

- I. Intro
 - A. Last week, we received teaching from Jesus that helps us to unlearn the malformed motives and beliefs that we tend to operate in. In other words, how NOT to pray.
 - B. This week, we're going to step into Jesus preaching on how TO pray at verse 9.
 - C. Jesus gives us what we now call "The Lord's Prayer."
 - 1. Is it supposed to be prayed verbatim? Or is it a template that guides our prayer?
 - 2. YES. It is both.
 - D. There are two sections to this prayer.
 - 1. The first section is focused on God's honor, Kingdom and will. The reason this part of the prayer is first is because it is most important.
 - 2. The second part is about our needs, forgiveness and protection from sin. This too is VERY important.
 - 3. But the universe is not a man-centered universe. It is a thoroughly God-centered universe so our prayer must reflect this.
- II. *Pray then like this: "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven."* (Matthew 6:9-10)
 - A. "Our Father"
 - 1. Don't rush past this. Jesus is inviting us to call HIS Father, OUR Father. Calling the Supreme King of the universe "Father" is the highest honor we could ever be offered.
 - 2. Don't miss the "plurality" of this prayer: this entire prayer is plural: our, us, we. We pray to God alone as our audience, but our concern is not for ourselves alone. Our concern is the family of believers we have been placed in, including ourselves!
 - B. "In Heaven": This phrase is said twice in this passage and serves two major purposes:
 - 1. The way this was originally written, the intention is to ask that all three requests be done "on Earth just as it is in Heaven" – used like parentheses
 - 2. The second way this repetition of "Heaven" is used is as a stark contrast of the way things are on Earth compared with Heaven.
 - a. In Heaven, the dwelling of God, the inhabitants of Heaven honor God, surrender to His Kingship and obey His will immediately, completely, and joyfully.
 - b. We ask God to cause the people of Earth to respond the same.
 - 3. First Prayer Priority: that humanity would honor God, surrender to His Kingship, and obey His will immediately, completely, and joyfully.
 - a. We want the way and culture of Earth to mirror the way and culture of Heaven.
 - b. This must start with us, Jesus' church.
 - C. A bit more on: Hallowed be your name, Your Kingdom come, Your will be done
 - 1. "Hallowing God's name": This means to honor WHO God is for ALL He is.
 - a. Our prayers start with WORSHIP.
 - b. Express specifically to God why and what you worship Him for.

- c. And not only this, ask Him to make the honoring of Him true for more and more people on this Earth.
- 2. "Your Kingdom come": A kingdom is the realm over which a king rules.
 - a. The Kingdom of God is EXPANDED on Earth as people trust Jesus, and it CULMINATES when Jesus returns to reign on Earth.
 - b. We pray to both ends ...
 - 1. That Jesus' Kingdom would continue to expand in the Earth through the Gospel being shared and people surrendering to Jesus as their King
 - 2. Longing for Jesus' physical return and rule over the world
 - c. Martyn Lloyd Jones (Buy his book on the Sermon on the Mount!): "It is a prayer which indicates that we are 'Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God' (2 Peter 3:12). It means that we should be anticipating the day when all sin and evil and wrong and everything that is opposed to God shall finally have been routed. It means that we should have longings in our hearts for the time when the Lord will come back again, when all that is opposed to Him shall be cast into the lake of burning, and the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ." ... "That is the petition. Indeed its meaning is expressed perfectly at the very end of the book of Revelation. 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus.' 'The Spirit and the bride say, Come'. Our Lord is just emphasizing here that before we begin to think of our own personal needs and desires, we should have this burning desire within us for the coming of His kingdom, that the name of God may be glorified and magnified over all." Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. 1976. [Studies in the Sermon on the Mount](#). Second edition. England: Inter-Varsity Press.
- 3. "Your will be done": Those who are loyal to the King OBEY the will of the King.
 - a. The logical and ethical outcome of God ruling as King over the Earth is that He is obeyed.
 - b. We pray this for ourselves – that OUR will and OUR thoughts and OUR actions would be subject to His.
 - c. And we pray that through the spread of the Gospel, more and more people would bow to Jesus as their King and learn to obey His will.
- D. Transition
 - 1. So, that is the first and most foundational part of prayer: The honor, Kingship, and will of God.
 - 2. The second part of the prayer, for our needs, is prayed in submission to the first:
- III. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (Matthew 6:11-13)
 - A. "Give us this day our daily bread"
 - 1. There is no question in my mind that Jesus is using language here to evoke the story of God providing manna for the people of Israel after exodus from Egypt.
 - a. God provided a bread-like substance on the ground to be collected daily for the food needs of THAT DAY ALONE.

