

Teach Us To Pray

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Good evening to our Wednesday evening discipleship study. As always before we start, let us go to the Lord in prayer.

Oh, Father, thank you that we have this awesome privilege of entering into your throne room, not by our merits, but by the merits of thy son Jesus and his blood. We thank you that we can be called children of God. That we can receive, Lord, things from you that only a good father, a perfect father can give to your children. And I look upon you, Father, for your help tonight as we work through Luke's gospel in chapter 11, these four verses, Lord, that Father, you have shown us through your son his heart for how disciples should pray and to pray aright. And so, Father, I pray that you would grant to us your presence, grant to us a heart that we be led by your word. And I pray grant to us, Lord, just reminders if we need to be reminded of what the Lord teaches us about prayer. And I pray that we would be in sync, our hearts would be tuned to your word and to what you have to say to us this evening. We thank you in Jesus name. Amen.

Well, we'll be in chapter 11. So, if you will go ahead and turn with me there, chapter 11, and we're going to be going through verses 1-4 this evening.

This is an invitation that the Lord Jesus gave his disciples a method, a way and how to pray or rather not how to pray but to be taught to pray. So as we look at these four verses, this is often referenced as the Lord's prayer, but this is as we will discover tonight is truly the disciples prayer given to them by the Lord Jesus. So if you will go ahead and look down with me at verse 1 and we will start our study. And it came to pass that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples.

We began not with Jesus commanding in a way towards the disciples you know why would you ask to be taught as John was teaching his disciples he doesn't even enter that thought and say it but rather we see here that we start off with a picture of Jesus where Luke tells us he was praying in a certain place and it is significant that this teaching on prayer arises from the example of the Lord Jesus Christ himself you see Jesus is praying it's not teaching in this situation not healing not preaching but praying and it is this praying that awakens desire in the disciples we I don't see him saying teach us to you know preach to heal or teaching in as well just respectively teaching. We see instead that they saw something in his praying that was completely different from all those other things situations.

Praying is what awakened them. The desire to want to pray just like him. And the disciples are filled with awe watching him praying all the way until Luke says until he ceased praying. Then

they would ask they knew that there was something going on there that could not be interrupted. It was quiet possibly in this section of Luke's writing when the Lord Jesus is praying. They're watching. They're watching him pray unto the father, fully absorbed, fully immersed in his prayer to his father and demonstrating a certain power that was visible so visible that they recognized that something was missing in them that needed to be taught. They saw something missing in them and they saw something in Jesus and said, "I don't know this yet. I don't know this kind of experience." And under their tongue, they were just waiting till he stopped praying so they can ask. And they saw God the son communing with God the father and God stirred in them a longing that they could not create themselves.

I'm sure they were praying previously to the situation but compared to their prayers no there was something else here something altogether different and they must know from the Lord Jesus Christ. The disciples request for Christ to teach us to pray is often noted for its wisdom. Knowing even to ask to teach us to pray is wisdom. But yet there's something deeper that lies within lies deeper than wisdom. And it's this longing that's not produced of curiosity, of wanting to know, but igniting rather the glory of the son of God which was revealed in the father's presence that something that they saw Jesus praying and this communion with God's presence that there was something radiating in him that they must need to know that it wasn't just an intellectual teach us at the intellectual level. It was much deeper, much greater than that. It was a relationship that they wanted to experience with God the Father that they saw in the Lord Jesus Christ. And so the hunger for God wasn't self-generated. It is God himself who initiated this desire, right? They saw Jesus Christ and praying. So meaning that the disciples request was ultimately God initiated. God was the one that initiated. So holiness is not self-initiated but rather we are drawn to holiness by the compelling attractiveness of Jesus Christ. So holiness is something that draws us draws us near and it's drawn to the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what holiness is.

