

Session 13 Being Taught to Pray by Jesus (Mt. 6:9-13)

I. THE MODEL PRAYER

- A. It is a great gift to learn about prayer from the One who had the greatest prayer life and the greatest teaching ministry in all history. Matthew 6:9-13 is one of the most familiar passages in the Bible, yet so few have searched out its deeper treasures. Its over-familiarity has resulted in many being content with a superficial view of its glorious contents.
- B. Jesus gave us a model of prayer (Mt. 6:9-13) based on what God is like and on the nature of the kingdom. It covers all the foundational basics that are expanded on throughout Scripture. Jesus told us the things that we must know and keep central in our quest to grow strong in prayer.
9In this manner, therefore, pray: our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. (Mt. 6:9)
- C. Jesus pointed out six requests to pray regularly. The first three focus on God’s glory (His name, kingdom, and will). The second three focus on man’s needs (physical, relational, and spiritual).

II. OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

- A. Jesus’ teaching on prayer starts with a strong focus on who God is—He is *our Father in heaven*. Foundational to a strong prayer life is a right view of God as our heavenly Father. A. W. Tozer insists that a low view of God has been the biggest problem in the Church in every generation. As we pray, we must intentionally take time to recall who He is according to His Word.
9Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. (Mt. 6:9)
- B. In the time of Jesus, the Jewish people saw God as transcendent creator and King. They trembled before His great power. Jesus taught them that their creator God was their Father.
- C. ***In heaven*** points to God’s transcendence. Jesus combined two ideas about God—He is powerful and personal. He combined God’s fatherly love with His heavenly power, His transcendence with His tenderness, and His being exalted so high with His humility that bows so low.
- D. He is a Father who longs for a relationship of deep partnership with us, in which He trains (disciplines), provides for, protects, and directs us with tenderness. He plans our destiny in His glory with great detail. He is a Father in the core of His personality. He expresses the fullness of the highest ideals of fatherhood. C. S. Lewis wrote of God as being “*beyond personality*.”
- E. Our Father in heaven is so kind, yet terrifying, in His majesty. We are to draw near to His tender heart with great confidence, adoring love, awestruck humility and wholehearted obedience.
- F. ***Our***: He is not only *my* Father, but *our* Father. Our prayers requests are tempered by the realities of who we are to God as one family. We are to pray inclusively for the whole family of believers, and not for ourselves only.

- G. Revelation 4 is one of the great passages on the Father's heavenly glory and beauty. I see four categories, each having three themes. These 12 details have many implications.
1. The beauty of **God's person**: how God looks, feels, and acts (4:3)
 2. The beauty of **God's people**: the Church enthroned, robed, and crowned (4:4)
 3. The beauty of **God's power**: manifest in the lightning, thunder, and voices (4:5a)
 4. The beauty of **God's presence**: His fire on lamps, seraphim, and the sea (4:5b-7; 15:2)

²A throne set in heaven...³He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne...like an emerald. ⁴Around the throne...I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns...⁵From the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne...⁶There was a sea of glass, like crystal...around the throne, were four living creatures...⁸they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, ..." (Rev. 4:2-8)

- H. Jesus set the context of intimacy with God within His sovereignty and majesty. Some only see His heavenly glory, but do not see His nature as a Father with deep love. They depersonalize God, presenting Him as majestic, but distant, cold hearted, and even harsh. We will see much more of the truth of His fatherhood as we see glimpses of His transcendence. Others only see Him as a tender Father, without seeing His heavenly glory. They see a Father who is kind and personal but without trembling before His transcendence. They portray God as a familiar and fun-loving buddy. It is based on bad and shallow theology and little personal experience of God.

III. PRAYING FOR GOD'S GLORY (MT. 6:9-10): THREE REQUESTS

- A. **Petition #1 - Praying for God's name to be hallowed**: God's name refers to His person, character, and authority. His name is hallowed when it responded to in a way that He is worthy of. The very thought of His name stirs awe and holy fear in any who understand a little. This petition is that God's majestic name be revealed *to us* and then *through us*.

⁹Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. (Mt. 6:9)

1. We pray, "Lord, work in me and others, so that we see and respond appropriately to Your greatness." We ask God to release His power to cause more people to see the truth about Him and to refuse to take His name in vain in jest or expressions of anger.
2. This is a prayer that the Father receive the highest place in our life, heart, and worship. We revere God's name by not asking for anything contrary to His glorious name and will.

- B. **Petition #2 - Praying for the kingdom to come**: We ask for His kingdom to increase on earth. The kingdom is the place where His Word is obeyed, His will is done, and His power expressed. For example, it is manifested when the sick are healed and demons are cast out (Mt. 12:28).

