

Teach us to pray

The Lord's prayer

Sermon on the mount

Matthew 6: 9-13

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

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Luke 11: 1-4

1 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Christ is depicted as praying in a specific location (v. 1). In his divine nature, he was the recipient of prayer; as a human, he prayed; and as a Son, he demonstrated obedience through prayer. Numerous accounts highlight Christ's frequent engagement in prayer, more than others. For example, he was praying during his baptism (ch. 3:21), withdrew to the wilderness to pray (ch. 5:16), spent an entire night in prayer on a mountain (ch. 6:12), was found alone in prayer (ch. 9:18), and experienced transfiguration while praying on a mountain (ch. 9:28, 29). In this passage, he is again described as praying in a certain place, reflecting his commitment to prayer similar to that expressed by David in Psalm 109:4.

His disciples approached him seeking guidance on how to pray. After he had finished praying, they requested, "Lord, teach us to pray." As followers and new creations, these

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gifts and graces should inspire us to pursue similar aspirations. Our enthusiasm ought to motivate us towards constructive emulation.

It is reasonable for us to consider doing likewise. The disciples waited until he had completed his prayer, showing respect for his practice. One among them said, "Lord, teach us." Notably, although Christ had been providing instruction on various subjects, they specifically sought his guidance regarding prayer, demonstrating an earnest desire for deeper understanding.

- Their request is, "Lord, teach us to pray; give us a rule or model by which to go in praying, and put words into our mouths."
 - It is critical disciples of Christ petition him for instruction in prayer. Lord, teach us to pray, by itself a good prayer, and a very needful one, it is a hard thing to pray well, and it is Jesus Christ only that can teach us, by his word and Spirit, how to pray.
 - "Lord, teach me what it is to pray; Lord, excite and quicken me to the duty; Lord, direct me what to pray for; Lord, give me praying graces, that I may serve God acceptably in prayer; Lord, teach me to pray in proper words; give me a mouth and wisdom in prayer, that I may speak as I ought; teach me what to say."
- Their plea is, "As John also taught his disciples. He took care to instruct his disciples in this necessary duty, and we would be taught as they were. Remember that at that time the Jews' prayers were generally adorations, and praises of God, and doxologies.
- Christ gave them direction, much the same as he had given them before in his sermon upon the mount, Mt. 6:9, etc. We doubt they had forgotten it, but they needed to have had further and fuller instructions. In Matthew he had directed them to pray after this manner; here, When ye pray, **say**; which means that the Lord's prayer was intended to be used both as a form of prayer and a directory.
 - There are some differences between the Lord's prayer in Matthew and Luke, it appears that it was not the design of Christ that we should be tied up to these very words, or there would have been no variation.

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- Here is one difference in the translation only, which ought not to have been, when there is none in the original, and that is in the third petition: As in heaven, so in earth; whereas the words are the very same, and in the same order, as in Matthew. But there is a difference in the fourth petition. In Matthew we pray, "Give us daily bread this day:" here, "Give it us day by day" - (kath' hepmeran in the Greek). Day by day; that is, "Give us each day the bread which our bodies require, as they call for it. We depend on God daily, like children rely on their parents, receiving fresh mercies and supplies each day as needed, which obligates us to fulfill our daily duties accordingly.
 - There is also a difference in the fifth petition. Matthew uses the phrase "Forgive us our debts," whereas in this context it is rendered as "Forgive us our sins," indicating that sins are regarded as debts. The act of forgiving others does not merit pardon from God or serve as motivation for divine forgiveness, as God forgives for His own sake and for the sake of His Son. Forgiveness is key to receiving forgiveness, and if God has given us this trait, we can ask for His mercy by showing that we forgive others. We should forgive everyone without exception or resentment, expressing genuine love toward all. The doxology and Amen are omitted here, allowing flexibility for other doxologies from David's psalms or ones specific to Christian teachings that praise the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
- **Since it is essentially unchanged, we will simply summarize in general.**
 1. In prayer, approach God as a Father—with humility and confidence in his power and goodness—on behalf of yourself and others.
 2. When praying to God for ourselves, we should also include all humanity, recognizing them as fellow creatures of God. The prayer is designed to reflect this inclusive spirit of charity and sanctified compassion.
 3. To develop heavenly mindedness, we should focus on God as our Father in heaven during prayer. This helps us become more familiar with spiritual matters and better prepared for the future.
 4. In prayer and life, we should prioritize seeking God's kingdom and righteousness by honoring his name and recognizing his authority in both the world and the church. May these truths become more evident, bringing us all into greater obedience.