So though the disciples possessed an aspiration, a desire, their understanding was limited. They hoped Jesus would simply provide a readymade prayer. But that's wasn't what Jesus was having in mind. They were thinking maybe there's a form or formula or a checklist of some sort that would suffice with them. No, Jesus wasn't going to compare himself first of all with John the Baptist disciples that he wasn't just going to say, "Well, just do what John the Baptist does." No, he was about to tell them something wholly original, a wholly different, something much greater and much higher for his disciples to know. You see, Jesus didn't criticize their lack of knowledge. They thought, "Oh, he is it similar to John's Baptist prayer?" No, it wasn't it wasn't in that frame of mind. Instead, he answered their request by not just meeting it, their need, but transcending their request, transcending it. Because there's no kind of prayer like the Lord's prayer truly as an example. So, he gives them a pattern, but more than that, he gives them a relationship. He invites them into his own communion with the father. So this is not about us striving to master you know following the prayers of Jesus but rather it's ushering us Jesus is ushering us into the very presence of the father. You see this is why the disciples does not say teach us how to pray. So if you look at the text it doesn't say teach us how to pray. Rather it says teach us to pray. Only God can make a praying heart of a child. It's a dependence. It's a dependence that we depend upon him even in prayer that we don't even know how to pray. That's why they don't say how I need you to guide me through even the whole prayer. I don't even know how to pray. That that's the response of the disciples.

So let's walk now through the petition starting at verse two. So verse two continuing says, "And he said unto them when ye pray, say our father which art in heaven." So I'm going to pause there. Here is the foundation to Jesus's answer, reminding us that there's two prominent features of the prayer that's brought out here in true prayer. The first is recognizing his presence. That's what sets the tone and the tone is reverence. That we must enter into prayer with reverence with deep respect. We don't pray to God just lightly. Another way of putting it. The second is the essence of prayer. The essence of prayer. We're going to go through that. So we're going to go first with recognizing his presence.

Jesus instructs us to call God father. Now we must be careful not to view this as a task. We do not make God our father. We do not earn the right to use this name by our good behavior. Father is rather a name that eliminates self-will altogether. This relationship is a gift from God signifying our adoption into his family. That's what father signifies. And we might naturally approach God with hesitant uncertainty, viewing ourselves as a stranger or perhaps even worse as just someone that reports to him. However, Jesus shows us that God has already secured our relationship by this word father. This is the understanding that leads us directly to the second most prominent feature of the prayer which is the essence of what prayer is.

And we see this by looking to Jesus and his prayer in the garden of Gethsemane. He said in Mark 14:36, "Abba, father." Abba father. Apostle Paul explains what this means, which is the spirit of adoption. We see this in Romans 8:15 where he says, "You have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby you cry, Abba, Father." And then in Galatians 4:6, Paul says this. He says, "Because ye are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts crying, Abba, father." So you see that the connection it indicates the Holy Spirit enables believers to call out Abba father which affirms that our identity is as children and as heirs in Christ.

Next we see the context of obedience. Abba implies father I will obey you. See, this demonstrates that the intimate relationship is not just for comfort, which is part of it, but there's more to it. It's this idea of voluntary submission to God's authority even during suffering. It is a work of the Holy Spirit in us to obey to obey. And we'll see this later in the chapter when we continue our study that the father gives the holy spirit to those who ask and it is the spirit who assures us within that we belong to him.

So that's the context of just this part of this verse. So God brings us in and not only does God give us the spirit of adoption, but he also gives us confidence in prayer. That's Hebrews 4:16. He gives us access unto the father by one spirit. Ephesians 2:18. And so prayer begins with what God has done in us. And then what we do is obedience to him as a child unto a father. So father also admits that we are children. You see an example a child does not worry about providing for the house. The child trusts the parents to provide.

So true prayer is us going unto the father like a child would freely confidently and completely honestly with him. And who is the one that gives us this confidence? It is the father himself. And we find comfort in the fact that he like a father to his children is already leaning in and listening to us. He hears us. He listens to us. He knows what we need and he knows what our needs are perfectly because he is a perfect father and he knows exactly what to give us because he is a good father.

And then we see in verse two the priorities. The priorities. Verse two starts off with and he said unto them when you pray say unto our father which art in heaven next hallowed be thy name. That literally means that Jesus moves from relationship to worship relationship to worship. But notice the order in the prayer. The order is important. Before we ask even a single thing for ourselves, we are drawn to God's glory. Namely, the name hallow. See, putting God the father's honor first is a characteristic of a person with the spirit of a child. This mirrors the even same structure that we see in the ten commandments where the initial commandments focus on what? God's name and his glory. And so this is a request that is consistent old and new testament that God would cause his name to be honored in us and through us. Order is important and it must be admitted right that even believers find it difficult to maintain this order in prayer. When left to ourselves our prayers become self-centered, don't they? We focus on my comfort and my success and my relief from difficulties.

