



# **Peninsula City Church**

## **Teach Us to Pray**

### **Our Father**

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**23<sup>rd</sup> April 2017 the PM Service**

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# Our Father

## An Introduction

**Q.** Have you ever stopped and thought about why you talk to God the way you do?

In the gospels of Matthew and Luke, we read about Jesus teaching His followers how to talk to God. So, what is the context of this teaching by Jesus regarding how to pray? In Matthew 4:25-5:2; 6:1; 7:28-29 we read,

<sup>4:25</sup> “Large crowds followed Him wherever He went—people from Galilee, the Ten Towns, Jerusalem, from all over Judea, and from east of the Jordan River. <sup>5:1</sup> One day as He saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around Him, <sup>2</sup> and He began to teach them... <sup>6:1</sup> ‘And when you pray...’ <sup>7:28</sup> And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, <sup>29</sup> for He taught them as one having authority, & not as the scribes” (NLT).

## 1. Our Father

With this context, Matthew recorded Jesus maintaining that talking to God can become a religious obligation if one is not careful. As a matter of fact, the words ‘pray’ and ‘prayer’ may become a duty if one is not born again or even if we are, we may become careless. But when the idea of prayer is deconstructed it is simply talking with our Heavenly Father.

### a. A framework

In the gospels of Matthew and Luke, we see that Jesus provided a skeleton or framework to wrap conversation with God around and develop. The reason for this was so that His followers did not merely ramble and repeat words again and again as the religious leaders of the day. The following is a parallel reading of this directive to use the kingdom framework,

<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” (Matt 6:9-13 NKJV esp. v9).

<sup>1</sup> “Once Jesus was in a certain place praying. As He finished, one of His disciples came to Him and said, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.’ <sup>2</sup> Jesus said, ‘This is how you should pray: ‘our Father, may Your name be kept holy. May Your Kingdom come soon. <sup>3</sup> Give us each day the food we need, <sup>4</sup> and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation” (Lk 11:1-4 NLT, esp., v2).

Notice the language is either God focused or plural when relating to Christ-followers.

A breakdown of the kingdom Prayer in Matt 6: 9-13	
v9	<u>Our</u> Father in heaven, may <u>Your</u> name be kept holy
v10	May <u>Your</u> Kingdom come soon. <u>Your</u> will be done On earth as it is in heaven
v11	Give <u>us</u> today the food <u>we</u> need
v12	And forgive <u>us our</u> sins, as <u>we</u> have forgiven <u>those</u> who sin against us
v13	And do not lead <u>us</u> into temptation, But deliver <u>us</u> from the evil one.
c13	For <b>Yours</b> is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen

## b. Beginning the conversation

In Matthew 6:5-8 we see Jesus make the statements “And when you pray...and when you pray... your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.” Consequently, Jesus expected that His followers would pray. However, in doing so, His followers need to remember that the Father is clued-in and is more aware of our needs than we are aware. However, even though He knows our needs, Jesus still requires His followers to talk to the Father. God speaks to His own through the Bible, prophecy, providence, conscience, our surroundings and the Holy Spirit, etc. but they talk to Him using prayer.

You will notice that Jesus said, in approaching God to address Him as “Our Father in heaven.” Namely, although He is your Father, He is also our Father. This concentrates on the fact of, our allegiance and where it lies, it is with our Father. Jesus was not introducing a new idea by calling God our Father. It was an Old Testament idea, for example, Isaiah used this phrase when speaking to God,

“Surely You are still our Father! Even if Abraham and Jacob would disown us, LORD, You would still be our Father. You are our Redeemer from ages past” (Is 63:16 NLT)

This is the same Father that Jesus was speaking of in the New Testament. So, this identifies these Old and New Testament believers as our brothers and sisters in the Father’s family. We are not alone in our relationship with the Father but are united with other brothers and sisters. It is not all just about you and me; it is about being united in our relationship with each other and our Father.

The next thing that stands out here is that our Father is in the heavens (plural). He is not restricted by an earthly perspective and existence. Instead, being spiritual and heavenly in existence, He is above all things and sustains all things in its place. He is, in fact, the infinite Heavenly Father in every way that we could imagine, except without sin or the effects of sin. Without this perspective of our Father in the heavens, we can become earthbound in our perception of life. Our Father in the heavens is both far above us in every way imaginable and at the same time so very near us.

