will reign fully and completely over the world.

6:11-13. In verse 11, the prayer's focus shifts from God's eternal purposes to our temporal needs. We are to request what we need to sustain life, such as daily bread. "Daily" may be understood as "for today" or "for tomorrow," in either case pointing to immediate need. This prayer reminds us that our Father is our Provider. As a wise father, God provides what we need, not necessarily what we want. We also are to ask for forgiveness. Debts are sins viewed as obligations to the Father. The Greek grammar indicates that the disciple prays for forgiveness from God only after having first expressed forgiveness to others. The final petition has puzzled many believers—"Do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." We know God is good and does not tempt us to sin (James 1:13), so how are we to understand this? The overall meaning is obvious: the prayer is for the Father to keep us doing His will rather than being led astray by Satan.

6:14-15. These verses further exhort the Kingdom servant concerning the necessity of forgiveness in human relationships if we expect God's forgiveness. These verses, and 18:21-35, explain 6:12. Receiving God's forgiveness motivates forgiveness toward others. Jesus expects us to replace this specific petition with more personalized requests for forgiveness for the specific sins in our own lives.