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5. The unseen realm, understood through faith, serves as our model. We should aim to align our actions on earth with its principles. The statement "As in heaven, so on earth" reflects the first three petitions: for the sanctification of God's name, the prevalence of His kingdom, and the fulfillment of His will on earth, just as in heaven.
6. Those who sincerely seek God's kingdom and righteousness can trust that other needs will be met as deemed appropriate by divine wisdom and may pray with faith. When our primary aim is honouring God and fulfilling His will, we can confidently ask for daily necessities, which are blessed when we are dedicated to God.
7. We should moderate our prayers for material blessings, seeking only what we need. The phrase "day by day" matches "our daily bread," which may mean not just daily, but necessary bread—what is sufficient for our needs as earthly beings, as reflected in Psalm 104:14.
8. Sins accumulate daily like debts, so we should regularly seek forgiveness. Each day brings new omissions and commissions, increasing our guilt, yet God's mercy continually invites us to seek pardon, offering forgiveness far beyond measure.
9. It is unlikely that one can reasonably expect forgiveness for personal wrongdoings if they do not genuinely forgive others who have offended or harmed them. Even if someone expresses a desire for forgiveness verbally, if their internal mindset includes resentment or thoughts of retaliation towards others, their request for reconciliation may not be considered sincere or effective.
10. We should fear temptation as much as the consequences of sin, and pray both to break sin's hold on us and to remove its guilt. Even when temptation appears attractive, we must earnestly ask God to keep us from it so that it does not lead us to sin and eventual ruin.
11. We should trust and seek God to protect us from all evil, praying not only for guidance away from wrongdoing but also for protection from Satan's harm.

He promotes persistence, intensity, and consistency in prayer by demonstrating,

This passage demonstrates that perseverance can significantly affect our interactions with others. It references the example of an individual who requests bread from a neighbor late at night and ultimately receives assistance due to his unwavering persistence, highlighting the value of steadfastness in prayer. While human responses to repeated requests may

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stem from irritation, the text asserts that God appreciates determination, encouraging continued prayer without discouragement.

Persistence can be highly effective in our dealings with others (verses 5-8). For instance, consider a situation in which an individual, facing an unexpected circumstance, attempts to borrow bread from a neighbour during the night—not for personal consumption but to serve an unexpected guest. The neighbour, inconvenienced by the timing, is reluctant to comply, citing various excuses such as the door being locked, children and servants being asleep, and personal discomfort in rising. Nonetheless, the requester remains undeterred, persistently knocking and expressing his intention to continue until his request is fulfilled; consequently, the neighbour eventually concedes, granting the bread to put an end to the disturbance. This parable is presented to reinforce the principle articulated in chapter 18:1—that individuals ought to pray consistently and not lose heart. The comparison is made not to suggest that God is swayed by persistence in the same way humans are, but to emphasise that while people may yield out of displeasure, God welcomes determined prayer.

We should approach God boldly and confidently, just as we would seek help from a trusted friend.

It is essential that we seek sustenance—those necessities which are indispensable and cannot be omitted.

It is important to approach God through prayer not only on our own behalf but also for others. In this instance, the man sought bread for his friend rather than himself. Notably, the Lord accepted Job when he prayed for his friends, as referenced in Job 42:10. Approaching God with requests for grace to enable us to do good—such as nourishing others through our words and providing meaningful engagement—is considered a commendable purpose.

Individuals may approach God with greater confidence during challenging times when those difficulties are not the result of their own actions, but rather circumstances beyond their control. In this scenario, the person would not have lacked bread if an unexpected guest had not arrived. Difficult situations that arise due to external circumstances can be addressed with assurance, trusting that they will be managed appropriately.

We should persist in prayer and stay vigilant with perseverance.

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The purpose is to encourage persistence in prayer. If persistence can influence an individual who might be initially displeased by it, how much more effective will it be with a benevolent God, who is far more willing to grant good than we are among ourselves, and who welcomes our persistent requests rather than resents them—particularly when we seek spiritual blessings. Even if our prayers are not answered immediately, perseverance will ultimately yield a response in due course.