

¹ Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." Luke 11:1 The Lord's Prayer is Jesus' teaching on how His followers should pray. It is the perfect prayer for every Christian in every culture and age. It is a prayer of five requests. We often hear that we should not come to the Lord with a list of requests, but that is not entirely true. Certainly, we should give thanks and praise (Ephesians 5:20ⁱ), but the prayer Jesus gave us is all requests. It is not a prayer that Jesus prayed, for He never needed forgiveness. It is for those of us who realize we desperately need God's help to think and act as we should. That is why I've entitled the sermon, Our Prayer.

The disciples witnessed Jesus' prayer life. They had to search for Him sometimes because He would go off by Himself to pray (Mark 1:35,36ⁱⁱ). His example gave them a desire to have Him teach them a prayer. It is not unusual that Jesus gave them a prayer instead of discussing the methodology and theology of prayer. Rabbi of His time taught a prayer to memorize. An illustration can be the best instruction. There are Jewish prayers in the Talmud that are prayed daily, some at certain occasions, and others for the feasts of Israel. The disciples were asking to be taught like John taught his disciples, and that meant a prayer to memorize. A few of the disciples had been followers of John the Baptist and knew John's prayers, but they wanted one from Jesus.

Luke has slightly abbreviated the prayer that we are familiar with from Matthew. Matthew's version adds to "your kingdom come" with "your will be done." Perhaps Luke thought that was redundant, which may also be the reason he did not follow "lead us not into temptation" with "but deliver us from evil". We could consider Luke an abbreviated form of the full prayer, and yet it has the essence of it. Because of this, we should consider the prayer a pattern to learn from. We can also recite it together. At different seasons in my life I have followed this pattern, thinking on each request and how it applies to my life and God's will for me. When you don't know what to pray or feel the need for a pattern, this prayer is our guide.

² And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come." Luke 11:2 Jesus begins with two requests that focus on God. It is the pattern of the Ten Commandments, our relationship to God first and man second. We address our relationship and submission to God, and then make requests for our needs. He starts by having us address God as Father. Again, Luke shortens Mathew's version, "Our Father who art in heaven, simply to "Father." While the concept of God as our Father is in the Old Testament fourteen times (Isaiah 63:16ⁱⁱⁱ; 64:8^{iv}), Jesus used the term much more than anyone had before. Unlike the Old Testament sense of God as the Father of the nation, Jesus used it as His personal Father. That was because He is the Son of God. The amazing thing is that He instructs us to use the term.

This personal relationship was a paradigm shift. By asking the disciples to address God as their Father He was saying they could have the same relationship that He had with God. While He is the only begotten Son, those who place their faith in Jesus become sons of God through adoption (Ephesians 1:5^v). This is the major difference between the old and new covenants. We often say faith in Jesus is not a religion but a relationship. That is captured in this shift of how we think of God as our personal Father. In fact, the term Jesus often used was *abba*. The closest English translation to that term that Hebrew

children used when addressing their fathers might be, "Dearest Father." (-K.Hughes) Jesus most likely used it as small boy to address Joseph. But Joseph died before Jesus matured, and then the term was exclusively used to speak to His heavenly Father. When we become sons of God by faith, the Spirit causes us to cry out to God as our Abba (Galatians 4:6^{vi}; Romans 8:15,16^{vii}).

To call God Father has many implications. It means He is the One who gave us life, who provides our needs, who protects and cares for us, and who desires that we live up to His image in us and that we mature to be like Him. Each of those concepts is profound. God created mankind resulting in our physical life, but His Spirit drew us to Jesus and gave us grace to see our need to repent and receive forgiveness and spiritual life. We would never have done that on our own. It was His work in us, each of us uniquely in a relationship with Him, not as nation, but as individuals. Peter wrote that we were born again by the living and enduring Word of God (1 Peter 1:23^{viii}).

A Father protects and cares for His children. Satan could have led us down a path of destruction, but our Father intervened. Even now Satan tempts our old nature and can lead us into destructive ways, but at the end of the prayer we ask our Father to keep us from being led down that path. When God becomes our Father, we find He has planned good works in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10^{ix}), so He protects us physically and spiritually that we might do them, and in the process, we lay up treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:20^x). We find all our needs are met in Him, and even the help to endure in the times when those needs are in short supply (Philippians 4:19^{xi}). Where He guides, He provides. He gives us fortitude and strength from His Word which lifts our spirits and helps us encourage our fellow brothers and sisters (Hebrews 10:25^{xii}).

