

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 6:9a-9b | The Lord's Prayer: Our Father
January 29, 2023

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 6.
- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.

REVIEW:

We are in our verse-by-verse study of the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew chapters five through seven include the most famous sermon ever preached by the greatest preacher ever—The Sermon on The Mount by Jesus Christ Himself.

As with many sermons, Jesus ebbs, flows, and preaches on several topics all relating to one theme.

Jesus' main theme is *the Kingdom of God*.

Both John the Baptizer and Jesus preached saying, "***Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near.***" (Matt 3:2; 4:17).

And for the past several weeks, we have been in the section where Jesus teaches His Disciples how and how not to pray.

LW KEYPOINT:

Public prayers come out of private prayers.

Jesus taught us that our public prayers are not to be showy—after all, we must remember it's not about our audience—it's about who we are paying to.

There's also no reason for our ^{public} prayers to be long or repetitive—after all, we are praying to a personal and relational God—a not some random cosmic force within the universe.

LW KEYPOINT:

Thoughtless prayer is as offensive to God as heartless prayer.

Jesus taught us how to pause before we start praying.

We are to think about our thinking.

As Disciples, we are to be concise, specific, and sincere as we pray.

I closed last Sunday's sermon by providing some practical suggestions and ideas that I've been taught about prayer.

I also provided a general outline/model to help you get started if you find yourself stuck with your prayer life.

INTRODUCTION:

Speaking of outlines or models of prayer—today, we turn to the perfect prayer model—*The Lord's prayer*.

Unfortunately, The Lord's Prayer is misnamed.

A better title would be *The Disciples Prayer*.

And the reason it's a Disciple's Prayer is because the Lord Jesus doesn't have to ask for forgiveness, as stated in verse 12.

The actual "Lord's Prayer" is in John 17, where Jesus prays for Himself, His Disciples, and All Believers.

Now I do need to back up a bit from last week.

I mentioned how you never know what you will find when you study God's Word, like searching for gold and silver.

I assumed—so we know we're off to a bad start there...

I assumed that I would preach throughout The Lord's Prayer today.

Guess what! I assumed wrong.

We will study the Lord's Prayer today, but I only got as far as "Our Father..."

Before I knew it, I had 10,000 words on my outline—and I only needed 4,000 to preach a message.

So we are going to focus on God as our Father today.

Scripture has much to say about God relating to His people as a Father.

STORY: Good, Good Father.

Before diving into the Scripture, let me provide a general overview.

KEY POINT #1
The Lord's Prayer is an outline that focuses on the ingredients that make up a godly prayer.

The first three verses concern the glory of God.

We are to pray "Your Name, Your Kingdom, Your Will."

The first three ingredients deal with God.

The second half of the prayer concern our well-being.

We pray, "Give Us, Forgive us, Deliver us."

Those verses deal with human needs.

The Lord's Prayer has a similar structure to the Ten Commandments.

Both place God's concerns first.

The first four commandments deal with how to honor God.

The last six commandments deal with how to honor others.

In both The Lord's prayer and the Ten Commandments, we see the illustration of the cross.

Honoring/Loving God is vertical. Honoring/Loving people is horizontal.

Within the Ten Commandments and The Lord's Prayer, we place God's glory before our wants and desires.

The Lord's prayer is the perfect prayer.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "The Lord's Prayer is not merely the pattern prayer, it is the way Christians must pray."

Martin Luther preached a volume on the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer is, without a doubt, the greatest prayer of the Christian church.

And we'll spend today learning the first part of it by focusing on God as Our Father.

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6:9a-9b CSB

Matthew 6:5—“Whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. Truly I tell you, they have their reward.

Matthew 6:6— But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.,

Matthew 6:7— When you pray, don't babble like the Gentiles, since they imagine they'll be heard for their many words.

Matthew 6:8— Don't be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.

