

THE LORD'S PRAYER

“One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray’.” —LUKE 11:1

If our prayer lives are going to be effective, it is helpful to understand the pattern for praying Jesus taught His disciples. He makes the first part of the Lord's Prayer about God, and is concerned with the worship of God – “Hallowed be your name.”

Worshipping God is recognizing who He is, our Creator and Sovereign Lord. We worship Him not only in word and deed, but in obedience. Next Jesus talks about the work of God – “Your kingdom come.” That is the jettisoning of our agenda for God's agenda. Our prayers should be in submission to the Kingdom of God, an exhortation of His work being done on earth. It means our kingdom go, God's kingdom come.

Jesus is then concerned with the will of God. “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” If we are praying for the Kingdom of God, then inevitably our prayers are going to include the will of God being implemented on earth. “Your will be done” is praying in faith. It is praying with the realization that there are things God knows that we don't, and perhaps even greater things He will accomplish that we have no idea of.

Jesus makes the next part of the Lord's Prayer about us. First, our physical need – “Give us this day our daily bread.” In this, we acknowledge our dependency upon God for our daily provision, no more and no less. All we need for each day is only enough to get through each day. Secondly, our spiritual need – “Forgive us our debts as we have

forgiven our debtors.” We all have a need to be cleansed and forgiven. Our relationship with God is designed to meet the needs of others, and in keeping our relationship right with others, we keep our relationship right with God. We are to forgive just as our Father in heaven forgives us. We are all with sin, and we add to it if we are unforgiving of others.

Thirdly, our moral need – “Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.” When we worship God and are concerned with the work and will of God, we can be absolutely sure the devil will be interested in us. Satan is described as the “prince of this world” and is intent on luring us away from God. Jesus tells us to ask for deliverance from the evil one.

The pattern of praying Jesus gives, takes us into the very heart and mind of God. God is the fixed point, and when our prayers revolve around Him, His kingdom and His will, what we’ll experience is a deeply enriched and intimate union with Him.

PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, there is no better will for my life and in this world than your will. I pray for it, Lord, and trust your direction.

TO REFLECT UPON: Is God the fixed point in my prayer life?