It's not a good place to be for sure. So you see true prayer in this manner in the way the Lord teaches us is self-regard must be cast out by our love relationship with the father. That's what is most important is the love of God the father. That's takes away the selfishness from us. See selfishness is not overcome by our willpower. We know that. But by the revelation of God's hallowed name, his revealed character in us in our lives and as God loves us and magnifies his perfection and his glory as he reveals this to us. You see, he becomes big and glorious and majestic and beautiful and loving. And that all-consuming characteristic of God compared now to us is small, isn't it? It's small. It's the self-centeredness is concerns are displaced and fade away by instead of ourselves with him. The priority again is God the Father, not us. And that's why when we are praying, we ought to always check our own hearts. Do we rush to our self or do we rush to God? Because that's the right posture he wants for his children.

And so we go more into this word hallowed. It literally means to sanctify, treat him as holy, separating him from all things that are common. He is uncommon. He is altogether separate. That's what sanctify means. And God's reputation, his name is all important. Hallowed be thy name. His name signifies his reputation, his character and his presence in the world. I don't know about you, but how many people profane his name in the world, right? They profane his name. They don't treat his name as hallowed. So, but as children of God, we focus on hallowing his name, focusing on his glory. And then when we do that, he reveals his holiness to our hearts. So that his character, our relationship with him captures our hearts. No longer the things of ourselves capture us. You see, when he consumes us, our self fades away. That's what the Lord Jesus Christ wants but everything else as the very thing of order.

Next, we go on to thy kingdom come. Thy kingdom come. So, it's an idea of receiving thy kingdom come, right? Receiving the kingdom. See, he imposes his will upon our chaotic lives, right? Can we all agree our lives are chaotic? We often say, "Oh, well, there's some peace here or peace there." But really, it's all chaotic if you put everything together in totality, it is a chaotic life we live in. So, he's saying, "Thy kingdom come." Why? Why is thy kingdom so important compared to our chaotic lives? Because his kingdom brings peace and order. Because his kingdom brings peace and order. It's a good thing that the Lord Jesus Christ wants us to pray. That's the way the chaos goes away. He is the only one that brings true peace and true order. And so God brings the kingdom. And as he does, what does he do? He puts before our eyes him above everyone else. His character, his holiness, and then his kingdom unfolding before our

eyes, transferring us from what? The kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of thy son. He brings us into where we are and where we belong positionally. Yes, we are in heaven as it were as our citizenship. But he wants us to experience that here and now. Here and now. So he says, "Thy kingdom come now for you for your good." And so when you experience peace and order, it is God's goodness that he's giving to you until thy hallowing of his name is the only foundation for his kingdom among us. It is God's work to hallow his name in us and as a result his kingdom establishes into our hearts.

And then we continue to verses three and four where now the provision of grace is provided. Verses 3 and 4. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. So we see here now the prayer turns to our needs. But even here we see that it is God who acts and we who receive. The posture of receiving is still consistent with thy kingdom come. Here we are asking number one daily bread out of the order. This is priority of the three petitions. Give us day by day our daily bread. You see our first need is for the maintenance of our bodily life. It is said that you cannot survive after just several days of not eating. But yet here it is the request, isn't it? We might be tempted to think that our bread comes from our toil. It comes from our work. But this prayer corrects that. It reminds us that God is the provider. Give us this day our daily bread. We don't earn the bread. We don't secure the bread. We don't sustain ourselves. So this is the thing we must also be reminded. You see, God knows what we need before we even ask. That is true. But the father knows how to give the very things that we need. Not what we want, but what we need. And our first need is to sustain our bodily life. And so that is the first request. And so we don't even have to grasp it or hoard the bread like the Israelites in the wilderness. He said, don't take the manna and save it for tomorrow because by tomorrow it's going to be rotted. So same concept here consistent with the Old Testament as we ask for it day unto day. It's a daily request. Beyond physical bread, God gives us of course spiritual bread, doesn't he? Namely, Jesus is the bread of life. John 6:35. And then we see in Matthew 4:4 that the word nourishes us. And then in Galatians 5:16, it's the spirit who sustains to not fulfill the lust of the flesh. And he gives us the very thing that helps us is the spirit who sustains us.

