

PRAYING THE LORD'S PRAYER

Have you ever wondered how to pray? Really, think about it. Did anyone actually teach you to pray? Most of us probably learned to pray by listening to our parents, pastor, or Sunday school teachers. You know, the disciples wanted to learn how to pray—how to really pray. They went so far as to ask the Lord to teach them how to pray. What was His response? We've heard it often. We say it often. Do we know what we are saying? Do we understand what it means to "pray in this way?" It was our desire to better understand this and so we got together and did a little study on the matter. We want to share just a few of the things that we found helpful and have put together to help us gain a better understanding as we seek to follow the pattern that our Lord gave when He said, "After this manner pray ye."

"OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN"

Do not pass over this first phrase too quickly. Christ calls God "Our Father"—not "our Judge" or "our Creator" (though those titles would be equally valid), but "our Father." He chooses an intimate, endearing term—a term that shows a dependent relationship. Each believer must begin his prayers as a child calling out in dependence. But what separates this Father from all others? What enables Him to answer us? Christ says He is "in heaven." "Our God is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased" (Ps 115:3). It is because of His high position that our Father can be called upon and expected to answer. He is in a different class than even the best of earthly fathers. He is truly "our Father...in heaven."

"HALLOWED BE THY NAME"

What on earth does this mean? This is a petition that the name of God, which reveals the character of our Lord, would be esteemed and treated as holy or set apart. How does one pray for this? Let's look at a couple of ideas.

Pray for God's specific desires regarding His name.

- **Pray that God's name would not be blasphemed by Christians' conduct.** In Romans 2:24 Paul says "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." Paul is rebuking the Romans for their conduct that brought shame to the name of Christ. His name was blasphemed by the very ones bearing the name of "Christian" or "little Christ."
- **Pray that His name be not despised or thought of lightly, but that it be glorified.** Malachi 1:6 "If I then be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?' saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests that despise My name." Malachi 2:2 "'If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name,' saith the LORD of hosts, 'I will even send a curse upon you.'"
- **Pray that God's great name be recognized universally.** Malachi 1:11 "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles."

Examples from Scripture

- **Solomon – God's name is hallowed when He answers prayer.** I Kings 8:43 "Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name."
- **David – God's name is hallowed when He fulfills His promises.** I Chron. 17:23-24 "Therefore now, LORD, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant and concerning his house be established for ever, and do as though hast said. Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified forever."

God hallows His own name by continuing to be gracious to a disobedient people.

- Ezekiel 20:44 “And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name’s sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel,’ saith the Lord GOD.”
- Malachi 3:6 “For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

“THY KINGDOM COME”

What does it mean to pray thy kingdom come?

Christ is YOUR King!

- Acts 17:7 “[Paul preached] saying that there is another king, one Jesus.”
- Colossians 1:13 “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” **Others must to submit to Him as their king!**
- Matthew 28:18-19a “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ‘All [authority] is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and [make disciples of] all nations.’”

All men will submit to our righteous King!

- Zechariah 14:9 “And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.”
- Isaiah 32:1 “Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.”

Praying “Thy Kingdom Come” involves praying that

- Christ would rule my own heart as my King
- I would daily submit to Christ as my King
- Kingdom citizens to **go** and **make disciples** for the King (evangelism & discipleship)
- Other men would submit to Christ as their King
- Christ, the king, would return and rule this world in righteousness

“THY WILL BE DONE”

Pray with the Spirit that Christ had.

- When we pray we should have the surrendered Spirit of Christ. In the Garden he prayed, “Not My will but Thine be done” (Luke 22:42). Can you ask for God’s will to be done and then ask nothing more?

Pray for the following things. This is God’s Will.

- Purity – 1 Thessalonians 4:3 “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.”
- Thankfulness – 1 Thessalonians 5:18 “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”
- Submission to Authority – 1 Peter 2:13, 15 “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake...for so is the will of God”

“On earth as it is in heaven”

- In heaven God’s will is done immediately, completely, and in perfect submission. We should pray that His will would be so fully obeyed here on the earth.

“GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD”

We should recognize that the One who gives every good gift can provide for the present physical needs to sustain our life. Humbly entreat God to supply our needs so that others may glorify God because He has the power to care for His own. Pray the following promises to God as you ask for daily needs. God has promised!

- Psalm 34:10 “The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.”
- Phil. 4:19 “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”
- James 4:2 “Ye have not, because ye ask not.”

“FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US.”

We have a spiritual need to be cleansed from sin, but the fulfilling of that need is dependent upon our forgiveness of those who have wronged us.

- Luke 6:37b “Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.”
- Psalm 51:2 “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.”
- Matt. 6:15 “But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

“LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL”

Pray that God would save us even from the temptation itself.

- A deep hatred for sin causes the heart to well up with a firm desire to avoid even the temptation to sin.

Pray for God to deliver us from evil.

- **Cleansing from secret sins.** Psalm 19:12 “Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.”
- **Deliverance from sins done in high-handed defiance.** Psalm 19:13 “Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.”
- **A hatred for sin issues from humble dependence in prayer upon God’s delivering hand.**

Friends, we can safely leave these petitions with our Father. It is the spread of His kingdom, the display of His power, and the manifestation of His glory to the world that is at stake in these requests. When our requests intersect God’s agenda to spread His kingdom, display His power, and glorify His name, we can be assured that our petitions are safe in the eternal plan of God. He will answer a request to spread His kingdom, display His power and glorify His name by providing, protecting and cleansing His children. He has already said He would — **“For His is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen!”**

**STRIVING TOGETHER FOR THE
SCRIPTURAL STRENGTH TO SUCCEED
IN OUR SPIRITUAL STRUGGLE
(1 JOHN 2:14)**

