



“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name” (Matthew 6:9)

After This Manner

Lesson Subject: The Christian can pray effectively by following the Model Prayer that Jesus gave.

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Topic: Jesus: Teachings of.

The verses in this lesson today are so important. They are a part of Jesus' teachings on prayer.

Jesus gave us the Model Prayer to guide us in our praying. It may be recited word for word as our prayer, but that is not its full purpose. It is a pattern, a guide, and a model for our prayers.

I. PRAYER AND THE PERSON OF GOD (Matthew 6:9. 10)

A. Recognize the person of God: “*Our Father which art in heaven*” (verse 9). God is called by many titles in the Bible (creator, judge, governor) but most precious title is Father. God's word to those who believe in Jesus is, “*I . . . will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters*” (II Corinthians 6: 17. 18). His dear children respond in faith and love, “*O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand*” (Isaiah 64:8).

To call Him our Father is wonderful. To call Him our Father who is in heaven is twice blessed. Jesus used the title Father only when speaking with His disciples because God is truly the Father only of those who trust Jesus. In heaven He is the Father of believers on earth.

B. Have concern for the glory of God: “*Hallowed be thy name*” (verse 9). The term “hallowed” is a form of the word “holy.” Its basic

meaning is to be separate, to be different. To pray “*hallowed be thy name*” is to pray, “Let God's name be given a unique position among all names; let His name be recognized as distinct from all others in heaven and earth.

“*Name*” is more than a mere title. In the Bible the name refers to the nature and character of the person. It is the one who knows the “name (nature) of God” who trusts Him (Psalm 9:10; 20:7). His name is the nature of His person.

To pray “*hallowed be thy name*” means the petition is, “Enable us to give You the unique place which Your nature and character deserve.” It is a petition of worship.

C. Cultivate a desire for the reign of God: “*Thy kingdom come*” (verse 10). A kingdom is the domain of a king. The kingdom of God will come as the government of God is seen and the will of God is done.

The kingdom of God is past (Luke 13:28; Matthew 8:11), present (Luke 17:21), and yet future (Matthew 6:10). It has come, is here, and yet is coming.

The kingdom is entered today as people enter it one by one through faith in Jesus Christ. As one submits to the will of God for his life, the kingdom comes for him and he enters the kingdom of those who do the will of God. But one day, praise the Lord, His kingdom will be world wide. Jesus will return and “*the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea*” (Habakkuk 2:14).

D. Yield to the will of God: “*Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*” (verse 10). The will of God is our salvation (II Peter 3:9) and our sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4:3) so that we would become wholly like Jesus (Romans 8:29). For His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven, it must be done cheerfully, unquestioningly, unashamedly, swiftly, and harmoniously. No one can pray this petition in truth and be hindering it by indulgence in evil of any sort. If we pray for it we must work for it or our prayers will be hypocrisy.

II. PRAYER AND THE NEEDS OF MEN (Matthew 6:11-13)

A. Our dependence: “*Give us this day our daily bread*” (verse 11). That petition deals with present needs and is addressed to the Father who supplies His children “*according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness*” (II Peter 1:3).

The petition teaches many great truths. (1) God recognizes our physical needs, for He made us like this. (2) Our daily bread is from God, not from our own hands. (3) Provision for physical life is the blessing of

God. (4) We must live one day at a time, praying only for “*daily*” bread. (5) We must cultivate a grateful heart toward God for His provisions. (6) We must include others in our prayers for supply, praying “*give US this day OUR daily bread.*” (7) We must work for what we get, for God supplies according to our stewardship of labor. What a privilege to look to God for daily needs.

B. Our wickedness: “*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*” (verse 12). That petition looks to the past sins and relates to the Son who is our atonement for sin.

The petition pictures man at his worst. We trespass against one another; we trespass against God. We want God's forgiveness without extending forgiveness to one another.

Forgiveness and a forgiving spirit is a major problem to us. Of the six petitions of the Model Prayer, this is the only one our Lord expanded in personal explanation (verses 14, 15). It is the one with which we have the greatest problem in praying and in experiencing.

C. Our weakness: “*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*” (verse 13). That petition looks to the future and relates to the Holy Spirit who guides us.

Here is a fitting petition to the requests in the Model Prayer. We need to pray it often and sincerely. “*Temptation*” refers to testing of any kind. “*Evil*” has a definite article and can be translated “the evil one,” meaning the devil. So the petition is, “Let us not be put to the test, but rescue us from the evil one.”