Our dear Father is shaping us increasingly into His likeness as we behold Him in the Word and prayer (2 Corinthians 3:18^{xiii}). This too is His work, though our willing cooperation with the Spirit certainly speeds the process. He promises to finish the work He started in us (Philippians 1:6^{xiv}). That is a promise I hold dear. When I fall short, and that is way too often, I could be discouraged and condemned, but then I realize that His promises are sure and that only He can complete that work He has begun in me.

What a Father! Your earthly father may have fallen way short of this standard God has set. You may be a father that fell way short like I did. But now we are adopted and have a new Father, a fresh beginning, and a guaranteed completion date known only to our precious Father. He will never fail us. He may discipline us and take us through some tests to strengthen us. He may even take us through the school of suffering, but we can be assured it is all done in love. When you pray "Abba" you are using the same relationship, the same syllables, that came from the lips of Jesus. It is personal, intimate, profoundly meaningful, and tender. It is filled with warmth, comfort, security, and most of all with His unfailing love.

The first request is that His name be seen by all as holy. It should be revered. The name of a person represents who they are, their character and abilities. If I say a person's name, an impression comes to your mind. When we say the name of God we mean YHWH, the covenant keeping God. who is referred to as Elohim, the Creator. We should say it reverently and with great respect. The name of God is the sum of His attributes, steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, justice, mercy, grace, and goodness, all in their most perfect form. The context may point to revering His name as "Father".

Some people flippantly say, "O Gawd!" or the name of our Savior, "Jesus!" This teaching is warning us not to do that (Exodus 20:7^{xv}). Instead we are to set His name apart as sacred. We should utter it with awe and respect. When people use it flippantly, it just shows they don't know the awesome holiness of our God. May His name, which is the sum of all His glorious, perfect attributes, be revered as holy in all the earth and in every language. His name deserves nothing less.

As Jesus came near the time of the crucifixion, He prayed, "Father, glorify Your name" (John 12:28^{xvi}). The glory of God's name was never seen more clearly than on the cross. There we see the greatest example of justice, mercy, righteousness, and love. **We reverence God's name when those attributes are seen in our lives, in the way we speak of Him, and in our devotion to Him as our loving Father.**

To ask for the Kingdom to come was to ask for Pentecost when the kingdom was established in the hearts of believers and for all who would come into the kingdom since. The Greek points to a time and the future with a continuing effect. As we pray it today, it is asking for God to reign in our hearts and in all the earth when Jesus returns. The kingdom is now and then. We enter it when we come to know Jesus as our Savior. Nevertheless, we will see it established in the earth one day. May that day come soon!

In the meantime, may the kingdom advance in the hearts of men and women as they see their need for a Savior and do His will on earth even as it is done in heaven. That is how the prayer in Matthew continues. "Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The kingdom is present when people do God's good will. That is best for the one who does it and for all affected by that obedience. Exalt Jesus in your conversations and people will be drawn to Him. They will see there is another kingdom far superior to anything man can offer (Luke 17:21^{xvii}). Conviction of sin leads to repentance and a desire to do God's will. Repent for the kingdom of heaven is near (Matthew 4:17^{xviii}). Repentance leads to obedience which is to experience the kingdom while living for our King.

Our hope of the eternal reign of Christ where sin is no more helps us to endure our short lives. We know that one day pain and suffering will be no more. We know we will be rewarded for faithful service done now (Ephesians 6:8^{xix}). We know the curse of sin will be lifted and we will experience all as God meant it to be. Let Your kingdom come!

By beginning with our unfathomable relationship as children of our dearest Father and requesting that His name be held in sacred honor, and asking Him to reign over all, our minds are turned from earthly things to the eternal. We should begin prayer with reverent wonder of how gracious, good, and loving the One we address truly is. That begins our prayer with gratitude and a reminder of who it is we are addressing. It gives us courage to know our requests are heard, for we are His children. And we are reminded that He is holy and sovereign over all things and will reign in the earth.

³ *Give us each day our daily bread*, Luke 11:3 We've come to the three requests that are for our needs. Keep in mind that the prayer is a corporate prayer. All the pronouns are in the plural. We are not just asking for ourselves as individuals, but also for all of us. It focusses us on the entire body of believers. When one is hungry, we feel their pain. We are an interdependent body of believers in Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:12^{xx}).

The word that is translated "daily" in ancient literature is only used here and in Matthew's version of the Lord's Prayer. St. Jerome found that in the *The Gospel of the Nazarenes* the Greek word was translated into Hebrew as *mahar*, meaning 'tomorrow's.'

