



13: Our Father in Heaven (Matthew 6:9-15)

Today we examine the significance of the best known & most thoughtlessly repeated prayer across the planet. Oh that followers of Jesus would LIFT & LIVE this out!

beourguest

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Jesus Teaching On Prayer

Matthew 6:5-8 (NIV) And **when you pray**, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But **when you pray**, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then **your Father**, who sees what is done in secret, **will reward you.** And **when you pray**, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for **your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.**

* See the teaching called **"Doing It Wrong?"** for more on the previous passage.

Following the Master in Prayer

Luke 11:1 (NIV) One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, **"Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."**

It is then that Jesus taught His disciples to pray to our **Father** in heaven (Luke 11:2-4) - a prayer we have heard *so often* that few pause to consider what it really means.

👁 Quick Insights

- **NET** (New English Translation) is a fine translation from the original languages that will help us better appreciate the meaning of this prayer.
- **"For yours is the kingdom and power, forever and ever, amen"** is not found in the oldest & most reliable New Testament manuscripts of Matthew & Luke, the reason it is not translated in NET, ESV, NIV, CSB.
NOTE: "The doxological ending that many Christians are accustomed to pray—"For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen"—did not originally conclude the Lord's Prayer in Matthew's Gospel. The best and oldest manuscripts do not have it, and the earliest commentaries on the Lord's Prayer do not mention it. Neither does it appear in Luke's parallel prayer (Luke 11:2-4). This doxology does occur in a variety of forms in many later manuscripts."¹
- This is typically referred to as **'The Lord's Prayer'** but would be better labeled as **"The disciples' prayer"** - an example to follow. Jesus would have never personally prayed "forgive us our sins", since He never sinned. He models this for His disciples to pray.

Appreciate Who we are talking to

Matthew 6:9 (NET) So pray this way: Our **Father** in heaven, may **Your Name** be **honored**,

We must appreciate WHO we are talking to, our Creator, the One whom Jesus said no one on this side of eternity has ever seen - except for Himself (Jn. 6:46). We must recognize there is a difference, a distinction from the Creator and His creation.

✓ God is the creator of all things, eternal, all wise, and without sin. God is **in heaven**, not bound by time nor space.

✗ We are sinful beings who live on the earth for a short time in these bodies that will eventually fail.

🔍 There are similarities between us and God. After all, we are made in the image of God (Gen 1:27). Jesus even taught His disciples to call God **our Father**.

Our Father

Jews in Jesus' day did not talk of God as their personal Father, but the Father over their nation.

- "Father" is found only 15 times in the entire Old Testament referring to God, none addressing God as "Father" in prayer.²
- Not one of the prescribed prayers in ancient Jewish literature has a single example of a Jew addressing God in the personal form of "Father" as Jesus uses here.
- Yet when Jesus prays He addresses God as **'My Father'** almost every time.

¹ Michael J. Wilkins, Matthew, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 280.

² Robert H. Stein, Luke, vol. 24, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 324.

✓ In telling the disciples to address God as **Father**, Jesus transfers this privilege onto them. More than just our Creator or 'the man upstairs', **Father is a relational term**, recognizing God as our Creator, Provider, Director, Protector, and Corrector.

🕒 Calling God **our Father** is not just about *YOUR* upward relationship to God, but also about *OUR* outward kinship to our brothers and sisters who follow Jesus.

To **honor**, or as most translations say - **hallow God's Name** - means to recognize HIM as HOLY - different from all others - the perfect Creator of all life. Before we ask anything *OF* Him, we bring something *TO* Him - our recognition that HE is GOD and He is GOOD...and because of that we desire to **honor** Him above all others. This is what was intended when God told the Jewish people to keep His Name holy (Lev 22:32; cf. Ps 79:9, Isa 29:23).

🔍 The Jews of Jesus' time so *honored God's Name* that they chose not even to speak His Name aloud.

✗ Yet some of us refer to God or Jesus flippantly, saying "Oh My God!" or using Jesus' name as a cuss word.

✓ Don't use "GOD", "JESUS", or "LORD" unless you are taking TO HIM or ABOUT HIM.

💡 **Martin Luther** asked a great question we should ask ourselves: "*How is it [God's name] hallowed amongst us?*"³

❓ *How do our lips & lives communicate that honoring & trusting our Father above all others?*

Praying for God's Will Above All

Matthew 6:10 (NET) may **Your kingdom come**, may **Your will be done** on earth as it is in heaven.

We pray **may Your kingdom come** - that His KINGDOM authority expand all over the earth! We pray that God's **will be done** on earth - just **as it is in heaven**. How wonderful would THAT be - that God's will honored and obeyed HERE like it is in heaven!