¹⁰Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (Mt. 6:10)

1. The kingdom is manifest in part in this age and in fullness when Jesus returns to earth. The kingdom is “already, but not yet”—it is already here, but not yet fully here (Mt. 3:1-2; 4:17, 23; 6:10, 33; 10:7; 12:28; 13:11; 16:18-19; 19:12; Mk. 4:11, 26; 9:1; Lk. 16:16; 17:20-21; 18:16, 29-30; Acts 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 30-31; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 4:20).
 2. We are to labor in prayer for the kingdom to increase. The error of the church of Ephesus was to do kingdom work without prayer or connecting deeply with Jesus (Rev. 2:4). The Lord gives more if we ask for more—in the process of speaking to God and bringing Him these requests, we develop our relationship with Him, and this is what He really wants.
 3. This petition includes being kingdom-minded in our lifestyles and in our attitudes towards others. Therefore, we are to work together with other believers, instead of having a territorial attitude and being focused only on our own sphere of authority and influence.
- C. ***Petition #3 - Praying for God’s will to be done:*** The third request includes our obedience in light of God’s kingdom purposes. His will consists of His commands and our ministry assignment. Some who are committed to changing the nations are not committed to personal purity. They are more captivated with their ministry as a “change agent” than with Jesus and obeying Him.

¹⁰Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (Mt. 6:10)

IV. PRAYING FOR OUR PERSONAL NEEDS (MT. 6:11-13): THREE REQUESTS

- A. The next three requests are for our needs—*physical* (daily bread), *relational* (forgiveness), and *spiritual* (deliverance from evil). Jesus commanded us to bring our personal requests to God in prayer. These prayers express our dependence on God in every area of life. Some wrongly conclude that this kind of prayer is “selfish,” so they neglect to make petition for personal needs.
- B. ***Petition #4 - Praying for our daily provision:*** This request is for our *daily* provision, protection, and direction. We do not pray to inform God of our needs (Mt. 6:7-8), but to enhance our relationship with Him. Asking God for our needs does not free us from the responsibility of working. He meets our needs partially by giving us the ability and opportunity to earn a living.
¹¹Give us this day our daily bread. (Mt. 6:11)
- C. ***Petition #5 - Praying for forgiveness:*** This petition helps our relationship with God and people. This is a prayer for restored communion with God that also renews our relationship with others.
¹²And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (Mt. 6:12)
- D. We are justified by faith, so prayer for our debts to be forgiven speaks of restoring our fellowship with God (1 Jn. 1:9), not being saved from hell. It is to cleanse our heart and thoughts.
⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful...to cleanse us from unrighteousness. (1 Jn. 1:9)

- E. The proof that we have been freely forgiven is that we gladly forgive others. The man who knows he has been forgiven is compelled to forgive others. Jesus did not say, “Forgive us our debts *because* we forgave our debtors.” This truth was illustrated in John 13, when Peter refused to let Jesus wash his feet, Jesus said that he was *clean* and that He only needed to wash his feet.
¹⁰He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean (Jn. 13:10)
- F. ***Petition #6 - Praying for deliverance from evil:*** This petition is that the Father lead us away from temptation. God never tempts anyone with evil (Jas. 1:13).
¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. (Mt. 6:13, NIV, RSV)
- G. Jesus’ point was to pray that God help us to avoid and escape temptations. He used a figure of speech to express *one petition* in two ways—*lead us from temptation* and *deliver us from evil*. The second half of the request defines positively what the first half says expresses negatively.
- H. There are *opportune* times when demonically-energized temptations hit us like a “storm.”
¹³The devil ended every temptation...he departed from Him until an opportune time. (Lk. 4:13)
- I. Jesus was calling the apostles to pray this prayer (Mt. 6:13) when He urged them to pray to *not enter into temptation* (Mt. 26:41; Lk. 22:40). To enter temptation speaks of something far more intense than the general temptations we all face. It points to a specific “storm of temptation” that occurs when three components come together—when demonic activity against us is heightened, our lusts are aroused, and circumstances are optimum for sin.
⁴¹Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. (Mt. 26:41)
³¹Satan has asked for you [Peter], that he may sift you as wheat. ³²But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me... (Lk. 22:31-32)
- J. Pre-temptation prayers for help will remove or reduce a storm of temptation. Praying before the temptation expresses humility that depends on God’s strength and acknowledges our weakness.
- K. David prayed for deliverance from sinful situations even before they occurred (Ps. 19:12-13).
¹³Keep back your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless... (Ps. 19:13)
- L. We “take heed” by keeping our relationship with Jesus strong through a consistent prayer life.
¹²Let him who thinks he stands [without prayer] take heed lest he fall... ¹³God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. 10:12-13)

M. Jesus calls us to “pray always” to prepare for the snare of temptation in the end times.

*³⁴Take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Watch and pray always that you may be counted worthy [*found prepared*] to escape...and to stand [*victorious*] before the Son of Man. (Lk. 21:34-36)*