

The Proper Pattern of Prayer, Pt. 1
Matthew 6:9-10

Introduction

It has been well said that the church cannot go forward unless it is on its knees. When we properly understand that we can accomplish nothing for the kingdom of God unless it be by the Holy Spirit working through us, we then also understand the absolute necessity of prayer. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said that prayer is *“beyond any question the highest activity of the human soul.”*

Context

Last week I introduced this section of the Sermon on the Mount by looking at the Proper Purpose & Practice of Prayer. In Matthew 6:5-6 Jesus taught the proper purpose of prayer. He told the people not to follow the example of the hypocrites who prayed publically to be seen by men instead of praying to talk with God. They gave the appearance of being pious, but their hearts were actually far from God. The proper purpose of prayer is to talk with God and seek His approval. Prayer is not about impressing people.

In Matthew 6:7-8 Jesus taught the proper practice of prayer which begins with a proper understanding of God and His love for His people. We can go to the Lord with confidence that He knows our needs before we even pray and therefore that He will hear and answer. This is in contrast to both the Gentiles who repeated their prayers over and over again trying to get the attention of their god, and the Pharisees who gave long prayers trying to impress God. We do not impress God by the length, eloquence or repetition of our prayers.

The proper pattern for prayer is given by Jesus in Matthew 6:9-13. These verses are often referred to as the “Lord’s Prayer,” however, it is not actually the Lord’s prayer because it is not a prayer that Jesus Himself prayed. This is a model of prayer that Jesus gives to teach His followers how to pray properly. That is what Jesus has been doing throughout this passage. In Matthew 6:5 Jesus says, *“When you pray.”* In 6:6 He says, *“But you, when you pray.”* In 6:7 He instructs them, *“when you are praying,”* and in 6:8 He tells them, *“... before you ask Him.”*

Command

Jesus uses the command voice in Matthew 6:9 telling His disciples, *“Pray, then, in this way.”* He was requiring them to pray according to the model He was about to give them. So it would be better to call this “Jesus’ Pattern of Prayer” than to refer to it as is usually done as “the Lord’s Prayer.” Why spend the time to make this point? Because some believe that the prayer itself has power because Jesus prayed it. It is this kind of thinking that leads to the same meaningless repetition that Jesus spoke against back in verse 7. This prayer has no power because Jesus prayed it.

First, Jesus did not pray this prayer for Jesus had no need to ask for forgiveness. He gave it to His disciples as a pattern for their prayers which would include asking to be forgiven. Second, we need to be very clear that there is no power in the words themselves of this prayer or any prayer. The power is always in God, not in the words. I hope you understand this is directly contradictory to what those in the Positive Confession movement will tell you. The teachings of such people as Larry Lea, Paul Yongi Cho, Robert Schuller, Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, Charles Capps, Robert Tilton, Paul Crouch, and their many followers are absolutely wrong on this. Words in and of themselves neither contain spiritual power nor do they carry or transmit spiritual power. Words are simply a means of communication. The spiritual power is always in God. Romans 8 even tells us that when words fail us

the Holy Spirit intercedes with the Father for us. Prayer is not an incantation of magical formula which is what those who advocate positive confession, name it - claim it, and rhema teachings do. That is heresy.

Jesus is not reciting a prayer for us to repeat. He is laying out a pattern of prayer to be followed just as He says in His introduction to it at the beginning of verse 9 *“Pray, then, in this way,”* (NAS), *“Pray then like this,”* (ESV) or even more clearly translated in old KJV, *“After this manner therefore pray ye.”* We are to pray after the manner of this prayer. We are not to repetitiously repeat its exact words.

What then is the pattern?

The Proper Pattern of Prayer

“Our Father Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy 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 forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen).”

This simple prayer of less than 60 words in Greek (67 in English) covers all of what prayer is about. First, it tells us what we need to know about our relationship with the One to whom we are praying including His position and nature. Second, it tells us the subjects that should be part of prayer by telling us what is important in life, what we have need of, and the source of that need being met. Third, it covers all aspects of time - past, present and future.

This prayer seems simple on the surface, but the closer you examine it, the more intricate, more complex, more beautiful it becomes to you. In the notes in the bulletin I have provided a chart that breaks the prayer down into its individual phrases and then shows the relationship described by those phrases between God and one praying and the spirit it should be prayed.