## 2. The Holy Name

In presenting this framework for talking with our Heavenly Father, Jesus focused on the reality of the Father’s name being kept holy. So, the whole conversation with the Father begins by focusing on His holiness. Observing this from another perspective, in Hebrew, this idea is seen as the ‘*Shem Haqadosh*’ i.e. the Holy Name. The phrase ‘*HaShem*’ means the Name, while the expression ‘*Haqadosh*’ means the holy. Thus the Hebrew means of speaking about God is often the use of ‘the Name,’ which is out of respect for His holiness. This is done instead of using any of His titles such as ‘*Adonai*.’

This is also used when relating to the holy God in the Old Testament.

“If you refuse to obey all the words of instruction that are written in this book and if you do not reverence the glorious and awesome name of the LORD your God” (Deut 28:58 NLT).

Consequently, the name of God is to be permanently sanctified and treated with respect. This idea of God’s name being holy and the sacredness of His name are paramount. His name is more than merely a title; it signifies who He is in His character. This comes through in the Ten Words (Ten Commandments).

“You must not misuse The Name (*HaShem*) of the LORD your God. The LORD will not let you go unpunished if you misuse His name” (Ex 20:7 NLT).

Jesus knowing this truth stressed the importance of sanctifying the Heavenly Father's name. This is representative of who He is, the Holy Heavenly Father. For that reason, this is the place where Christ-followers need to begin talking with God, our Heavenly Father who is to be revered. Since the Father is holy; Jesus emphatically stated this truth so that His followers would not forget who they are talking to when praying. God's holy character is continually declared from heaven in His presence in both the Old and New Testament's.

"They (the seraphim) were calling out to each other, 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Heaven's Armies! The whole earth is filled with His glory!'" (Is 6:3 NLT)

"Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered all over with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty-- the One who always was, who is, and who is still to come'" (Rev 4:8 NLT).

## Some concluding thoughts

So, coming back to the opening question,

**Q.** Have you ever stopped and thought about why you talk to God the way you do?

When talking to God, we need to keep in mind that He is 'Our Father in the heavens.' We need to approach and live before Him in such as to validate His holy name. That is that His name is kept holy in our heart, thoughts, attitudes, speech, actions, family life, work, and place of study, etc. When we talk with Him, we need to remember who we are talking to when praying. He is no one's fool to be mocked or toyed with, He is holy, and we need to ensure that we approach Him with this knowledge. To many times we can take our Heavenly Father for granted, or even become flippant or shallow when relating to Him. Holiness is not something that we hear much about these days, much less when talking about our Heavenly Father. I am not saying that we need to be frightened of Him, but we do need to reverence and respect Him and His holy name.

Remember the next time that you are talking with Him that, He is our Father in the heavens. It's not all about you, but it is about our holy Heavenly Father. There are others in this world besides you, and when you talk with our Father, they factor in the mix as well. It's not all about your needs, but our needs as His children focusing on Him and His, not you and yours. We need to slow down and stop long enough to see things from our Heavenly Father's perspective. We need to lift our eyes long enough to see Him and His ways, which are so different to our narrow-minded ways.

"Our Heavenly and Holy Father we need You to open our eyes that we may see You in a fresh way. You are more than someone who merely dispenses what we think we want. Your perspective is to see Your kingdom come in the hearts and lives of those around us. It is also to see Your will be done here on earth as it is in heaven.

We live in the grunge and filth of this broken world, which seeks to place Your name within its tarnished and broken perspective. So, please continue renewing our heart, thoughts, attitudes, speech, actions, family life, work, and place of study, etc. that we may continually sanctify Your holy name. Our Father in heaven, may Your name be kept holy in our lives and when we wander from this way of seeing and talking to You please draw us back to You."

So, have you ever stopped and thought about why you talk to God like you do? There is a way that has been given by Jesus Christ to His followers. It goes like this,

"Our Father in heaven, may Your name be kept holy."

Let us now begin to talk to Him starting here.