Matthew 6:9— “Therefore, you should pray like this:
Our Father in heaven,
your name be honored as holy.

Matthew 6:10— Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:11— Give us today our daily bread.

Matthew 6:12— And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Matthew 6:13— And do not bring us into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.,

And dear friends, these are the very words from the inerrant, inspired, and infallible Word of Almighty God.

PRAY:

*I will praise you with an upright heart
when I learn your righteous ways. (Psalm 119:7)*

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 6:7—When you pray, don't babble like the Gentiles, since they imagine they'll be heard for their many words.

Matthew 6:8—Don't be like them, because your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.

So Jesus tells us how not to pray...twice, in two verses.

And now, He teaches us How to pray in a Godly manner.

Matthew 6:9—"Therefore, you should pray like this:

Notice how Jesus separates the prayers of those who don't know God-- to giving His Disciples instructions to those who do know God.

In Luke's Gospel, we learn that one of the Disciples asked Jesus how to pray.

Luke 11:1—He (Jesus) was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John also taught his disciples."

Can you imagine watching Jesus pray silently and personally to God the Father?

Jesus had to do something while praying that drew the disciples in.

Jesus had something they didn't have.

And they wanted whatever they were missing.

So at the disciples' request, Jesus provides this structure/pattern of prayer.

Matthew 6:9— "Therefore, you should pray like this:

Notice what Jesus doesn't say— "pray this."

(Houtos in Greek) - In this manner
[who-toes] In this way
In the way indicated

He doesn't say, "use these exact words in this exact order."

Jesus says, "pray like this."

~~In other words, our requests should be along these lines.~~

Jesus is providing a structure because, as earthy people, we have no clue how to ~~approach~~ the Almighty.

Prayer outline

communicate to

KEYPOINT #2

The Lord's Prayer is a model, not a mantra.

It is not a prayer to be memorized and repeated.

only - that's a good start

It is an outline that gives us a foundation of where to begin—because prayer is a relationship with God.

Prayer is not a transaction.

business

The Lord's prayer is like a guardrail that keeps us from driving off a cliff.

It keeps us on the straight and narrow.

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we ought to slow down and pray it thoughtfully, giving attention to the individual pieces within the prayer itself.

Last Sunday, Jesus taught us the danger of using heartless and thoughtless prayers.

Jesus never intended The Lord's Prayer to become a mindless magical mantra—similar to what pagans use.

Yet, it is ironic that some people or denominations use The Lord's prayer in the very way that Jesus warns against!

In fact, the reason He gave this prayer is *to keep us* from using vain repetitions.

So how does the perfect prayer outline begin?

Matthew 6:9—Our Father

“Our Abba”—“Our dearest Father.”

Focusing on God as our Heavenly Father is the foundational awareness of all our prayers.

This is not an entirely foreign concept.

Devout Jews have always understood that God is comparable to a loving Father.

In the OT, God is referred to as *Father* fourteen times.

Within those fourteen verses, the term, *Father*, was usually used to reference the nation of Israel, not individuals.

Let me give you a few examples.

The nation of Israel was called God's son.

God is speaking to Moses.

Exodus 4:22—And you will say to Pharaoh: This is what the Lord says: Israel is my firstborn son.

Exodus 4:23— I told you: Let my son go so that he may worship me, Israel recognized that Their Heavenly Father who purchased them/redeemed out of slavery from Egypt.

-NATION of Israel

We see God as a Father, disciplining His Son—the nation of Israel.

Deuteronomy 32:5—His people have acted corruptly toward him; this is their defect—they are not his children but a devious and crooked generation.

In other words, the nation of Israel is acting like teenagers.

Deuteronomy 32:6— Is this how you repay the Lord, you foolish and senseless people? Isn't he your Father and Creator?, Didn't he make you and sustain you?

More on that distinction in A moment.

The prophet Isaiah acknowledges God as their Father ...

