

The Sermon on the Mount (Part 5–Jesus' Teaches On Prayer)

Matthew 6:5-15

The sermon on the mount is Christ's description of life in the Kingdom He will establish on earth in the Millennium.

In our text, Jesus instructs His disciples about prayer, commonly called "the Lord's Prayer" (more accurately it is the disciple's prayer¹). Jesus would not pray "*Forgive us our debts*" since He had nothing to be forgiven for. This is a "model prayer" for Jewish disciples awaiting the kingdom.

- Many churches formally *recite* this prayer every Sunday. However, no one in the N.T. prayed this prayer after the pattern of Jesus. It is not a prayer intended for a N.T. Christian to pray verbatim.
- This prayer concerns the coming kingdom dispensationally.

➡Conflicts in this prayer with the dispensation of grace:

1. Not time for the kingdom to come (v. 10). This will be the prayer of Jews in the tribulation period.
 - "*Thy kingdom come*" is "*the kingdom of heaven.*" The kingdom of God is within us (Lk. 17:20-21) as opposed to the kingdom of Heaven announced in Mt. 3:2; 4:17. The church is not seeking "*the kingdom of heaven*"—It is waiting the sound of the trumpet, and the rapture.
 - When the Kingdom does come, God's will, will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
2. Praying for daily bread will be essential in the tribulation period when there will be widespread famines and the Jews will be forced to live in the wilderness (Mt. 24:16-18; Rev. 12:13-14).
 - I can't imagine anyone in America today praying, "*Give us this day our daily bread.*" Even the homeless living on the street can get a sandwich from a local Gospel mission or food bank.
3. The basis of forgiveness is how we forgive others (vs. 12, 14, 15 cf. Eph. 4:32).

¹ "The Lord's Prayer" is actually Jesus' prayer recorded in John 17.

4. No one has to ask God not to lead them into temptation (v. 13). God never leads any man into temptation (cf. James 1:13). This was a request for God to keep them from *“the hour of temptation”* (Rev. 3:10). The word “temptation,” has to do with testing. Israel’s wandering in the wilderness was call “temptation” (Ps. 95:8). The testing of Abraham was called a “temptation” (Gen. 22:1). Whatever the temptation may be, they are requesting that God deliver them. It probably involves the temptation to take the mark of the Beast.
 5. The deliverance from “evil” (v. 13) is a prayer to be delivered from the wrath of their enemies. The evil may be the Antichrist, or some evil calamity that occurs in the Tribulation.
- ➔ Once the doctrinal application of this prayer is understood, there are some spiritual aspects in this model prayer may used as a “pattern” for our prayers—*“After this MANNER therefore pray ye...”*

I. The RUDIMENTS of prayer (vs. 5-8).

- A. The **practice**—*“When thou prayest...”* (v. 5), NOT “if thou prayest.” It is assumed God’s people will pray. It is the first evidence of spiritual life in a new Christian (Acts 9:11).
- B. The **direction** (v. 6).
 1. Prayer must be directed to God, not Mary or dead saints. We go directly to our Father who is in heaven (v. 9). Prayer is simply talking with God.
 2. The motive in prayer is to be heard by God, not men. Many public prayers are spoken to be heard of men. If people were not present, the prayer would be very different, if even prayed at all.
- C The **privacy** (v. 6). Prayer should not be a public spectacle to impress men.
 1. The majority of our praying should be done in secret. When one is conscious of the difference between group prayer, and private prayer, he realizes private prayer is more difficult. In

private prayer, there is no one to impress. You will be transparent, because it is just God and you.

2. Public prayer is OK, but if a person is praying more in public, than he does in private, he is praying to be seen of men.

D. The **length** (vs. 7-8). Prayers need not be long. The longest public prayer in the Bible is 1 Kings 8:22-53 and can be read in about three minutes.

1. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, who *“for a pretence make long prayers,”* (Mk 12:40). If you need to pray a long prayer, pray it in your closet.
2. Prayer should not be repetitious. There is nothing as pathetic and absurd as the Roman Catholic Rosary. Jesus said, *“When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do...”* This kind of praying is a sign of heathenism. The very idea that the more “hail Mary’s” one says, the less time he will spend in Purgatory, is a doctrine of devils. The doctrine of Purgatory is also a doctrine of devils.
3. Prayer is not us constantly reminding God of our needs (v. 8). God knows our needs better than we do. He knows what is best for us. He knows that we need to go through the testing to strengthen us.
 - There is no need to keep reminding God of your situation. He knows. Thank Him, and ask Him for grace in your situation.

II. The **RELATIONSHIP** in prayer.

- Prayer is based on a relationship between the person praying and God. We come to God as a loving Father who wants what is best for His children.
- A person cannot address their prayer, *“Our Father...”* if they are not saved. God is not their Father. This is a “family prayer” and can only be prayed by a “born again child of God” (John 1:12).
- God does hear the prayers of sinners, but only when they are seeking Him for salvation.

III. The REVERENCE in prayer (v. 9).

- A. The **PRIORITY** of God's name God is greatly concerned about His name. It is not to be taken in vain (or taken lightly). Jesus teaches prayer must begin with a recognition of the God we are praying to. He is holy.
- Prayer is to be God-centered, not self-centered. We pray that God would be glorified by our prayer (John 14:13).
 - Too often people begin their prayers by focusing on themselves and their own personal needs. We are not to approach God like a celestial genie to grant our wishes.
- B. The **PRAISE** of God's person. The front door of prayer is PRAISE and thanksgiving to God (Ps. 100:4—*Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*)
- Begin your prayers by exalting God's mighty and matchless name. We come to God in Jesus' name!

IV. The REQUESTS of prayer. Essentially, prayer is ASKING.

- A. Request for God's name to be "*hallowed.*" Held in high esteem.
- B. Request for the King to come (Rev. 22:20).
- C. Request for God's will to be done (Acts 21:14).
- D. Request for daily needs (cf. Phil 4:6).
- E. Request for forgiveness. We are forgiven on the basis of Christ's finished work at Calvary, not on the basis of our forgiving others.
- F. Request for victory over temptation (Mt. 26:41).
- ➡ Compare this to the publican's prayer in Luke 18:11-12. The publican never ASKED for anything. His prayer was all about himself.

SUMMATION: The conclusion of the prayer is as it began—God is given glory and praise. The *kingdom* is His... the *power* is His... and the *glory* is His. It is all about HIM!

THE LORD'S PRAYER THROUGH EYES OF SELF EXAMINATION

- I cannot say "***Our Father***" if I've not been born again.
- I cannot say "***which art In heaven***" if I'm focused on things of earth.
- I cannot say "***hallowed be thy name***" if I am not honoring God's name with my life.
- I cannot say "***Thy kingdom come***" if I am not prepared for His coming.
- I cannot say "***Thy will be done***" if I am determined to have my way.
- I cannot say "***in earth as, it is in heaven***" if I'll not serve him here and now.
- I cannot say "***give us this day our daily bread***" if I have no need to trust him to supply.
- I cannot say "***forgive us our debts***" if I am holding a grudge against another.
- I cannot say "***Lead us not into temptation***" if I am flirting with sin.
- I cannot say "***deliver us from evil***" if I do not put on the whole armor of God.
- I cannot say "***thine is the kingdom***" if I am not in subjection to His Kingship.
- I cannot attribute to him "***the power***" if I fear what men may do to me.
- I cannot ascribe to him "***the glory***" if I'm seeking honor for myself,
- I cannot say "***forever***" if the horizon of my life is bounded completely by time.
- And I cannot say "***Amen***" if I'm not in complete agreement to the petition of this prayer.