

Introduction

1. Why am I teaching this class?
 - A. Calvin
 - B. Kids had never heard it!
 - C. I need it! I often don't know what to pray. And I often forget that I have been given this gift.

Two contexts for the Lord's Prayer: Matthew 6 (Sermon on the Mount) and Luke 11 (after Jesus finished praying)

We are going to focus most of our study on Matthew's version, but I want to observe a few things about the Luke passage by way of introduction.

1. The disciples approach Jesus after he has been praying. Why does Jesus need to pray?
 - A. Jesus is God incarnate! But in his incarnation he has laid aside his glory, confined himself, as it were, to human limitations. He prays because he is human.
 - B. But he also prays because he is God's Son. He loves his Father. He communes with him because he has been communing from eternity past.
2. The disciples ask him to teach them. Apparently they saw great benefit in what Jesus was doing, but they also saw something they lacked. John was teaching his disciples to pray (evidently, some saw Jesus and John as being in competition!). Even the Pharisees taught prayer (Luke 5:33). (Had they forgotten his instruction on the mount?)
 - A. If you feel like you don't pray well, you're in good company. Prayer is hard.
 - B. Why such a short, simple prayer?
 - a. R.C. Sproul: Why not the Psalms?
 - b. Thomas Fuller: the Psalms are like clothes that parents buy several sizes too big in the hope that they will grow into them.
 - c. Derek Thomas' observations:
 1. Preface followed by six petitions
 2. First three focused on God, last three on man
 3. Worships before asking for something personal
 4. Comprehensive (covering worship, Kingdom, sustenance, grace, protection)
 5. Covers 3 out of 4 elements of prayer
 6. Brief!
 - A. Are our prayers worshipful? God-centered? Focused on the Kingdom? Humble? Convey an ever-increasing sense of our depravity? Chief end to glorify God? Reveals the quality of our prayer.
3. Jesus says: when you pray SAY
 - A. Different from Matthew's account (pray in this way)
 - B. Seems to suggest rote repetition. Isn't that what Jesus warns against in Matthew?
 - a. Phil's penance
 - C. How repetition can be helpful
 - a. Memorization: we're going to memorize it
 1. Why ESV?
 - A. Force us to think about the words
 - B. Don't hear the drone of congregational recitation in our heads
 - b. Developing a pattern of thoughts.
 1. SPROUL: "That's the benefit of praying a prayer like the Lord's Prayer over and over again. It becomes part of the fabric of our thinking. It begins to become a part of our souls, so that we fall back on it when we're at a loss as to how we ought to pray. We can always pray the Lord's Prayer.

OUR FATHER

1. We are not naturally God's children.
 - A. Old Testament does not record an instance of prayer to God as Father
 - a. Exodus — Israel as God's son: Hosea 11. How fatherly he is!
 - b. Defending, rescuing his son, Israel from Pharaoh — kills Pharaoh's son
 - B. We take for granted Jesus' references to God as Father:
 - a. The Prodigal Son
 - b. "Your Heavenly Father knows what you need."
 - c. Every prayer of Jesus but one!
 - d. This was a radical departure — no rabbi EVER spoke about God like this.
 1. J.I. Packer: "You sum up the whole of the New Testament teaching in a single phrase, if you speak of it as the revelation of the Fatherhood of the Creator."
 2. Sinclair Ferguson: "You cannot open the pages of the New Testament without realizing that one of the things that makes it so "new," in every way, is that here men and women call God, "Father."
 - C. John 1:11-12 — "He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."
 - a. Before this, whose children were we? Eph. 2:1-4 — "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once

walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.”

- b. Galatians 4:1-7 — “I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God”
 - c. Romans 8:12-17 — “So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.”
 - d. John 20:17 — “Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”’”
- D. And Jesus wants us to pray to OUR FATHER! As sons and heirs. Loved by our Father just as Jesus is loved by our Father.
- a. This prayer is extremely God exalting and self-abasing, but at the very beginning, we address him not as Creator, or King, or Judge, but as Father!

IN HEAVEN

- A. He is in Heaven
 - a. He is our Father, but he is still the king. That means our Father rules over all and has the power do do very thing this prayer has us requesting.
 - 1. Ps. 11:4 — The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD'S throne is in heaven; his eyes see, his eyelids test the children of man.
 - 2. Is. 66:1 — Thus says the Lord: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest?
 - 3. Matt. 5:34 — Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God
 - A. 23:22 — And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.
 - b. He is not like our earthly fathers
 - 1. Hosea: “I am GOD and not a man”
 - 2.

When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.
The more they were called,
the more they went away;
they kept sacrificing to the Baals
and burning offerings to idols.

Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk;
I took them up by their arms,
but they did not know that I healed them.
I led them with cords of kindness,
with the bands of love,
and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws,
and I bent down to them and fed them.

They shall not return to the land of Egypt,
but Assyria shall be their king,
because they have refused to return to me.
The sword shall rage against their cities,
consume the bars of their gates,
and devour them because of their own counsels.
My people are bent on turning away from me,
and though they call out to the Most High,
he shall not raise them up at all.

How can I give you up, O Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, O Israel?
How can I make you like Admah?
How can I treat you like Zeboiim?
My heart recoils within me;
my compassion grows warm and tender.
I will not execute my burning anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim;
for I am God and not a man,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come in wrath.

They shall go after the Lord;
he will roar like a lion;
when he roars,
his children shall come trembling from the west;
they shall come trembling like birds from Egypt,
and like doves from the land of Assyria,
and I will return them to their homes, declares the Lord.
Ephraim has surrounded me with lies,
and the house of Israel with deceit,
but Judah still walks with God
and is faithful to the Holy One.