

## The Lord's Prayer

Jesus Says: A Series on the Sermon on the Mount Part 9

*Matthew 6:9-15*

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### Greeting cards, Taylor Swift lyrics, and the prayers of scripture.

- Have you ever wondered what the greeting cards, Taylor Swift lyrics, and the prayers of scripture have in common?
- Growing up, as most guys with an immature sense of humor, I loved Adam Sandler movies. I loved *Billy Madison*, *Happy Gilmore*, and *The Waterboy*. But my favorite Adam Sandler movie was *Mr. Deeds*.
- *Mr. Deeds* is about a guy named Longfellow Deeds who inherits billions of dollars from his estranged uncle. The movie is about Deeds moving from a small, quaint town to New York City and all the adventures that entailed. But despite Deeds' billions of dollars, he always stayed true to his original passion: greeting cards.
- What is the purpose of greeting cards? *They give you words to communicate how you feel.*
- Many of you have outgrown this, but please be honest about this. So many of you in your middle school years and early high school years would post a picture (usually a selfie), and in the description of the picture you would put lyrics to songs that really touched you or spoke to you. You used those words to *communicate how you felt*.
- At times we need ways to express how we feel. We need others' words.

### Prayers of Scripture

- I think one of the best things that the prayers of scripture offer us are *they give us words to express ourselves to God*.
  - There are many prayers of Paul in his letters to churches
  - Most of the Psalms as prayers to God.
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, "The Psalter [The Psalms] occupies a unique place in the Holy Scriptures. It is God's Word and, with few exceptions, the prayer of men as well. How are we to understand this? How can God's Word be at the same time prayer to God?"<sup>1</sup>
  - In other words, the prayers of scripture are very interesting and compelling. They are God's Word to us, but they are at the same time, when we pray them, our words back to God
- The most important prayer of Scripture is the prayer we will be looking at tonight, the Lord's Prayer.

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<sup>1</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community* (New York: HarperOne, 1954), 44.

### **Matthew 6:9-15**

- The Lord's Prayer is a great prayer. It is the prayer that he taught his disciples. In Luke's (*Luke 11:1-4*) account of the Lord's Prayer, his disciples asked Jesus to tell them how to pray.
  - Andrew Murray - "Jesus never taught His disciples how to preach, only how to pray. He did not speak much of what was needed to preach well, but much of praying well. To know how to speak to God is more than knowing how to speak to man...Jesus loves to teach us to pray."<sup>2</sup>
- Tonight we are going to sit at Jesus' feet and learn from him how to pray. We are going to learn from the son himself.
- If you ever wonder the proper way to pray (or to do anything for that matter) look to Jesus.
  - Last week we had a very difficult discussion prompt which asked what the author of one of our textbooks thought about an issue. Everyone in our class struggled to answer. That is until one of my classmates Googled the author's name and found his email address. She emailed him and asked him the question. And he responded. She got it from the source.
- In this prayer, we get it from the source. We get to learn from Jesus how he expects us to pray.
- Tonight we're going to walk through this prayer and at the end look at a couple of ways we can put this prayer into practice.
- I want to point out one more thing before we get into the prayer. This prayer serves two purposes:
  - Model prayer which is easily memorizable for Christians
  - An outline for Christian living
    - This prayer moves us to action.

### **Our Father in Heaven (6:9)**

- God is to be addressed as our Father.
- How we address someone has everything to do with how we relate to that person.
  - You call a close friend a dumb name
  - You call your professor sir, ma'am, or Doctor
  - The groundskeeper at Eagle Ridge told me to call him anything except late for dinner.
- Jesus telling us to address God as Father is significant.
- Some of you have earthly fathers that make it really hard for you to relate to God as a Father.

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<sup>2</sup> Andrew Murray, *Lord, Teach Us to Pray* (Philadelphia: Henry Altemus), Kindle ebook, locations 58-64.