Some Bibles have a footnote to this effect. Just as Israel received enough bread for each day from heaven, the prayer asks for the next day's sustenance (Exodus 16:15^{xxi}, 19^{xxii}). The wording would have reminded the disciples about the miraculous provision by God in the wilderness. It keeps us looking to God for the next morning's supply.

Bread was the basic sustenance of physical life. By praying this prayer, we are asking for the essentials we need day by day. We are recognizing it comes from God. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "My God shall supply all your need..." Philippians 4:19^{xxiii}. We are so blessed that we don't worry about having enough to eat. Yet, we should still recognize that it comes from God. Much of the world still has this daily concern. Malnutrition affects millions. While we pray this for the needs of all, we are praying for the body of Christ in places where hunger is a daily concern.

Spiritual malnutrition affects even more of us and has even more dire consequences (John 6:32,33^{xxiv}). Every day we should wake up and ask God to give us our daily bread in a spiritual sense. The verse can be translated "Give us tomorrow's bread every waking hour." Asking for tomorrow's bread points us to the eternal tomorrow. Jesus said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven" (John 6:41^{xxv}, 51^{xxvi}). If you don't take time to feed your soul with heaven's bread, your spiritual life will be malnourished. The prayer is asking for spiritual nourishment throughout the day. That affects your physical life as well. The giants of faith almost to a person rose early each morning to spend time hearing from God in His Word and prayer. If you want to be spiritually well nourished and healthy you will daily do the same. Two weeks ago we read that Jesus said that sitting at His feet is the one necessary thing (Luke 10:43^{xxvii}).

⁴ and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation." Luke 11:4 The prayer next asks for God's forgiveness. We don't even realize how often we offend a holy God who made us in His image and blessed us with all our needs, physical and spiritual. Isaiah the prophet had a realization of his sins when he saw the holiness of God and fell on his face declaring he was ruined and unclean (Isaiah 6:5^{xxviii}). The psalmist asked to be kept from secret faults, those we don't recognize, and presumptuous sins, ones we intentionally do (Psalm 19:12,13^{xxix}). We find our forgiveness in the cross of Christ where our debt was paid in full. But the prayer asks for forgiveness predicated on our forgiveness of others. The only way I understand to reconcile these two thoughts is if we understand that the born-again believer must always be a forgiving person (James 2:13^{xxx}; Matthew 5:7^{xxxi}).

Unforgiveness is a poison that kills the soul of the one who holds on to it. The offender could often care less if the offended person forgives or does not. They forget the matter and continue on either way. But the one who won't forgive mulls the event over and over, like scratching open a wound that is trying to heal.

Forgiveness should come as we remember how much we are forgiven. I find that those whom I struggle to forgive have done something which I too have done at one time or another. But even more than that, we have been forgiven our many offenses against God. Matthew 18 tells the story of a man who was forgiven a massive debt and then went out and refused to forgive a tiny debt owed to him. The master who had forgiven the huge debt called the man back in after hearing of his unforgiveness. He asked, ^{32b} *'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³ Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?'* Matthew 18:32-33 (NIV) The master delivered him to the jailers to torture him until he paid back the full debt. I think the torture was meant

to be picture of what unforgiveness does to us. Matthew's record of Our Prayer ends with a footnote by Jesus, ¹⁴ *For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,* ¹⁵ *but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* Matthew 6:14-15 (ESV) *The nineteenth-century preacher Charles Spurgeon said, "Unless you have forgiven others, you read your own death-warrant when you repeat the Lord's Prayer."*^{xxxiii} The unforgiving person cannot say that he or she is a follower of Jesus or that He is his or her Lord. St. Augustine called this petition the terrible petition, for it tells us whether we are truly born-again. The grace of God cuts through our justifications and reveals truth so that we might be changed. Stop right now and look into your hearts and ask God who you must forgive, not because they deserve it, but because God has shown grace and forgiveness to you when you did not deserve it. Determine right now that by the grace of God you will forgive those who have hurt or offended you. A Christian person forgives as God has forgiven him or her.

