

The Sermon on the Mount

DEVOTIONAL STUDIES FROM THE
MEN'S MORNING FELLOWSHIP

Matthew 6:9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

Matthew 6:10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven.

Allow me to point out a few things before we get started on the verses:

1. First - while we call this the Lord's Prayer, it is really the Disciple's Prayer. Jesus didn't "pray" this prayer. In fact, Jesus could not pray this prayer, because in it, you ask for forgiveness – and Jesus had no need of forgiveness. Still, we will call it the Lord's Prayer because that is how it has been known throughout the history of the Church.
2. Second – The Lord's Prayer as it is recorded by Matthew differs in certain phrases from the one recorded by Luke. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus gave the multitudes this prayer in His Sermon on the Mount. In Luke, He gives it to His disciples. One of the things you conclude from these differences is that Jesus was definitely not teaching it as a *formal* prayer, since it differs. He taught it as a *form for prayer*.

The Lord's Prayer seems to move from Heaven to earth:

1. In verses nine and ten, you have a sense of being seated with God in heaven as you talk with Him in prayer.
2. That sense changes, in verse eleven, and it's like God is standing next to you as you talk to Him, in prayer, about issues on the earth.

Think of it: You can live your life as if you are seated in heaven with God. **Every spiritual resource in heaven is available to you.**

We'll look at the disciple's prayer in two sessions – this week as if you were sitting next to your Father in Heaven and next week as if He were standing next to you on the earth.

Our Father. This was radical; this was revolutionary. God was only called **Father** a few times in the Old Testament; and never as a term of personal endearment by a single individual. He was the **Father** of the nation of Israel. Jesus was telling His disciples to call God their **Father** in a personal, intimate relationship. It's the Greek word, *Abba*, which some go so far as to translate, *Daddy*.

Don't overlook the word **our**. God is **our Father**. The disciples didn't need formal prayers to identify themselves to others. Instead, they were part of a family who were on an intimate basis with God. Their intimacy was better, and greater, than anything more formal.

Intimacy is something precious, something personal. Anyone can call me Gene, or Pastor Gene. Only my kids can call me Dad or Daddy.

Here's another way of looking at it. When my kids talked to me, they never addressed me by saying things like, *O provider of all my food*; or, *You who hold the keys to the car*. They didn't use *Thee* or *Thou* ever! They were respectful; but I was their Dad.

Is God your **Father**? You can only address God as **Father** if you have been born into the family of God by believing on Jesus Christ to save you.

The next words are, **in heaven**. The words are literally translated, *in the heavens*. The Bible uses the word **heaven** in three ways:

1. There is the atmospheric heavens all around earth.
2. There is the stellar heavens, what we might call space.
3. Then there is Heaven – the dwelling place of God.

Your **Father** is in heaven, above the heavens. He is seated over the heavens, overseeing and supervising everything that occurs beneath Him.

You are seated right next to Him as He is in control over all the universe He has created. Since you are seated right next to God, you have access to everything heaven has to offer you as a resource.

Hallowed be Your name. The **name** of God is always shorthand for His nature and character. **Hallowed** means *to set apart*. The idea here seems to be that you desire, above all else, that God's true nature and character be set apart. In other words, you want God to be revealed.

Alan Redpath said, "First and foremost, I desire *in my life and through my life* to others to reveal the name of Jesus and the character of God" (*Victorious Praying*, page 30).

This radically affects your prayers. Whatever happens, you desire first and foremost to reveal God's grace, mercy, love, forgiveness, longsuffering, and compassion. Circumstances don't need to be changed; you want to change within them, revealing your **Father** within them.

Your kingdom come. The word, **come**, is in a verb tense meaning *come once and for all*. Your prayers are to be influenced by the future hope of the Lord's return. From your vantage point in heaven, you realize that the ultimate help for this earth and all the people on it is the return of Jesus to establish His **kingdom**. When earth is ruled the same way heaven is ruled, then peace and prosperity be possible.

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. **Heaven** is in great shape! There are no problems there. The **earth** is a mess. It got that way because Adam and Eve sinned, and have passed-on their sin to their offspring. Human history is the story of God intervening to save the human race from Hell for heaven. Your prayers should be influenced by the fact that God is accomplishing His **will** on the **earth**. Jesus spent a lot of time praying. It's been said many times that if Jesus spent so much time praying, how much more do we need to

spend time in prayer. True; but don't miss the underlying motive. Jesus came to earth from heaven. For all eternity, He had been in heaven, with the Father and the Holy Spirit. On earth, He continued His fellowship with them through prayer. In other words, it wasn't a formal activity; it was, for Jesus, His joy to communicate with heaven while physically confined to the earth.

I sometimes think more praying would occur if we remembered the joy of it, rather than stressing it as a duty.

I wonder if the disciples weren't just a little disappointed? After all, they wanted a formal prayer, and Jesus was encouraging them to pray informally.

Because of Jesus, you can call God your **Father**; your *Abba*; your Daddy. If you understand the intimacy, you understand prayer.



