



## Prayer Series - Part 1

January 2, 2022

In the Gospel of Saint Matthew chapter six, we are introduced to three specific points that Christ is teaching and they are simple: when you give, when you pray and when you fast. Notice that there is an expectation that Christ has regarding His followers and that is to have three specific and prevalent fruits of their lives: giving, praying and fasting.

And just as the text notes in the Gospel of Saint Luke chapter 11, when we compare these two passages of Scripture it lends to us an understanding of the situation surrounding one of the most famous and quoted passages of Scripture concerning prayer, “The Lord’s Prayer”.

But I would like to pose a question for all of our respective considerations today... is the “Lord’s Prayer” truly a prayer or is it a formula or perhaps better antiquated as a procedural approach, if you will, that teaches us the proper manners in which we are to perform the task of prayer. Prayer is more than talking to God and it is more than a list of wants and desires.

To make this more specific to provide context to what I am suggesting, consider a monarchy such as Great Britain; if you are to have an audience with the queen, there are certain nuances, expectations and considerations that one must more or less adapt to in so that the queen is not dishonored nor disrespected due to the ignorance of the visiting party. For Example, in the Presence of the Queen:

1. You bow if you are a gentleman and you curtsy if you are lady
2. You address her as your highness and never by her first name
3. You ensure that your head is never higher than her head
4. You only look her in the eye if she is speaking to you directly
5. You respect the fact that the queen is the authority in the room and is to not be interrupted while speaking until she is finished.
6. The queen remains seated but you are not afforded the right to sit in her presence unless instructed to do so because your standing is a sign of respect to the authority of the chair upon which she sits.

It is these few points that can make a huge impact or a huge mess if one is not aware of them thus there are guidelines to being in the presence of a monarch. And the just the same, there are guidelines to being in the presence of the King of Kings and there are proper and improper manners in which to pray which are clearly defined and outlined in your Bible.

For example, the Apostle James gives us insight into this very matter found in the Book of James chapter 4, in verses 1-4 (ESV), “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? <sup>2</sup>You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup>You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. <sup>4</sup>You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

Notice the statement here by the Apostle James, “You do not have, because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup>You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly...” In the King James version, the passage reads as thus, “<sup>3</sup>Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” We ask amiss, we are off target, when we do not understand the due order or proper order of a matter.

So how do we properly pray in so that we do not ask amiss? Perhaps we should bear in mind and not lose sight of the fact that prayer reveals just as much about us and the state of our heart as it does concerning the Character of God and regarding Christ's response to our prayer life. How do we properly pray powerfully and with purpose and prudence of His divine position in our lives?

The Gospel of Saint Luke 11:1-4 (NKJV), "Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." <sup>2</sup> So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done. On earth as *it is* in heaven. <sup>3</sup> Give us day by day our daily bread. <sup>4</sup> And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one."

Note the desire of this unnamed disciple asking the Lord to teach them to pray as John the Baptist had done for his disciples. There had to be something about Jesus' prayer life, just as John the Baptist's prayer life, that caused these men to desire that same closeness and intimacy that they saw demonstrated and can only be made manifest by and through prayer.

The old adage says that prayer changes things but remember that if we do not change the way we pray, and the intent of our heart while doing so, then prayer will not change anything; especially us. For some of us, far too often, we pray that things will change or circumstances would change but when is the last time we prayed for the Lord to change us?

Perhaps our circumstances are the direct result of we, ourselves, not being changed; suppose our circumstances can and will change when He changes us and transforms us, by way of the Holy Spirit, into the image of His Dear Son.

When we quote the Lord's Prayer, the vast majority quote from the Book of Matthew rather than the Book of Luke and it is in this chapter that we will focus the remainder of our time together today.

The Gospel of Saint Matthew 6:5-13 (NKJV), <sup>5</sup>“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. <sup>6</sup>But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. <sup>7</sup>And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. <sup>8</sup>“Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. <sup>9</sup>In this manner, therefore,

pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. <sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. <sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Pray then like this:

### 1. Our Father

- a. The Statement “Our Father” defines a Relationship and eliminates distance. The Opening Phrase makes it personal.
- b. Religion put God way up there and man way down here.
- c. Relationship makes our connection personal and not religious.

### 2. in Heaven

- a. Reverence and honor for His Position.
- b. The Prophet Isaiah said “Your ways are higher than ours” and “Your thoughts are higher than ours”.