- b. If anyone gathered more than their family needed THAT DAY, the extra would go foul. (You can read about this in Exodus 16)
 2. Why does Jesus invoke this story? Two reasons that I can see:
 - a. Daily Bread: First is the issue of trust. Am I the provider or is my Father in Heaven the provider?
 - 1) There is nothing wrong with the wisdom of working hard, providing both for current needs and saving for future needs. This is commended in Scripture. But there's a subtle brokenness that can creep in.
 - 2) In working for the future and providing for the future, a sinful person is very easily lured into trusting themselves and their plan for provision, cutting the Father completely out of the equation.
 - 3) When I pray this way, asking for God to provide my needs for today, I am aligning my view of life with reality: that my Father provides and I rely on Him every day: His hand to my mouth. This is not by default but by design. We were never intended to live outside of our need for God.
 - b. The second issue in "daily bread" is LIMITING consumption.
 - 1) Remember that in the story of the daily "manna" bread, God not only provided the minimum of necessity but limited the maximum of consumption.
 - 2) Asking for God's wisdom to limit our consumption is not a vow of poverty. It's a vow of surrender.
 - 3) No doubt, Jesus knew that this prayer would be a model for rich and poor alike. Whereas for the poor, this request requires great faith that God will provide the minimum, for the more well off, this prayer requires great faith to honor Him with limiting the maximum.
 - 4) There are Christ-followers in this world whose resources outmatch their need. In fact, in America, this is probably true for more people than it's ever been in the history of the world.
 - 5) So for these people the question concerning God providing daily bread isn't, "Will I have enough?" but rather, "How much is enough? How much should I consume today?"
 - 6) A person who sincerely asks the Father for daily provision from their full storehouse is asking permission to use the resources and asking for God's wisdom to limit their consumption
 - 7) If we are not the king at the center of our homeland and our kingdom has been absorbed into the true King's, then what we have is not our own.
 - 8) Requesting daily bread is trusting the Father to provide enough and also to tell us when enough is enough.
 3. Now, this request for provision is plural: give US this day. This prayer is not only for ourselves, it is also intercessory for our brothers and sisters in Christ, for God's will and provision in their lives. I want to jump over to an intercessory prayer we see Paul record in Ephesians:

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in **the knowledge of Him**, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may **know what is the hope** to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable **greatness of His power toward us who believe**, according to the working of His great might that He worked in Christ **when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places [KING!]**, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things under His feet and gave Him as **head over all things to the church**, which is His body, the fullness of Him Who fills all in all. (Ephesians 1:5-23)

- a. Here is the summary of what Paul prays for the Ephesians:
 - 1) That they would know God intimately.
 - 2) That they would both intellectually and experientially know the hope they have in Jesus.
 - 3) That they would walk in the power of Jesus' resurrection.
 - 4) That they would respond to Jesus as their head, their King!
 - b. Intercessory Prayer: we pray for our family in Jesus; for their intimacy with God, hope, walking in the power of Jesus' resurrection and the Kingship of Jesus over them.
 - 1) We also see from the Lord's prayer that we pray for each other's physical needs.
 - 2) And often times, we need to be open to the reality that God might want to involve us in the ANSWERING of this prayer – to provide for each others' needs
- B. Now, back to the Lord's prayer: "Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors."
1. In the same sentence as "give us this day our daily bread", Jesus instructs us to request forgiveness, likely because forgiveness is at the top of our daily needs.
 2. I probably don't need to spend much time convincing us all that we sin and sin regularly.
 - a. We request God's forgiveness daily because daily sin requires daily humility.
 - b. In the same way that Jesus instructs us to still request physical provision that has already been acknowledged and provided for, so He also instructs us to ask for forgiveness that has already been provided for. It is not a shame-producing experience to go to the Father daily, confess what is true, and ask for forgiveness. This is an experience of freedom. What is most astounding is not the need for daily forgiveness, but that the request is and has been granted already.
 3. But if God has already forgiven me for all my sin through Jesus' death, why do I need to continue to ask for forgiveness?