<u>Prayer</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Spirit</u>
<i>Our Father</i>	Father/Child	Family
<i>Who art in heaven</i>	Creator/Creature	Unpretentious
<i>Hallowed be Thy name</i>	Deity/Worshiper	Reverent
<i>Thy Kingdom come</i>	Sovereign/Subject	Loyal
<i>Thy will be done, On Earth as it is in heaven</i>	Master/Servant	Submissive
<i>Give us this day our daily bread</i>	Benefactor/ Dependent	Beneficiary
<i>And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors</i>	Savior/Sinner Teacher/student	Penitent Responsible
<i>And do not lead us into temptation</i>	Guide/Pilgrim	Humble
<i>but deliver us from evil</i>	Liberator/Debtor	Grateful
<i>For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen</i>	Sovereign/Subject	Triumphant Protected Jubilant Eternal

Our desire should be to pray according to pattern Jesus sets here. In order to do that properly we need to make sure that we understand each of the elements within this model prayer. The first element is how to address the One to whom we are praying.

OUR FATHER: This defines our relationship with God in a personal way. Everyone can call God, “Creator” or “The Almighty” or one of several other names for God. But not everyone can call God, “Father.” That great privilege belongs only to those whom God has adopted into His family. 1 John 3 makes it very clear that there is a division among men on this issue.

1 John 3:1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him” Drop down to verse 7. “*Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; 8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.”*

Notice the two divisions. There are children of God and there are children of the devil. Ephesians 2 explains that all of us “*were dead in our trespasses and sins,*” and that we walked “*according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air,*” and that we were “*sons of disobedience*” that “*lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and the mind and were by nature children of wrath.*” All of humanity starts out as children of the devil, so something must happen for you to become a child of God. Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3, “*unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” You have to be “*born of God,*” as 1 John 3:9 describes it.

Those who know Jesus as their Lord and Savior have the privilege of addressing God as “*Our Father*” because they are only ones that are the “*children of God.*” John 1:12 says that “*as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.*”

The idea of God as our Father is a precious truth. It is seen not only in the idea of being “*born again*” as “*children of God,*” but also in the references to being “*adopted*” into God’s family. Paul speaks of this in Romans 8:15 in which he says, “. . . *you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!'*” and in Galatians 4:4-7 where he speaks of Jesus Christ coming “. . . *that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying 'Abba! Father!' Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.*” What a precious truth! No one has a natural claim, right, or heirship with God, yet those who place their faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ are given those very things as a gift of God’s grace in Jesus and are adopted by Him to become His children.

Consider also the extra love that adoption represents. When a man and wife have a baby, part of their love for that child comes from their love for each other and the fact that the child is part of both of them. The parents of an adopted child choose to take that child and call him or her their own though there is no blood tie. The child is not their own, yet they love the child as their own. That is a much less selfish love, and that is the manner in which God loves us. He willingly choose us and adopted us as His own. What a great love!

So it is that we who have been born again through Jesus Christ can pray, “*Our Father.*” To be able to address God in that manner also speaks of both the access and the intimacy that you can have with Him. The subjects of a King are limited in both their ability to approach the king and in their intimacy with him. But the children of a good king will have both access to him and the familiarity that only comes with a parent/child relationship. It is in that the same manner that we Christians can go to God and say, “*Our Father.*”

God is Our Father through Jesus Christ our Lord. But take note that He is “Our” Father and not “My” Father. God is Father to all who believe. His family is large. There is no room for a selfish claim to an exclusive relationship to Him. My prayer to Him needs to be beyond myself and embrace my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. There is not to be sibling rivalry.

There is another precious truth that is brought out in the next phrase. This is a truth that is especially precious to those who have a distorted understanding of fatherhood because their dad did not live up to what God demands of parents. God our Father is not like our earthly father, for even a good earthly father will fail at times, but God never fails!