The request to not be led into temptation is better understood as, don't lead me into severe testing. James 1:13^{xxxiii} clearly tells us that God does not tempt us. This is one case in which the multiple meanings of the Greek word do not all apply, as James made clear. When Jesus was praying in the Garden before the arrest, He told the disciples to pray that they might not enter into temptation (Luke 22:40^{xxxiv}). Paul told us in 1 Corinthians 10:13^{xxxv} that God will never test us beyond our ability but will always provide a way out. This part of the prayer acknowledges our weakness and dependency on God to resist the flesh and the devil. If we did not have God's help in the assistance of the Holy Spirit, we would soon fail the tests we encounter in this fallen world and backslide, giving in to all kinds of vices. Recognize your dependency on God's intervention to keep you from being overwhelmed by tests that come our way. The tests should instead strengthen our resolve and help us see our weaknesses. It is like athletes in training as they hit a wall or plateau and learn to press forward and overcome, making them stronger. We are to consider the testing of faith pure joy (James 1:2,3^{xxxvi}) because it helps us develop perseverance. We read testimonies of great Christians who overcame many trials and came out heroes of the faith. This prayer acknowledges our weaknesses, vulnerabilities, and dependency on God.

Here are the requests Jesus said we should ask of the Father. We should ask for God's name to be held as sacred in all the earth. We should ask for His kingdom to come into the hearts of all. The three personal requests in this prayer are for daily bread, forgiveness of sins, and to not be led into severe testing. Each is a necessity of spiritual life. We need physical and spiritual sustenance every day. We need to be forgiven for our many sins and to be reminded that we must forgive others. We need God to keep us from testing that would overwhelm us. That is acknowledging our weakness and need for God to direct our steps. We know it is God's will to pray for these things, for Jesus told us to pray this. And if it is God's will then we know He will answer that prayer (1 John 5:14^{xxxvii}). That means we can have absolute trust that our most basic of needs will always be met by our Abba, for He has adopted us as His own children. Do we realize how blessed we are?

Let us stand and pray together Luke's version our prayer: ^{2b} *"Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.* ³ *Give us each day our daily bread,* ⁴ *and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation."* Luke 11:2-4 - Benediction

Questions

- 1 Why did the disciples want a rote prayer?
- 2 What does “hallowed by your name” mean?
- 3 In what ways was Jesus use of Father unique?
- 4 What are the implications of God being our Father?
- 5 What does “your kingdom come” mean?
- 6 What is our most needed daily bread?
- 7 How is it supplied?
- 8 What does it point to?
- 9 Why must we forgive to be forgiven?
- 10 Can we avoid temptation on our own?

ⁱ **Ephesians 5:20 (ESV)**

²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

ⁱⁱ **Mark 1:35-36 (ESV)**

³⁵ And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and those who were with him searched for him,

ⁱⁱⁱ **Isaiah 63:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ For you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us; you, O LORD, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.

^{iv} **Isaiah 64:8 (ESV)**

⁸ But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

^v **Ephesians 1:5 (ESV)**

⁵ he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

^{vi} **Galatians 4:6 (ESV)**

⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

^{vii} **Romans 8:15-16 (ESV)** ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

^{viii} **1 Peter 1:23 (ESV)**

²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God;

^{ix} **Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

^x **Matthew 6:20 (ESV)**

²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

^{xi} **Philippians 4:19 (ESV)**

¹⁹ And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

^{xii} **Hebrews 10:25 (ESV)**

²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

^{xiii} **2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

^{xiv} **Philippians 1:6 (ESV)**

⁶ And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

^{xv} **Exodus 20:7 (ESV)**

⁷ “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

xvi **John 12:28 (ESV)**

28 Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

xvii **Luke 17:21 (ESV)**

21 nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

xviii **Matthew 4:17 (ESV)**

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

xix **Ephesians 6:8 (ESV)**

8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.

xx **1 Corinthians 12:12 (ESV)**

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

xxi **Exodus 16:15 (ESV)**

15 When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.

xxii **Exodus 16:19 (ESV)** 19 And Moses said to them, "Let no one leave any of it over till the morning."

xxiii **Philippians 4:19 (ESV)**

19 And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

xxiv **John 6:32-33 (ESV)** 32 Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

xxv **John 6:41 (ESV)**

41 So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."

xxvi **John 6:51 (ESV)**

51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

xxvii **Luke 10:42 (ESV)**

42 but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

xxviii **Isaiah 6:5 (ESV)**

5 And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

xxix **Psalms 19:12-13 (ESV)**

12 Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. 13 Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.

xxx **James 2:13 (ESV)**

13 For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

xxxi **Matthew 5:7 (ESV)** 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

xxxii Hughes K. Preaching the Word - Luke, Volume I: That You May Know the Truth. Quoting Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Vol. 2, p.694

xxxiii **James 1:13 (ESV)**

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

xxxiv **Luke 22:40 (ESV)** 40 And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

xxxv **1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)**

13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

xxxvi **James 1:2-3 (ESV)**

2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

xxxvii **1 John 5:14 (ESV)**

14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.