Isaiah 63:16—Yet you are our Father, even though Abraham does not know us and Israel doesn't recognize us.

You, Lord, are our Father;
your name is Our Redeemer from Ancient Times.

ISAIAH refers back to the Exodus.

So in the OT, we have a glimpse of how the entire nation was viewed as God's son.

But when Jesus came on the scene, He addressed God as His personal Father.

All his prayers (except one) address God as His *Father*.

personal

He never used anything else!

The Gospels (just four books compared to the 39 books in the OT) record Jesus calling God His *Father* more than sixty times.

But, here's the rub—even though devout Jews understood God as a type of father—no devout Jew dared to address God as his personal Father.

Pagans didn't pray this way, either.

Devout Jews considered that kind of relationship too intimate.

In fact, the Jews of Jesus' day set up *fencing laws*, so they didn't even call God by His name.

What does a fence do? It keeps people out or keeps somebody or something in.

A fencing law acted as a precaution so the Jews wouldn't accidentally say the name of God.

Devout Jews would speak of God as "heaven" or "the Most High" or merely "Lord" instead.

They spoke this way because they considered God's name too holy to speak.

The problem was that they distanced themselves from God as a Heavenly Father by doing that—even though God told Moses His name—YWHW.

so YWHW is what God wanted His people to call Him.
Think about it, how can you build a relationship with anyone if you insist on being so formal?

Do you, as a parent or grandparent, insist that your kids or grandkids call you Mr. or Mrs.?

Do you require them to schedule an appointment weeks in advance for a visit?

No, you want them to run through your front door, saying, "Daddy! Papa! Grandpa!"

Formality creates distance.

Even today, devout Jews don't say "God."

Several years ago, I was working on something that dealt with the Jewish calendar.

And I had some email correspondence with a Rabbi.

I couldn't help but notice that whenever he wrote "God," he wrote G-d.

If we think about it, it's easier to pray to a Divine Being/Force than it is to a caring and loving Heavenly Father.

Because we can keep a Divine Force at a distance.

We won't allow ~~him~~^{it} to get too close.

Just tell me what mantra I have to recite and what type of allegiance I need to pledge, and I'll do it to make ~~him~~^{him} happy.

But don't tell me that God is a Heavenly Father.

That is way too intimate.

If God is our Father, we are His sons and daughters.

It implies a relationship, a oneness, and accountability.

And our humanness/our earthiness — our sinfulness revolts and rebels at the thought of being accountable to anyone or anything—especially to our Creator.

However, Jesus communicates a family dynamic when He says, “Our Father.”

In Greek, **Father** is *patēr*, (paw-tay-er).

FATHER is “Abba” in Aramaic.

Aramaic was the everyday language spoken by Jesus (Mark 14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6).

We see Jesus speaking Aramaic throughout the Gospels.

EXAMPLES:

When Jesus raised a girl from the dead, he said, “*Talitha koum*” (Tah-Leath-Uh / kum) (“Little girl, I say to you, get up”). (Mark 5:41)

When Jesus healed a deaf man in the Decapolis, he said, “*Ephphatha!*” (Eph/Fah-tha) “**Be opened!**” (Mark 7:34)

Probably the most famous Aramaic statement is from the cross when Jesus cries, *eloi eloi lama sabachthani* — **My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?** (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34);

Jesus uses **Abba Father** in the Garden of Gethsemane, “**Abba, Father! All things are possible for you. Take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, not what I will, but what you will.**” (Mark 14:36).

All that to say that Aramaic was similar to Hebrew.

However, Aramaic used words and phrases that were borrowed from other languages and cultures, especially Babylonian.

Regardless, **Abba** was the word used by Jewish children for their earthly fathers.

Let's not miss that! How precious is it for a little boy to call his father, daddy?

So for Jesus to use **Abba** when addressing God, was absolutely revolutionary in Jesus' day.

It nearly got ~~Jesus~~ ^{him} killed in John chapter ten.