God is Our Father **WHO ART IN HEAVEN,**

This differentiates Him from any earthly dad. God is in a completely different category. *“God is not a man that He should lie nor the son of man that He should change His mind”* (Numbers 23:19). I have a basis for hope because God is not like man. Men are not only selfish and fickle, but even when they have every good intention, they often lack the ability to carry out their promises. God is Our Father who is in Heaven and therefore I have a hope that will not cease or even diminish. Why? First, because God is both sovereign and faithful so that He always fulfills every one of His promises. Second, God’s love is an everlasting love that will not diminish for He is immutable. Third, God’s love and actions toward me are not dependent upon my actions but are instead bound up in His own character. God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were yet sinners, disobedient and enemies against Him, He loved us and sent His Son Jesus Christ to die in our place as the offering for our sins (Romans 5:8). If you are a believer, God is *“Our Father Who Art in Heaven,”* and He loves you and will take care of you. You have a personal, intimate, loving relationship with the One who controls Heaven, the One who is the creator of all.

Because He is *“Our Father Who art in Heaven”* He has no limitation. An earthly father, even a wealthy one, is always limited, but there no limit on God for He is the Creator and has all resources available to Him to meet the requests that you bring to Him. He is able to care for you. That is why the Apostle Peter could tell us to cast all of our care and anxiety upon Him, because He, God, *“Our Father Who Art in Heaven,”* cares for us.

Let me expand on that thought in pointing out that God is infinite in all His attributes so there is no limitation to His wisdom. No man or the sum total of all the wisdom of all men shall ever even come close to approaching God in wisdom. You can place your trust in the Lord and rest in His sovereignty because as a wise loving Father He will do what is best for you whether you understand it or not. Because His wisdom is greater, you can rest in His love and His plan for your life even in those times when life gets hard.

God is *“Our Father Who Art in Heaven”* and you no longer have to fear. There is no fear of eternity because you will be with Him. There is no fear of your earthly future because as your Father He will guide and provide for you. There is no fear of the present because He is ever with you. You can come humbly before your Creator and rest in His care.

God is *“Our Father which art in heaven.”* That tells us who we pray to and sets us in proper relationship to Him. Flowing out of that is the key passion of all payer: *“Hallowed by Thy name.”*

HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

This sets the tone of our prayers. To hallow means to make holy, to sanctify, to set apart in a reverential manner, and God's name, which represents Him, is to be hallowed. It is to be set apart with reverence. Yet, we find that many people, including professing Christians, think of God in casual terms. They regard Him as their pal, a good buddy, someone with whom they can hang out. In doing so they have reduced the Creator of the universe into a being like themselves with the resulting lack of reverence. God’s name is to be hallowed. He is to be given the highest respect and honor. You should never come into His presence in a flippant or careless manner. ☐ He is the Supreme Being, who, according to both the prophet Isaiah and the Apostle John, has four special living creatures, the Seraphim, which have six wings - two covering their face, two covering their feet, and two used to fly - that continually say day and night, *“Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD God, the Almighty, who was and who*

is and who is to come,” (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8). If such majestic creatures show such reverence for God, should any human do less and especially those who profess to be Christians? How do you hallow God’s name?

1. Believe that He exists. Hebrews 11:6, *“And without faith it is impossible to please [Him], for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and [that] He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”* This is the first step in pleasing God. It is the fool that believes or acts as if there is no God (Psalm 14:1-3).
2. Believe the things He has revealed about Himself in His Word. Jesus said in John 17:17 that God’s word was truth and in John 8:29 that continuing in His word would give them knowledge of the truth and truth would set them free from slavery to sin. That honors God. On the other extreme, Romans 1 tells us that God’s wrath is revealed against the ungodly because they suppress the truth about God in their unrighteousness.
3. Always speak of Him in a reverent manner and encourage others to do the same. This goes back to the third of the ten commandments in Exodus 20. Taking the Lord’s name in vain, that is, using it in a flippant, disrespectful manner, is a sin. This includes thoughtless exclamations such as, “God,” “O God,” and “Jesus.” Included with this diminutive forms such as “Gosh,” and “geez.” You need to have a proper fear of God (Proverbs 1:7) which includes treating His name with reverence.
4. Your godly behavior. In Matthew 5:16 Jesus’ command is to *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”* Martin Luther asked, *“How is God’s name hallowed among us?”* His answer, *“When both our doctrines and our living are truly Christian.”*

God’s name is hallowed by those who turn to Jesus Christ and long for God’s rule over their lives. It is because of our desire to see God’s name hallowed in ourselves and in others that we also we pray according to the next part of the prayer.

