

Essentials
New Way to Pray (2)
Matthew 6:9-13

August 6, 2017 am

HDBC

Jesus calls His followers to abandon the stale, lifeless praying of the religious hypocrites of His day and embrace a ***New Way to Pray***. In doing so he gives some clear instructions and provides a great illustration of how we are to pray. Last week we looked at the instructions. When we pray, we are to . . .

Be Sincere (avoid praying to impress others, pray in secret)

Be Smart (avoid thoughtless repetition, pray the right kinds of things)

Be Forgiving (pray with a forgiving heart toward others)

This morning we focus on the illustration. Lord's Prayer. Model Prayer.

Read the Text: Matthew 6:9-13

This was never intended to be a memorized prayer that is simply repeated back to God like a mantra. It is a call for clarity and simplicity rather than rhetoric. It is a call for thoughtful, serious praying.

It is an illustration of the kinds of things that should be including in our prayers. Jesus is teaching us to **be effective** when we pray. Some of our prayers are ineffective because of the content of our praying.

Play Video: Vending Machine Prayer

We may chuckle at the video. But far too many of us pray with as immaturely as they did. We need to learn to pray the right things. Prayer offers an endless opportunity to go deep in our relationship with God. We squander that opportunity when we fill our praying with **unimportant, selfish, frivolous things**.

As a child I learned to pray by repeating what I heard others say. But there came a time when I learned the importance of choosing my own words in prayer.

Five Things:

1. The Person (9) *Our Father*

To begin a prayer by calling God ***Father*** would have been shocking to those who heard this the first time.

Father was almost never used of God in the O.T. Only 14 times in 39 books. Each time it was used of God as the father of the nation, rather than individuals.

When Jesus came onto the scene he changed that. In fact, with only one exception, He always referred to God as Father. In just four books of the N.T., the gospels, God is referred to as *Father* more than sixty times.

I knew God as the father of creation and the ruler over all things before I was saved. But when I was born again, He became my father. No longer did I view him only as father over the cosmos, but as my spiritual daddy.

When you pray, you are praying to ***your Father***. God has chosen to adopt his people into his family as His children. The fact that He is ***our father*** settles so many things for us.

1) Settles the problem of fear.

As Father, he gives us unlimited access into His presence. He knows us, loves us, cares for us. I know my kids, love them, protect them.

2) Settles the problem of loneliness.

Even if we are rejected and abandoned by others, we have a heavenly father who will never abandon us. Also notice that we are taught to pray ***our father***.

We use the plural pronoun, which indicates there are others who also call Him Father. That means we are not alone as His children. We have a family of believers.

3) Settles the problem of provisions.

He is ***our father who is in heaven***. That means all the resources of Heaven are at His disposal to meet our needs. He is the ultimate supplier and his pantry is never depleted.

We don't have to ring a bell or use some other device to get the Lord's attention. Because He is our father, he gladly hears us.

2. The Purpose (10)

Note three things mentioned related to His purpose.

A. His Glory - *Hallowed be your name*

Hallowed means to be set apart as holy or sacred. His name be declared or rendered sacred. We should remember that in the Bible, names were more than ways to differentiate one person from another.

Names were given not because they sounded cool, but because they **revealed character**. His name reflects His character. God's name is holy, but we are to pray that it would be recognized as such on earth.

God is not like us. He is separate, different, unique. Phrases like, "The man upstairs" should be avoided.

B. His Kingdom - *Your kingdom come*

The kingdom of God is real and it is here. However it is also evident that not everyone yields to His kingdom.

There is a present meaning to this request. This is a call for Christ to rule in the lives of people now, especially the one praying. Allow His kingdom to direct us in our current situation. Also a desire for the kingdom of God to be **evident and operative** in the culture around us.

There is also a future element to it. It is a prayer for the return of Christ when He will make everything good, again.

C. His Will - *Your will be done...*

Desire for God's will to be done completely on earth. How is it done in Heaven? Perfect, without error, without delay, etc. No form of sin or disobedience mars the peace there.

God's ultimate perfect will is going to be accomplished. Nothing that God determines to do will ever be left undone. He will do all that He has set out to do. This prayer is a willingness to yield to that will and to participate in the carrying out of that will.

Now we are taught to consider praying about our own needs.

Note three things here.

3. The Provision (11)

Ask Him for the things we need. Note two things:

A. Ask for Bread and Not Steak

He will meet needs, not necessarily our desires. Literally "Give us this day daily bread that is suited for us." He knows what we need. Bread is symbolic of all that is indispensable to good living.

B. Ask for It Daily

Statement of trust. Not a prohibition against planning and saving, but a reminder that our ability to take care of ourselves is really pretty fragile.

The manna was provided daily so they would daily remember who was providing for them. Daily dependence upon God.

4. The Pardon (12)

Two things will hinder fellowship with God. Being unforgiven and being unforgiving. According to Jesus, one leads to the other. **If we are unforgiving then we are unforgiven.**

We need daily cleansing because we sin daily. This comes from daily confession of our sins. (1 John 1:9)

But this is only effective if we are daily forgiving those who sin against us. It would be a mockery for me to ask God to forgive me while I have unforgiveness in my heart toward another.

5. The Protection (13A)

Lead us not into temptation

This is a preventive prayer. Could legitimately be translated, *Lead us lest we fall into temptation.*

Desire for God to map out the road for us, and lead us to avoid the areas where temptation will be greatest. God knows the tactics of Satan, and he knows where the traps have been laid and can lead us through them. Walking through mine field with someone who has map of each mine's placement.

Evil might be *Evil One*.

God is greater than the evil one. Luther was right when he penned . . .

The prince of darkness grim,

We tremble not for him.

His rage we can endure,

For lo! His doom is sure.

One little word shall fell him.

Kent Hughes rightly points out that this model prayer is structured like a ladder with six rungs.

The top three rungs are in Heaven, having to do with God.

His glory, His Kingdom, His will.

The bottom three rungs descend to earth where we live, having to do with us.

Our needs, our forgiveness, our protection.

Not an accident that Jesus teaches us to pray for the Father's concerns before our own. Lesson in priorities.

That is a great way to pray. Start with God, then move toward self.