### 3. Hallowed be Your name

- a. Holy is your name! Remember the Bible says that the Lord honors His Word above His Name but His name is Holy!

- b. I refuse to treat your Holy Name with contempt nor use your name in futility or vanity.
- c. Church Family, Familiarity breeds contempt; I refuse to fall into the trap of misusing your name and influence because I've gotten too comfortable in His Presence.
- d. This statement is a solemn reminder to me that I am privileged to call upon His Name; I am not owed the right, I am privileged with the opportunity to do so. That a Holy God would be willing to lend an ear to the cries of wretch like me; too many of us have gotten far too comfortable and we've lost our reverence for His Name.

#### **4. Your Kingdom Come**

- a. I choose to die to building my own kingdom.
- b. I choose to die to building my own identity.
- c. I choose to die to building my own authority.
- d. I choose to die to "Me" and all of my "Me Me Me" so I can serve the Great I Am.
- e. By Stating, "Your Kingdom Come", I choose to get "Me" out of the way.
- f. Hence the reason why the Apostle Paul said, "I die daily".

g. Church, you can't serve the Risen Savior until you've climbed upon the Cross and died to yourself. This life is not your own; you were bought with a Price and when we commit to His Kingdom; ours has to die upon the Cross as well because when His Kingdom Comes, it expels everything that is Anti-Kingdom.

## **5. Your Will Be Done**

- a. I choose to die to myself and my desires for the sake of doing Your Will.
- b. I choose to do it Your Way and not Mine.
- c. I choose to let you be the director of my life and not my sins, emotional whim, or what I think is best. All of us are Conduits of His Glory and Power; but if we are not careful we will clog up the pipe with "me" and stop up the flow.
- d. Again, I choose to die to "Me" so I can get "Me" out of the way.
- e. The Greatest Obstacle to His Will being done in your life and getting your will out of the way; or perhaps better said, getting our will in line with His will.

## **6. On Earth As *It Is* In Heaven**

- a. I choose to intentionally obey your will in the Earth as it is intentionally obeyed in Heaven even when it doesn't make sense. I choose to get in line with your will for me and my life.
- b. God's Will is obeyed in Heaven without Restraint; His Will in the Earth is made manifest through us but if we are too busy building our Kingdom and doing our Will then we, by our actions, are restraining the Will of God in the Earth.
- c. Christ works through People; He works through Us. My question is as follows: Are we in His way or in His Will?

## **7. Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread**

- a. I lean on you for my daily provisions and needs
- b. I trust in your ability to put your super on my natural to bless the works of my hands and the giftings in my life to prosper.
- c. Tomorrow has enough troubles for itself so my focus is on a daily walk with Christ to see the Goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living!

## **8. And Forgive Us Our Debts**

- a. I daily throw myself upon Your Mercies.
- b. His Mercies are new every morning.

## **9. As We Forgive Our Debtors**

- a. I choose to willfully forgive because I have experienced and understand the Mercy of my Father, I demonstrate that same Mercy as I immolate the one I serve.
- b. Christ expects us to forgive as we have been freely given.

## **10. And Do Not Lead Us Into Temptation**

- a. I trust your Leadership
- b. I am willing to let you take the lead and I trust you in all things to be content through the process.

## **11. But Deliver Us From The Evil One**

- a. I depend upon your protection over my life.
- b. I will not allow the enemy to have a foothold in my life.

## **12. For Yours Is The Kingdom**

- a. All that I build and all that I will ever accomplish is for the sake of building your Kingdom and not my own.
- b. You are worthy of it all...

### **13. For Yours Is The Power**

- a. Any strength or might or influence I have come from You and belongs to You.
- b. I will seek to pervert any power you give me to be used for self serving ventures.

### **14. For Yours Is The Glory Forever**

- a. Anything that I accomplish in this life is for your Glory and not my own. Any good that is found in me is only because of You.
- b. Elders with their golden crowns cast them at Christ's feet

### **15. Amen**

- a. Amen defined humbly means “so be it”.
- b. When we say amen what we are saying is, “And I am fine with that. I will align my life with your will. I am in agreement with your will and choose to build your kingdom and I will choose to trust you daily in all things. So be it. As the old hymnal song sweetly records... It is well, it is well with my soul...”