THY KINGDOM COME

What do we mean by that? First, notice whose kingdom is being talked about. It is not “my kingdom,” but “THY Kingdom.” It is the kingdom of God. This expresses the desire for the kingdom promised from of old, the kingdom of Messiah, to come upon earth. This great promise was given to David back in 2 Samuel 7:12. Through David there would come a son whose Kingdom would never end. This is the one of whom Isaiah said in 9:6-7, *“And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forever more. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.”* The kingdom we are looking for is that of Jesus Christ our Lord.

To pray, *“Thy kingdom come”* is to pray that Jesus Christ would reign here and now. The true Christian longs for the Lord to return and set up His kingdom. Does this mean that *“Thy kingdom come”* is equal to saying, *“Lord Jesus, return quickly?”* Yes and no. Yes, it does express that, but it also expresses the desire of a heart that wants Jesus to be in control of everything in their life in the present.

While we do not have the full manifestation of the kingdom of God at present, for the King was rejected and died on the cross for us and rose again nearly 2,000 years ago, we must remember that the Kingdom is present in part even now. The church is the revealed mystery of the kingdom and we are very aware by the Scriptures and personal experience that the present manifestation of the kingdom is not purified. As Matthew 13 points out, there are tares among the wheat, leaven in the bread, & wicked among the righteous. Yet, the kingdom is present in part.

In Acts 8:12 we find Philip *“preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.”* In Acts 19:8 we find Paul trying to persuade the Ephesians Jews about the *“Kingdom of God,”* and then in 20:25 he gives his farewell to those who responded to his *“preaching the kingdom.”* When Paul finally arrives in Rome, he began *“explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the*

kingdom of God" (28:23) and he did this for about two years (28:30-31). No wonder we see this same theme in Paul's other epistles. In Colossians 1:13 he states that we need to give thanks to God because He, "*delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.*" In Romans 14:7 Paul even defines the character of the present kingdom of God on earth saying, "*for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*"

The Kingdom of God is not here on earth in its full manifestation, and so we desire along with the rest of creation for the complete restoration that will occur when He returns (Romans 8). However, the kingdom is partially present in a real sense. Jesus is now on the right hand of the Father in heaven (Hebrews 12:2). We have the Holy Spirit within us, and according to Philippians 3:20, our citizenship is in heaven. We are now, as it says in 2 Corinthians 5:20, "*ambassadors for Christ.*" Therefore when we pray, "*Thy kingdom come,*" we are not only asking that Jesus would return, but also expressing our desire for Him to operate in complete control of those that belong to Him. To pray "*Thy kingdom come*" is to pledge our allegiance to the King and set ourselves to follow Him now as if He were already physically present, and through the Holy Spirit He is present within us.

An example of this from history was the time when Richard I (The Lion-Hearted) of England was leading a crusade to Palestine. On the way back he was captured and held captive by the German prince Henry VI, king of Naples and Sicily. Richard's brother, John, sought to usurp the throne. (This is the setting for Robin Hood and several other stories). Those who longed for Richard's return continued to regard him as the king regardless of what his brother John did. They continued to live as citizens of Richard's kingdom with some of them even dying for doing so. If this can be true in the matters of human affairs, then how much more in spiritual affairs. Jesus is king. We wait for His return and pray, "*Thy kingdom come.*" As citizens of heaven and therefore the loyal subjects of Christ, we pray, "*Thy kingdom come,*" and pledge our fealty and live our lives for Him in the here and now.

Conclusions

In considering just these first few elements of Jesus' pattern of prayer, your prayer lives should change. You can, as Hebrews 4:16 says, "*draw near with confidence to the throne of grace.*" You need not fear because there is an intimacy available to you with the Creator of the Universe. An intimacy so close that you can call God, "*Abba*" / "*Daddy.*" And since He is "*Our Father which art in Heaven,*" there is a complete confidence for He is not a man and so will never fail. You are to hallow His name and so you approach Him with the proper respect due to Him. He is not your "buddy" or "comrade," but the One who is inestimably higher than you are, so you give Him the proper honor and reverence due. You are also to long for His kingdom in all its aspects. You anticipate the Lord's return and the future fulfillment of the prophecies of the kingdom, but you also pledge to live in the present as His loyal subjects.