It's also very interesting how Jesus uses His pronouns with *Abba*, Father.

When Jesus speaks of forgiveness, He speaks of **your** Father" and excludes himself—because Jesus doesn't need to be forgiven.

When Jesus speaks of His unique sonship and divine authority, he speaks of **my** Father" and excludes others.

Now what's fascinating about the beginning of the Lord's Prayer is that the pronoun is plural.

Contrary to popular belief, nowhere in Scripture is there a place for the Americanized individualism that says, "It's just me and Jesus." — *that's all I need*

Now, there is another popular belief that we need to address.

Who can legitimately call God **Father**?

Malachi 2:10— Don't all of us have **one** Father? Didn't **one** God create us?

Paul said to the Greek philosophers on Mars Hill,

Acts 17:28—For in him we live and move and have our being, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we are **also his** offspring.'

Is Paul = Malachi teaching Universalism? — That all people will eventually be saved?
So can anyone and everyone call God, Father?

Is everyone a son or daughter of God Almighty?

Let's keep digging...

We know that God loves the world He created...

+ **John 3:16 ESV**—“For God so loved the world,

In other words, God loves all of His creation.

But let's finish the rest of the verse...

+ **John 3:16 ESV**—For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

IF Universalism teaches that everyone will be eventually saved, why did God send His Son?

It's through God's love for “the world”—His creation—that God gave His Son to the world as a gift.

+ **John 3:17 ESV**— For God did not send his Son into the world (creation) to condemn the (people of the) world, but in order that the world (people) might be saved through him.

In Greek All three “worlds” translated as world is Kosmos + but the sense is different

~~Now we have three uses of the word—world. They are not the same,~~

+ **John 3:18 ESV**— Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

So if a person refuses to believe that Jesus is God's Son, then spiritually, unbelievers have another father.

How do we know this to be true?

Because in His most severe criticism of the Jewish leaders, Jesus said,

John 8:38— I speak what I have seen in the presence of the Father, so then, you do what you have heard from your father."

Notice that Jesus is referring to two distinct Fathers.

John 8:39— "Our father is Abraham," they replied.

"If you were Abraham's children," Jesus told them, "you would do what Abraham did."

John 8:40— But now you are trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

John 8:41— You're doing what your father does."

"We weren't born of sexual immorality," they said. "We have one Father—God."

The Jews take a dig at Jesus because they don't understand the virginal conception.

John 8:42— Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, because I came from God and I am here. For I didn't come on my own, but he sent me.

In other words - If we claim that God is our Father - then we will love Jesus.

John 8:43— Why don't you understand what I say? Because you cannot listen to my word.

John 8:44— You are of your father the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.

John 8:45— Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.

John 8:46— Who among you can convict me of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

John 8:47— *The one who is from God listens to God's words. This is why you don't listen, because you are not from God."*

Telling people that their spiritual father is Satan wasn't a popular spiritual truth then—and it's not now.

However, truth is truth, no matter how uncomfortable it is.

It's been said that we have to hear the bad news before we can understand the good.

That principle remains true today in this text.

We can only call upon God as our Father based on one condition: Belief.

John 3:18 ESV— *Whoever believes in him (Jesus) is not condemned (guilty of sin),*

When we choose to believe ^{in Jesus that Jesus is God in human flesh} that, a supernatural transaction takes place.

Our sin debt has been paid via the blood-stained cross of Christ.

Our sins are legally transferred /imputed to Jesus' sacrifice for our sin.

If that wasn't good enough, the perfect life that Jesus lived (righteousness) is then transferred to you.

And the proof of this amazing ^{transaction} transition is the empty grave.

Jesus did exactly what He said He would do—He walked out of his grave, conquering sin and death on our behalf.

KEYPOINT 2:

Believe
 God is a Father only to those who ~~have come to His family through His Son, Jesus Christ.~~

BUMPER STICKER: coexist / tolerance

It's quite clever with all those religious symbols to make up the word—but it's a lie.