The petition calls us to watchfulness against sin. It challenges us to resolution against any act of our will, any habits, any lusts which defile us. Pray this prayer often. “*The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen*” (II Timothy 4:18).

Pray, trust, and be not afraid. “*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms*” (Deuteronomy 33:27).

III. PRAYER AND THE PRAISE OF GOD (Matthew 6:13)

“*Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised*” (Psalm 48:1). He “inhabits” the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3). It is but reasonable, therefore, that praise should occupy a portion of the Christian's prayers.

What is the difference between praise and thanksgiving? Praise recognizes who God is, the splendor of His person, and responds to His greatness. Thanksgiving recognizes what God has done, the excellence of

His works, and responds to His actions. Praise is based on the character of God. Thanksgiving is based on the acts of God. Christian prayers should have both praise and thanks.

The prayer begins with the unique nature of our Father who is in heaven. It ends with worship and praise to Him on the basis of who He is and what He has done. How appropriate that the prayer begins and ends with our eyes upon God.

“Thine is the kingdom” indicates His sovereignty as *“the King of glory”* (Psalm 24:10) who rules over all, even the kingdoms of the heathen (II Chronicles 20:6). *“Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places”* (Psalm 135:6). *“Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth”* (Revelation 19:6).

“Thine is . . . the power” refers to His ability. It is an axiom of Bible truth that *“power belongeth unto God”* (psalm 62:11). *“He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”* (Daniel 4:35). We pray on the basis of His ability to do. Jesus promised, *“Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, THAT WILL I DO, that the Father may be glorified in the Son”* (John 14:13). God has given and continues to give us all things that pertain to life and godliness, according to His divine power (II Peter 1:3).

“Thine is . . . the glory” refers to the goal of all things. All things that were created exist solely for the glory of God (Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11). Even the salvation of sinners is for the glory of God (Ephesians 1:11, 12). So the end result of all our prayers must be to the glory of God.

The kingdom, the power, and the glory belong to *God “for ever Amen.”* He who is Lord is our heavenly Father in Jesus Christ!

IV. PRAYER AND THE PROBLEM OF SIN (Matthew 6:14, 15)

We have such a problem of forgiving one another that Jesus selected that one petition to explain and expand. To pray, *“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”* (verse 12), reveals us at our worst.

The basis of the petition is that sin can be forgiven. To forgive in Bible language means to send away, to lift up and bear away. It is used to describe God removing the guilt and penalty of sin from the repenting sinner.

We sin against God and need His forgiveness. He has provided a way for our forgiveness through Jesus Christ. *“Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things”* (Acts 13:38, 39). *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and*

just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

We sin against one another and need one another's forgiveness. *“In many things we offend all” (James 3:2). “When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ” (1 Corinthians 8:12).* That is why God commands us, *“Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you” (Ephesians 4:32).*

God's forgiveness is extended to us and He commands us to extend forgiveness to one another. *“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (verse 12).* What does that mean to us? It does not mean our forgiving one another is a deed of merit which purchases God's forgiveness to us. Neither does it mean that our forgiving is an example God follows in forgiving us. Quite the opposite. We forgive because we have been forgiven in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4:32).

Here is why an unforgiving spirit in a person will withhold God's forgiveness from him. (1) Unforgiveness is disobedience against God because He has commanded us to be forgiving (Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 18:21, 22; Luke 17:4). (2) Our forgiving another is based on our relationship with God (Matthew 5:7, 39-48), not on our human abilities. (3) Our forgiving another follows the example of Christ (Ephesians 4:32). (4) An unforgiving spirit in us is sinful disobedience against God, based on human pride, and keeps God's forgiveness from us. (See Psalm 66:18.)

The Lord gave us the Model Prayer to help us to pray aright. That indicates He wants us to pray. He wants us to ask in order that He might give what we ask. Let us pray. Let us pray more. Let us pray much more, for God will answer!

QUESTIONS

1. What is prayer?
2. What indicates the simplicity of the Model Prayer?
3. Why did Jesus give us the Model Prayer?
4. What does that prayer say about your relationship with God?
5. How can you assure that God's name will be hallowed?
6. How can you do the will of God in your life?
7. What is involved in praying for daily bread?
8. What does verse 12 mean to you?
9. How does God deliver us from evil?
10. How can God be praised in your life this week?