When you pray, don't just quickly throw out your address to God without taking time to think about who it is you are talking with. Give time to think about who He is and praise Him for it. Thank Him for the privilege being able to come and talk with Him. And if you cannot address God as "Our Father," then you need to come and talk with me or one of our church leaders and get your life right with Him so that you can. There is no better way to live.

Sermon Notes: The Proper Pattern of Prayer
August 3, 2014 - Matthew 6:9-10

Introduction

The Context - Matthew 6:5-8

The proper purpose of prayer is to _____ with God, not impress other people

The proper practice of prayer is to seek God's _____ confident that He hears and answers

Matthew 6:9-13 is the proper _____ of prayer taught by Jesus to His disciples

The Command - Matthew 6:9

Jesus _____ pray this prayer for Jesus has no need to ask for forgiveness

The power of prayer is in _____ to whom we pray, not in the words that are said

The Proper Pattern of Prayer - Matthew 6:9-13

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<i>Our Father</i>	Father / Child	Family
<i>Who art in heaven</i>	Creator / Creature	Unpretentious
<i>Hallowed be Thy name</i>	Deity / Worshiper	Reverent
<i>Thy Kingdom come</i>	Sovereign/Subject	Loyal
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<i>And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors</i>	Savior / Sinner Teacher / student	Penitent Responsible
<i>And do not lead us into temptation</i>	Guide / Pilgrim	Humble
<i>but deliver us from evil</i>	Liberator / Debtor	Grateful
<i>For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen</i>	Sovereign / Subject	Triumphant Protected Jubilant / Eternal

Our Father

Humans are _____ into Children of God & Children of the Devil - 1 John 3; Ephesians 2; John 3

Only those that have faith in Jesus have God as their _____ (John 1:12)

God _____ us into His family - Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:4-7

Our Father speaks of access and _____

Our Father - the _____ is large, we are not to be selfish

Who Art in Heaven

This differentiates God from all _____ dads - Numbers 23:19

God is not limited in _____

God is not limited in _____

Hallowed Be Thy Name

To “hallow” is to make holy, _____, set apart in a reverential manner

We are to approach God with _____ - Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8

1) Believe that God _____ - Hebrews 11:6

2) Believe what God has revealed in the _____ - cf. John 17:17; John 8:29; Romans 1:16f

3) Speak of God with _____ - Proverbs 1:7; Exodus 20:7

4) Have _____ behavior - Matthew 5:16

Thy Kingdom Come

It is the kingdom of _____

Desire for the establishment of the _____ kingdom - 2 Samuel 7:12; Isaiah 9:6-7, etc.

Desire for Jesus to _____ here and now

The Present Kingdom

The church is a revealed mystery of the _____ kingdom - Matthew 13, etc.

It is now present in part

Part of the _____ Message - Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23; Colossians 1:13; Romans 14:7

_____ Restoration people and creation when Christ returns - Romans 8

Jesus is _____ in heaven at right hand of the Father and is preparing a place for us (Heb. 12:12; John 14)

Christians are already _____ citizens - Philippians 3:20

Christians are God’s _____ - 2 Corinthians 5:20

Conclusions

Hallow God’s name with proper respect longing for Christ’ return and living in the present as a _____ subject

KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God’s Word to your children’s lives. Here is some help. **Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch.

Older Children - Do one or more of the following: 1) Count the references to prayer in the sermon. 2) Talk with your parents about praying according to this pattern.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What is the proper purpose of prayer? What is the proper practice of prayer? What was the purpose of the prayer of Matt. 6:9-12? Did Jesus ever pray it? Where does the power of prayer reside? What does this prayer tell us about the believer’s relationship with God? What is the relationship of God with non-believers? What does this prayer tell us about the nature of God? How does someone become a child of God? How is God different from earthly fathers? What does it mean to “hallow” God’s name? How can that be done? Whose kingdom is prayer to focus on? What are some of the Old Testament promises concerning a future kingdom of God? New Testament promises? How does the kingdom of God manifest itself in the present time? What manifestations of the kingdom of God are missing at the present time? What is your relationship to the kingdom of God? How do you demonstrate your loyalty to God? Should anything change in your life? If so, what? When will you change it?