ABOUT FATHER
 We don't come to God on our own terms | picking our own personal flavor of religion.

We come to God through His Son—a relationship—not a religion.

So every time we pray the Lord's Prayer, we are reminded that we are praying as God's adopted children.

We cannot call God, Father, | through our own will or merit—there is no stairway to Heaven.

It's only by faith | in the Son of God, Christ Jesus The Lord.

PREACH:

Now, many of us have a hard time wrapping our brains and emotions around the concept that God really is a good, good Father.

MR
 I mentioned last week, that it was especially hard for to call God my Father at times because I had three "dads" growing up | but no father.

A father to me was someone who would eventually leave me.

He would hang around until something better came along.

And the reason that these three dads came and went, at least in my childhood mind, was that there must have been something wrong with me.

There had to be something inherently dysfunctional about me—that no man wanted to stick around.

Some of us have been terribly abused by our earthly fathers or father-figures.

So, I get it, for many if not most of us— it's difficult to use that same word that caused us so much pain in our past—and apply it to God today.

So let me share some things that allowed me to address this type of fatherhood pain in my life—and as I share a bit of my own story, I pray that God speaks to you. *about you.*

When I got saved at 33 years old, the Lord surrounded me with men.

Men who loved God and accepted me—warts and all.

God placed me in the local church—and that's where He taught me about Himself—through imperfect God loving God fearing men.

I may have not a father in my life, but when God saved my wretched perverted soul, He adopted me into a new family and surrounded me with Brothers.

Older Brothers who became mentors.

Brothers who became my friends.

Younger Brothers to disciple.

These men taught me the Word of God—just as I'm teaching it to you today.

And it was through these men where I slowly learned how my Heavenly Father is so radically different than my three dads.

These men taught me how to read the Bible.

And it's in the promises of God where I cling to passages like:

+ **Deut. 31:6**—Be strong and courageous; don't be terrified or afraid For the Lord your God is the one who will go with you; he will not leave you or abandon you."

—
+ **Proverbs 2:1**—My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you,

+ **Proverbs 2:2**—listening closely to wisdom and directing your heart to understanding;

+ **Proverbs 2:3**—furthermore, if you call out to insight and lift your voice to understanding,

+ **Proverbs 2:4**—if you seek it like silver and search for it like hidden treasure,

+ **Proverbs 2:5**—then you will understand the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God.

—
+ **Proverbs 4:10**—Listen, my son. Accept my words, and you will live many years.

Proverbs 4:11— I am teaching you the way of wisdom;
I am guiding you on straight paths.

↳ Who, my Daddy, ~~my~~ My Abba.

Proverbs 4:12— When you walk, your steps will not be hindered;
when you run, you will not stumble.

Proverbs 4:13— Hold on to instruction; don't let go.
Guard it, for it is your life.

It is through the Scriptures & the Holy Spirit where we slowly
learn about God as our Heavenly Father

When you skim the Scriptures you will find only a handful of godly men who were good fathers.

From the very beginning, Isaac and Jacob—these men didn't get “father of the year awards.”

Even King David, a man after God's own heart—blew it as a father with Absalom.

But not our Daddy in Heaven.

Our Father in Heaven, holy is Your Name!

Our Heavenly Father is so radically and fundamentally different than your experience with your human father or father-figure.

Even if you had a great father growing up—the only thing great about him was that he reflected the Heavenly Father.

Dear friends, I pray that no matter where you are today in the relationship with your Heavenly Father, that you can take another step toward Him.

And maybe, just maybe learn to run into His arms and jump in His lap—so that He can wrap His Heavenly arms around you.



PRAYER

*And I will be a Father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to me,
says the Lord Almighty. (1 Cor. 6:18)*

say thank you worship.

BENEDICTION

*(May) the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your
hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:7)*

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