

Matthew 6:9-14

Praying With Jesus Pt.2 (How to Pray)

Introduction: We began last week looking at the subject of Prayer. In Christian understanding and teaching, prayer is talking to God the Father, through the atoning work of Jesus the Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the Bible prayer begins with God. He has first spoken to us through natural revelation (creation). Have you ever had a transcendent moment? Maybe it was piece of music? Maybe seeing half dome in Yosemite or looking out over the vastness of ocean. Maybe from Taylor Mountain looking over the beauty of our city..maybe the birth of your child... Transcendence is that moment where you are caught up in such awe, wonder, and worship, you just want to burst out in gratitude to someone or something. This is God speaking to us of his power and beauty - that created all that we see. Then through his special revelation (his word) his character, his acts in creation, his judgments, his redemption and rescue, his love mercy and grace...again that bring us to awe and wonder to burst out in gratitude..what is mankind that you are mindful of us?? Prayer is a response to God's words to humans.

*"Prayer is continuing a conversation that God has started through his Word and his grace, which eventually becomes a full encounter with him." - Timothy J. Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God**

In the Bible we find many different forms of prayer. Prayers of thanksgiving and praise, prayers of confession and lament, prayers of petition and intercession. But all are the same in that they are directed to God. Now of course prayer is part of the Christian life, it is necessary for the follower of Jesus. Even here Jesus doesn't say, if you pray, but when you pray. He assumes that his people will be a people of prayer. For the follower of Jesus prayer is not just a practice it is a way of being - a continual conversation and dependence on God.

Last week we looked at Jesus' teaching on "How not to Pray". We saw that the first step and first importance in prayer is that we come to the Father who loves us with simplicity and honesty - Pray what you have... I

do believe this is where prayer needs to begin for the Christian. To develop a continual conversation and daily, even, moment by moment, dependence on God. Prayer begins by knowing that God loves me and accepts me, has already started a conversation by his word and his grace, He knows me, He knows what I need. So I simply come to him as I am, and I share what is on my heart...

But we cannot stay here. Prayer cannot end there. And Jesus doesn't leave us there. As I've said many times before one of the things prayer does in the life of the follower of Jesus - is to mold us and shape us, to mature us to bring spiritual formation by giving us a greater vision of God our Father, his will, his kingdom and his glory.

So I ask this morning - What is in you? What is your vision for you life? What do you desire?

You want to experience an exciting, full life?

You want meaning and purpose?

Do you want inner peace?

You want a meaningful career?

You want to make enough money so you don't have to worry about money? Security?

You want to love and be loved; to be known and accepted?

I believe each of these in part are a whisper, an echo of the longing for the kingdom of God - and that's where Jesus wants to raise our minds and hearts - To God Our Father, and his Kingdom. Let's look at this pray in order that it would shape our imaginations and teach us to pray.

1. Pray like this: In Luke 11 Jesus is recorded as saying, "say these words" or recite these words" in reference to the Lord's prayer. There are different views on what we are to do with this prayer - do we recite it verbatim, do we paraphrase and make it our own? It's interesting to note that Jesus' teaching on prayer is the very middle of the sermon on the mount so whatever your view is on it is - Jesus' purpose is that it would bring radical shape to the life of his followers. - The point being - make this prayer a regular part of your life as a follower of Jesus.

1. Our Father in heaven

1. The first two words of this prayer set the tone for everything that comes afterwards. We are talking to our Father in heaven. Jesus uses possessive language "OUR Father", we belong to him, and are a part of his family. Of course, when Jesus calls Yahweh "Our Father" he means father in the best of terms. Jesus uses the

word Abba to refer to God here, it is the equivalent to our word Papa. Not only this but the Jews had a certain posture when they would pray - lifted hands, eyes raised to the sky. It was a posture of dependence, of reliance upon, a posture of a child reaching for its Father. Think of your crying, needy child - what is your heart to them when they are hurting, afraid, and truly in need - how much more Our Father in heaven?

1. There is a beautiful passage in the prophets where Yahweh expresses his fatherly care for his people - **“Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.”** - Isaiah 49:15-16
2. As we discussed last week Our Father knows us intimately, sees us, hears us when we call. He knows the hairs on our heads, our thoughts before we think them, our words before we say them. Our fears, our desires, our sins, our victories..he knows it all and he loves us so very much - This is the Father that sent his one of a kind son on a rescue mission to redeem us and bring us into his family. You are dearly loved by our Father - Not only that, but he is our father in heaven - All power, all wisdom, all authority belong to him and he's your Abba - talk to him, go to him with your cares, your desires, your fears.

2. Hallowed Be your Name

1. Now I asked in our intro what your desires were; what your vision for your life was? I want you to notice that Jesus here is raising our vision with these three petitions that he teaches us - The Father's Name being known and honored, the kingdom of God to come and His will to be done on earth like it is in heaven.
2. **The Name** - In Hebrew and Ancient usage to talk of someone's name encapsulated the whole person - to have a good name was to have a good reputation.
3. There is a great example of this in Exodus 34. In this famous passage Moses had asked Yahweh to see his “glory”. He wants to see God as he is - pull back the veil so to speak. What happens though is God puts Moses in a cave of sorts (so that he is not vaporized by God's glorious presents) and as God passes by it says, He (Yahweh) proclaimed the name of the LORD. The

LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

4. Jesus teaches us to ask for God's name to be hallowed - honored - glorified - it means that who God is and what he has done would be held up for all to see, that it would be famous. That God might have the applause and cheers of all people. It is the God who's name is mercy. The God who's name is Grace, The God who's name is steadfast love and faithfulness - that is the God we are asking to be made known and famous in all the earth! The God of Salvation - the God of the Gospel!! The God of the Bible has some bad PR. Do you ever hear people throwing God's name around - “God hates such and such people.” Using God's name for political agendas, dragging his name and reputation through the mud. And that isn't just in the culture it's in the church as well.
 1. Listen to the way Paul talks about God **“At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”** - Titus 3:3-7
(Ephesians 1; Psalm 103, etc)
 2. That God's name - who he really is - should be made known should be the heart cry, and prayer of every follower of Jesus that the world would really come to know and see the true character of our God!
 3. **Your kingdom Come, Your will be done; On earth as it is in Heaven**

1. Can I just say that if you're thinking this petition is a prayer of surrendering your true happiness and fulfillment, a dull, defeatist prayer, then you really don't understand the Kingdom of God, his will or his character. This is a prayer of the greatest and highest vision! This prayer encompasses all the true heart longings of humanity.
2. The Kingdom of God refers, not to disembodied souls being caught up to another realm in some hypnotic state strumming harps on clouds - crying Holy - but to Heaven on Earth; to God's final and eternal reign over his creation. And the Kingdom of God means, a guaranteed new heavens and new earth, a healed material creation. Absolute wholeness and well being- physically, spiritually, socially, and economically.
3. The Kingdom is bound up with the Old Testament concept of *shalom* - *The peace and glory of God permeating every part of the creation*. The Kingdom was said to be fully established when all that is broken and wrong with this world is mended and made whole and right. As such, the Kingdom is tightly bound up with poverty, oppression, misery and sin in all its various forms being brought to an end, and an ushering in of absolute flourishing, prosperity and blessing of the creation. That is the kingdom we are asking to come - there will be no more hunger, or thirst, no more war or genocide, no more rape and sex slavery, no more tears or pain, confusion, hopeless and meaningless - but the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea!!
 1. I love Dallas Willard's comment on this part of the prayer. He says, "*When Jesus directs us to pray, "Thy kingdom come," he does not mean we should pray for it to come into existence. Rather, we pray for it to take over at all points in the personal, social, and political order where it is now excluded: "On earth as it is in heaven." With this prayer we are invoking it, as in faith we are acting it, into the real world of our daily existence.*" - *Dallas Willard, The Divine Conspiracy*
 2. Where we see an absence of the Kingdom peace, righteousness and joy in the world- we can cry out with this prayer - bring your kingdom here!!
4. **Your will be done** - Means right relationships - righteousness and justice, peace - All that is taught the sermon on the mount. The Law of Loving our neighbor as ourself.

1. “The first and second petitions of the Lord’s prayer are fundamentally gospel aches: They ache for the full Story to become complete where God is All in All.” - Scot McKnight, Sermon on the Mount
2. When we begin our prayer focusing on Our Father, his Glory being known, His kingdom and will coming to pass - it put our own request in the right perspective.. My heart is often settled from the fear, anger, or frustration that I approached God in prayer with and I come to my needs, whether practical, social or spiritual, with a renewed faith in my Father who loves me, works redemption, and makes all things new.

1. Give us this day our daily bread. - Practical Needs

1. The need for God’s daily grace in our lives.
2. This request is not confined to food only. It is meant to cover all our material needs, everything that is necessary for life in this world.
3. Through this request we recognize God’s daily work in our lives to provide all that we need for life and godliness. He is our good father, and we acknowledge his very practical fatherly care. We ask and thank him for what he provides.

2. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. - Social/ Relational Needs.

1. This prayer reminds us of our continual need to confess our sins, faults, and failures and to receive God’s forgiveness
2. The continual need of cleansing from the defilement and guilt of sin done to us, sin done by us, and sin done in our presence that defiles us.
3. This prayer reminds us of the need to stay in right relationship not just with God but also with others - Jesus says, at the end of this teaching - “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

3. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. - Spiritual needs.

1. This petition is not so much about God ’s not leading us into testing or temptation - but about God’s protection, preservation and rescue from temptation or testing
2. A prayer for being kept from sin and it’s power.

3. Praying against the evil that still resides in us - Lord, save me from myself, Lord save me from worldly allurement, save me from the schemes of the devil.
4. Praying that God would Preserve us for his will and his kingdom.
 1. **“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” -Hebrews 4:14-16**
 2. These last two request are made so that we might enjoy unbroken fellowship with God.
4. **For Yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**
 1. Some translations leave this out because it is not in the earliest manuscripts. However, it is a most appropriate conclusion and benediction. Attributing once again power and worth to our God.
 2. We close our prayer with declarations about God's power and worth! We finish with praise!

Conclusion: The Lord's Prayer is meant to be recited whenever the follower of Jesus prays - of course there are many prayers and Psalms that we can pray from scripture - But Jesus says to his followers when you pray, pray this prayer. He wants this prayer to be central to our lives as his followers - he wants it to shape and form our hope, stir our faith and reorient our desires.

As Tim Keller says, *“Prayer is the way that all the things we believe in and that Christ has won for us actually become our strength. Prayer is the way that truth is worked into your heart to create new instincts, reflexes, and dispositions.”* - Tim Keller , *Prayer, Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*

Church I challenge you to make this prayer a part of your daily rhythm and begin to see how it brings a kingdom of God mindset and posture to your life. May it shape your hope, refresh your faith and reorder your desires toward your Father, his kingdom, and his glory!

Let's close praying this prayer together:

***“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also
have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”***