And then we see here continuing after the first need and petition we see the second one is forgiveness. So look down with me verse four he says and forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. Interesting thing here is that you'll see all throughout wherever it says us. Well we see that as a second person plural right? And this emphasis is important because the petitions that we see are not primarily for our individual needs but it's actually a need for all disciples. So of course in this context it's the local church and we ask for these things in the context of not only receiving forgiveness but we are forgiving sins of others and that's in the context of other believers. And this is important because first of all forgiveness was never generated by us. But it also means that forgiveness is something God produces in us. Just as we receive forgiveness, he will produce in you to forgive others. That is his power working in you. And this is a chief need of the inner man because deliverance from sin is all important, isn't it? So what made us become Christians? It is what regenerated our hearts to be new creatures in Christ. Because sin is ultimately a debt that we could never pay. And it was only because of Jesus paying for our debt on the cross that we are free from it. But just like how important it is for us individually, the penalty of sin is of course individually separation from God. We no longer are separate from God. But think about it. How are you separated between your brothers and sisters?

Are you separated between your brothers and sisters? Because just like separation from God, you can be separated from other believers. And so this is in there. So if he has truly forgiven you, then you have been reconciled to God by Jesus Christ. But have you also reconciled with other believers in the name of Jesus Christ? Because you see, forgiveness, if it's not done, it leads to bitterness. And we know there's a passage where it talks about bitterness defiles many. It literally uses that word, it defiles many. That's the opposite of forgiveness. And actually, it's it stumps growth. If you ever notice plants and you see weeds consuming a plant, weeds are growing but that plant can't grow. It cannot grow in an environment of weeds because it's sucking the life out of and the nutrients of that plant. And so what does that mean? You stay immature. You stay as a baby Christian because of not forgiving others. So think about it. Are you still continuing to grow? Are you still continuing to mature in your walk with the Lord Jesus Christ? You can very well narrow it down to are you still bitter over what someone has done in your life? Because that you can trace back to why you're not growing as a Christian and then as a result why you're not producing fruit as a Christian. So this is really important, really important. These petitions, they are focused petitions. They're important for your vital relationship with God and your vital relationship with other believers. So with that said, for this part, we must treat this as all important as God treats it as all important in this text.

So let's look at the third request. It's for protection. Protection. It says here, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." This is not a request for God to avoid tempting us. He never tempts. James 1:13-14, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God." For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempted he any man. But everyone is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. It's a good reminder. This is a request for God to protect us, guide us, and deliver us. He provides the escape. 1 Corinthians 10:13. With the temptation also make a way to escape. Whatever that temptation is, there is always an exit. There is always an exit. However might you think of that temptation, whatever it is, God makes an escape. God always will make an escape. But he says there in that continuing verse in 13 that you may be able to bear it. Just wait. Wait. Don't go further. Wherever you are in that temptation, stop because he'll help you to bear through it and he will show you how to exit. But you have to bear it. And then he says with another promise in Jude 24, he keeps us from falling. He says, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling." So we cannot say that God tempts. He never tempts. He never ever tempts his children. He always wants us to not fall into temptation and not fall. Not fall. So recognizing this petition, it helps us to see our inherent weakness.

See, Jesus knows that as believers, it doesn't matter how mature you are as a Christian. Remember order is important, right? So let's just say in that second request that you are reconciled to God and you're reconciled with believers and you're in a good place. You're mature. Don't think because of your maturity that now you'll have less opportunity to be tempted, less opportunity to fall. That's a lie. That's why Jesus says this is a petition. Even if you're mature, doesn't mean that you'll never be tempted or you'll never fall. And I'm not saying like fall as in you're going to go to hell. I'm talking about you're just stumbling along. And it means to be tempered by the reality that he will never make you fall. But you got to always realize that it's still there. Why else is he asking us to pray like this? So pride always leads to fall. We never arrived. Like Paul says, I am still, he says where he was at, he was closer toward the end than the beginning, wasn't he? But yet towards the end, closer to the end, he still said, I'm still trying to reach for the high calling of God through Christ Jesus. We're always still more. There needs to be

more work in us. Amen. There still needs more work in us. We will always be weak in our flesh. And so we ask not to be led into situations where the temptation to sin will be overwhelming. This is our prayer concerning weakness. Lord, help this not to be overwhelming because right now I am overwhelmed. I am overwhelmed. That's okay. Pray that I'm often overwhelmed. I know how it feels. And when you're overwhelmed, those are times where you're the weakest, aren't you? You can be serving. You can be doing all these things. You remember the previous message I gave about sitting before serving. It's all important, isn't it?