We pray for the EXPANSE of the Kingdom *ON* Earth while we EXPECT God's Kingdom to come *FROM* Heaven at the return of Jesus.

This PRAYER is a PARTNERSHIP: "*Father...through OUR LIVES...may Your Name be honored and Your Kingdom come!*"

❓ Does your prayer time begin with something like this: "*Father...Bless YOU, bless YOU, bless YOU! - BRING YOUR Kingdom.*"?
OR do your prayers start with, "*Bless me, bless me, bless me - build MY kingdom.*"?

BIG TRUTH: Honor the Father & Ask in Faith

Asking God for Daily Provision

Matthew 6:11 (NET) **Give us** today our **daily bread**,

We are to ask God to provide for our **physical needs**, which **daily bread** represents.

Those who have more than our daily needs often forget to ASK God & THANK God for His daily provision.

God KNOWS your physical needs. ASK HIM to provide! Jesus taught His followers **Honor the Father and ask in Faith**.

Jesus encourages us to ask for **PHYSICAL needs** as well as **SPIRITUAL needs**.

Seeking Forgiveness & Extending Forgiveness

Matthew 6:12 (NET) and **forgive us our debts**, as we ourselves have forgiven our debtors.

Matthew 6:14-15 (NET)

For if you forgive others their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But **if you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive you your sins**.

2 Important Principles from this ONE verse:

1. We can confidently ask God to **Forgive us** for our sin. YES we have wronged Him. NO, we can't pay Him back for the **debts** we owe...**THAT'S WHY** He freely forgives us!!!
 - Quit wondering if God can forgive you. Is anything TOO great for God to forgive? Remember Jesus crucified for our sin?
2. We too are to **forgive others who owe us**. YES they have wronged us. NO, they might not be able pay us back for the **debts** they owe...**THAT'S WHY** we...like our Father has done for us...freely forgive them!!!
 - Those who have experienced God's forgiveness should extend God's forgiveness to others! Quit wallowing in how others have wronged you.

❓ **Question:** *How is holding that grudge HONORING God & HELPING you?*

Asking God to Protect from Temptation/Tempter

Matthew 6:13 (NET) And do not lead us into temptation, but **deliver us from the evil one.**

Does God lead us into temptation? James 1:13-14 says God does NOT tempt us to sin, but our own desires and the devil can.

✓ Instead of giving in to temptation, we are commanded to **ask our Father to protect us from/through temptation and from the evil one.**

- Remember when Jesus has the apostles pray, *"Pray that you may not enter temptation,"* in Gethsemane (Luke 22:40, 46)?

❓ **When's the last time you prayed THAT for you/another?** *"God, please protect us from temptation/tempter this week."*

Instead of rushing through this well-known prayer, disciples of Jesus pray to...

Honor the Father & Ask in Faith

Jesus didn't PRAYER was a WASTE, but a necessity...and if YOU follow Him, you will view prayer the way HE DOES.



Make Time to Pray

- **PRAY ALONE.** Make some time to pray as Jesus taught us, and use your own words.
- **PRAY WITH OTHERS.** Ask about Physical/Spiritual Needs to pray for then do it! You don't have to pray long, just be sincere.

discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. What challenged or encouraged you most from today's teaching? (Look back in your notes to help explain your answer.)
2. Are you satisfied with your prayer life? Explain your answer. What are some practices that help you to stay focused while you pray and/or what are some ways that you are distracted from praying?
3. **Read Matthew 6:9-10.** Why does it matter that we remember WHO we're talking to when we pray? What is the significance of being able to refer to the Creator of the universe as "our Father"? What are some practical ways the WE can expand the kingdom influence, that God's will be done on the earth?
4. **Read Matthew 6:11.** Why do you think it's so easy for us to take food and other necessities for granted rather than being grateful for God's daily provision in our lives? What are some practical ways that we can appreciate God's provision for our physical needs?
5. **Read Matthew 6:12, 14-15.** Take a moment to consider and share some of the things you are grateful God has forgiven you for. Why is it vital for us to forgive others who have harmed us? What do you think of this statement, "Unforgiveness is like YOU drinking poison and expecting your enemies to die."?
6. **Read Matthew 6:13 and James 1:13-14.** Explain how we know that GOD never tempts us to sin. What/who *DOES* tempt us to sin? Have you ever prayed for God to protect you or another from/through temptation? That would be a great way for us to pray for one another this week!
7. Share some practical ideas on how you can consistently pray alone & pray with others this week.
8. Share prayer needs and **pray for one another.**

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Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- * Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- * Or call our **deacons & wives**: Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (850-673-7952), Freddy & Joyce Howard (850-973-0047), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).