- God is our “Good, Good Father”
  - Pat Barrett is one of the writers of the hit worship song “Good, Good Father.” His father left him when he was a baby. He said, “The only person I’ve ever called Father was God.”<sup>3</sup>
- You are God’s child. You were created in His image. When we get into chapter 7 of our study of the Sermon on the Mount we will see that Jesus again tells us that God is a good father in 7:7-11. Jesus says that even evil fathers take care of their children. How much more will God, who is good, take care of us.

### **Hallowed be Your Name (6:9)**

- Hallowed is not a word we use very often in our vernacular these days.
- Hallowed simply means “to honor, sanctify, set apart, and treat with the highest respect.”<sup>4</sup>
  - Dallas Willard: Hallowed be your name means “the name of God should be held in high regard...’let your name be sanctified.’ Let your name be uniquely respected. Really, the idea is that his name should be treasured and loved more than any other, held in an absolutely unique position among humanity.”<sup>5</sup>
- When we hallow God’s name we are saying, “God, you are the greatest being in all of the universe, and you deserve all of our worship and adoration.”
- We’re actually to pray that God will honor his own name. If God honors his own name, and Jesus honors God, we are to honor God, too.

### **Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven (6:10)**

- We pray for God’s Kingdom to come, that God’s reign would spread further and further.
- The kingdom is now but not yet.
- Sinclair Ferguson these four things involves us when we pray “Your Kingdom Come”<sup>6</sup>
  - Bowing to God’s sovereign purposes
    - “Your will be done”
  - Seeking the spread of the gospel
  - Searching out God’s will in scripture
  - Praying for Christ’s return

### **Give us this day our daily bread (6:11)**

- We pray to God that he will provide for our needs today.
- We depend upon him daily.

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<sup>3</sup> Worship Together, “Good Good Father // Housefires // New Song Cafe,” October 2, 2015, accessed on November 7, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unucc7Mp8rU>.

<sup>4</sup> Scot McKnight, *Sermon on the Mount* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 177.

<sup>5</sup> Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God* (New York: HarperOne, 1997), 258.

<sup>6</sup> Sinclair Ferguson, *The Sermon on the Mount* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 124-127.

- Dallas Willard points out that we pray for today's needs because we know that God is present with us today and will be present with us tomorrow.
  - "The emphasis is on *provision today* of what we need *for today*. This is because God is always present today, no matter which day it is. His reign is the Eternal Now. So we do not ask him to provide today what we will need for tomorrow."<sup>7</sup>

### **Forgive us our debts, as we also forgiven our debtors (6:12, 14-15)**

- We should be overwhelmed by the grace of God.
- This is at the core of the Gospel - we are saved from our sins.
- We're called to forgive others the way God forgave us.
  - Dallas Willard - "It is not psychologically possible for us really to *know* God's pity for us and at the same time be hardhearted towards others."<sup>8</sup>

### **Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (6:13)**

- This comes, in the Gospel of Matthew, right on the heels of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness (4:1-11).
- We acknowledge to God that we need his help. We are prone to wander, and Satan is out there trying to get us.

### **Why should I pray the Lord's Prayer?**

- Jesus commands us to pray this prayer.
- Millions of people have prayed this prayer for thousands of years.
  - We never pray alone.
  - Isn't it an amazing thought that your ancestors prayed this prayer and your great-great-great grandkids will pray this prayer. Even the Apostle Peter prayed this prayer.
- Possible objections to this prayer:
  - It's too short.
    - Jesus told his disciples to not be like the Gentiles who went on and on (6:7-8)
    - Short doesn't mean bad.
  - If I just recite this prayer it won't be personal.
    - You can make it personal.

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<sup>7</sup> Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*, 261.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 262.

**Memorizing the Lord's Prayer**

- You won't always have your Bible.
- You won't always have the words to communicate to God.
- Two examples from my life when I needed the Lord's Prayer
  - When I had anxiety
  - When I was really ticked off kayaking
- By next week, have this prayer memorized.
- We share graphics on our social media pages.
  - Make this your screensaver on your phone this next week.