And I'm reminded of what Leonard Ravenhill says in his peak of his ministry, he prayed eight hours a day, not less, but more. You know, that is a mark of a true Christian, isn't it? Where while the Lord Jesus prayed many times in the wilderness, Apostle Paul said, "Pray without ceasing." These are the men that we what we learn is the Lord Jesus Christ of course in his modeling but as far as a sinner is concerned apostle Paul is the one we call the great apostle don't we and he says pray without ceasing I think that shows a lot doesn't it how important prayer is even advanced in our maturity as believers that prayer actually becomes more important more important because we're prone to being overwhelmed prone to be overwhelmed.

So the enemy is the one that overwhelms us as well. He fills us with all sorts of thoughts to stop us in our way the furtherance of the gospel or doing God's will. And with that, we have this assurance that only God can rescue us from the lion's mouth. And he will do so if we call upon him. Just call upon him. Call upon him. Call upon him. Call upon him over and over and over again. And you will find the assurance that there is an escape in every situation. No matter how difficult it may be or how overwhelming the enemy might be attacking you, there is always an escape. Just call upon him as Jesus reminds us to. And then deliver us from evil. Again, this is where we're going to close up tonight.

This prayer of acknowledging we are dependent on God for deliverance from evil. So call upon deliver me from evil. We cannot navigate this thing what we call life alone. And so he ends it with deliver us from evil. We ask him to keep us to guide us to deliver us. You see that is what a good shepherd does. He protects the sheep from danger. You see what happens with sheep is we tend to walk near the edge. We tend to walk towards danger, right? Sheep are known as dumb animals. They naturally stray away. They naturally go to the edge as it were. They naturally go to danger. I mean, we're not using this metaphor for not a real not a fake reason. It is a real applicable situation that we are. And so we need to constantly realize that we need to be delivered from evil and we need to always be protected by our shepherd from danger and falling over the edge as it were.

And just recall that Jesus offers this prayer to his disciples because they felt remember inadequate. They sense they lacked something that John disciples possessed. But Jesus wasn't here to correct him, but to transcend what they even ever imagined what prayer looks like. He was introducing them to the father and he was giving them a solid promise. He was giving them a solid promise that is guaranteed in these prayers. And the ultimate fulfillment of the Lord's prayer is found in the gift of the Holy Spirit. And Jesus highlights at the conclusion of this section in Luke I'm just briefly mentioning here is the Holy Spirit who enables us again to cry Abba father from our hearts. It is him that helps us to hallow God's name in our daily lives. It is him that provides the power that deliver us from evil. And then when we approach prayer in this

way, we see all the things that God actively accomplishes on our behalf. So we started off with teach us to pray. God initiates. Then we saw our father who is the one that adopts us into the family of God. And then it is God that sanctifies and hallowing thy name. It is God that reigns in our lives by thy kingdom come. It is God who provides by all the things that he gives us in our petitions such as bread, forgiveness for our sins and for others. And God transforming work of allowing us to be able to forgive others and then he protects us. He leads us not into temptation and he delivers us from evil.

So he loves his children both perfectly and wisely and we can rest in his work knowing he will always give what they need. Let us pray.

Father, thank you for the words of Christ just reminding us of how important this model that he has laid before us as his disciples to model it out in our own lives and to know that these are things Lord that we have to constantly remind ourselves, Father, we are so easily forgetful, Lord. We are so easily led astray. We're so easily to forget you, Lord. And I pray, Father, that you would grant to us just a reminder, a fresh reminder tonight of the very order and peace that you have for our lives. Wherever people are right now, God, I pray that you would work that peace and thy order in their lives. And I pray, Father, that you would continue to help them flourish as believers, that they will continue to grow in the maturity and stature of Christ. And I pray, Father, that you would bless to this end in and through our church. And we'll thank you in Jesus name. Amen.