- a. Because this is a relationship. Just because God has graciously forgiven us for our rebellion against Him does not mean we don't have a need to acknowledge it!
 - b. Because God lives outside of time but you don't. God can forgive you for things you haven't done yet but you can't ask until you know what you need forgiveness for!
- 4. The hard part of this request though is "as (or "like") we also have forgiven our debtors."
 - a. Whether we like it or not, here's what this request means: Father, look at the way I forgive others and forgive me in the same way.
 - b. And in case you want to disagree with that rendering, skip down to v.14
 - c. *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.* (Matthew 6:14-15)
- 5. I think it's really tempting to explain this away to mean something other than it says because we struggle with the idea of God's forgiveness of us being contingent upon our forgiveness of others.
- 6. But we need to frame this in the broader context of the sermon on the mount, specifically the beatitudes.
 - a. In Matthew 5:3-12, Jesus paints a portrait of His Kingdom citizens. He describes people who have truly surrendered to Him and have been changed by His salvation for them and His Kingship over their lives.
 - b. One of the things He says is "Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy."
 - c. The heart of a true believer in Jesus will have been changed by the mercy they have received from Him.
 - d. If I have truly received forgiveness I will value and honor it so deeply that my heart will seek to extend it to others.
 - 1) This does not happen automatically, quickly, or easily at times. The question is, "What is my intention? Do I have a heart that intends to forgive even when it's hard?"
 - 2) Note: Forgiveness is NOT forgetting, and it is NOT necessarily trusting. It is letting go of the expectation that somehow a debt will be paid back, that the person who hurt you can heal you.
 - e. If my kingdom has been abolished and absorbed into His, so have the debts which were owed to me. Those debts have now been written over to the King, and He says, "forgiven!"
 - f. A true Kingdom citizen would never attempt to collect on a debt he does not own.
- 7. The sober warning here is this: if I find myself characteristically and habitually unwilling to extend forgiveness, there is a likelihood that I have never received it. If I have not received it, I am not a child of the King.
- 8. Certainly, this is in no way asserting that forgiveness is always or even often immediate. There are wrongs that are so devastating and so deep that forgiveness will take weeks, months and sometimes years to work toward or arrive at. But again, I

plead context: what is the inner intention of my heart? If I belong to the Father, though I am not able to arrive at total forgiveness today, my motives are to arrive there some day and as soon as possible with God's help.

- a. Story: Someone I knew and loved for decades decided to cut off the relationship. I still find myself slipping back into resentment. Each time I choose forgiveness and blessing.
 - b. Struggling with unforgiveness is not the problem. CHOOSING unforgiveness is.
- C. *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil [or "the evil one"] (Matthew 6:13)*
1. The previous request is for forgiveness from PAST sin
 2. This request is for protection from FUTURE sin.
 3. A genuine disciple of Jesus desires forgiveness from PAST sin and protection from FUTURE sin.
 - a. Those who love God don't desire to wantonly repeat our failures over and over. We want to be conformed to the likeness of Jesus.
 - b. And so daily, we ask our Father to protect us from temptation and falling into sin.
 4. It is this request that brings us back full circle to where we started: Father, honor Your name, bring Your Kingdom, do Your will! And may my desire for You and Your way above all things keep me on the path of righteousness to serve You as my King.