

THE LORD'S PRAYER - (An Example of Prayer)

Matthew 6:9-13

In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

That is what has been called "the Lord's Prayer." Some Bibles are actually captioned with that, "The Lord's Prayer." But really it was not a prayer that the Lord, being Jesus, was even praying. In fact what we Christians call "the real Lord's Prayer" is in John 17. That is where Jesus prayed to His Father in heaven, who is THE Almighty God, "I do not pray for these alone [that is, the disciples], but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me." (**John 17:20-23**) That was Jesus, pouring out His heart to God in prayer. That we may be one, IN Christ, so that the world may believe that God sent Him; of which then prompts us, by being in Christ, to share the love and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

There are two recorded instances in the Bible where "The Lord's Prayer", the example of prayer that Jesus gave, can be found, but with slight differences. The passage of Scripture that was just read is in **Matthew 6:9-13**. The other is in **Luke 11:2-4**. It says, "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Not much difference between the two other than the one in Luke does not include the last phrase, "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." In fact, according to the oldest manuscripts in existence, that phrase is not there. According to many Biblical scholars, they believe it was just added later as to add fullness to the prayer, giving it a conclusion, if you will. But a majority of the greek manuscripts do contain it and it is very much in line with what David wrote in 1 Chronicles 29:11, "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is

Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all." So if that last phrase were to add some questional doctrine, perhaps we would exclude it as being not necessary or important or with it not lining up with the rest of Scripture.. But we'll see how it truly does fill out the example of prayer that Jesus spoke of. Another bit of insight that can be mentioned is that the two examples of this prayer in Matthew and Luke appear to be at different times in Jesus' ministry. In Matthew this prayer is with the rest of His teachings that we call "The Sermon on the Mount." In the book of Luke it comes about as Jesus' disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. Whether they were at two separate times or not really doesn't matter, since Jesus didn't have to say anything twice for it to have significance. If Jesus said it, then it certainly matters. But yet, even though it has been called historically as "The Lord's Prayer", it is not a prayer that Jesus was praying, it was given to His disciples and others as an example of how to pray to God. That is, God being God Almighty, Creator of all things, maker of the heavens and the earth, the one and only God who could say, I AM that I AM. He alone is God and there is no other God like Him. He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and therefore He alone is worthy of all of our praise, glory and honor. Amen.

That leads us to the first part of this sample prayer. "Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." The first thing that can be noted is that He is suggesting to His disciples to call God, Father. Yet we know from Scripture that Jesus said in **John 6:44**, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day." In **1 John 5:12** it says, "He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." Jesus Himself said that, "He is not the God of the dead but the God of the living." God cannot then be your Father if you do not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, if you do not have Christ. God is the God of the living, so you are either dead in your sins and God is not your Father or you are alive in Christ and God IS your Father. Jesus also said, "Therefore, everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me." (**John 6:45**) Just before that Jesus said, "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." You may be thinking at this point that you haven't seen Jesus. Nor have I. After Jesus had risen from the dead, the disciple Thomas who said he'd have to see the nail holes in Jesus' hands and the wound in his side and touch them before he'd believe that Jesus rose from the dead. When Jesus had appeared to the disciples and Thomas, Jesus said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas,

because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (**John 20:27-29**) "Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us." (**Romans 8:34**) That is, Jesus is interceding for all of the children of God who can call God, Father! Speaking of God as our Father, speaks of Jesus being our righteousness and salvation before God. It IS the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." (**Romans 1:16-17**) God reveals to us that Jesus IS the Christ, the Savior of the world, to reconcile us into a relationship with God because of our sins against God. Jesus becomes the righteous requirement needed to have fellowship with God. Jesus raising from the dead ensures us eternal life in Him. The shedding of the blood of Jesus and His death and resurrection makes it possible for us to call God, Father! As Paul said to those who have believed on Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God in **Romans 8:14**, "you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father.""

To those who believe on Jesus, who live by faith in the promise of eternal life in Christ we can pray, "Our Father who is in heaven", or more succinctly, "Heavenly Father!"

The next part of the sample prayer given by Jesus is "Hallowed be Your name." Any time we go to God in prayer we must always keep in mind that He is God. We are not. He is not our magic genie to does whatever we want Him to do. He is not our slave, or our servant, that we can just command Him to do things and He'll do it. Even more than that though is recognizing God for who He is. He is Almighty God who is Omnipotent (or all-powerful), Omniscient (or all-knowing), Omnipresent (there is nowhere that He does not exist). He is perfect in all His ways, and has not nor ever will change. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." God is Just, Holy, Righteous, Good, Faithful, Merciful, Forgiving, and Love. He IS perfect in all His ways. "I AM that I AM." He says. "Hallowed be Your name." I like what one commentary said about that. It says, "The first expression of thought in the pattern prayer is not the utterance of our wants and wishes, but that the Name of God—that which sums up all our thoughts of God—should be "hallowed," be to us and all men as a consecrated name, not lightly used in trivial speech, or rash assertion, or bitterness of debate, but the object of awe and love and adoration. The words "Jehovah, hallowed be His name," were familiar enough to all Israelites, and are found in many of their prayers, but here the position of the petition gives a new meaning to it, and makes it the key to all that follows. Jesus taught

His disciples to pray just as He had done in **John 12:28**, He prayed Himself, "Father, glorify Thy name." (Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers)

This leads us into a smooth transition into the next part of the example prayer. "Your kingdom come, Your will be done." Many times when we may go to God in prayer we may already have an agenda in what we want to present before Him. But it is important for us to keep in mind what God spoke through **Isaiah (55:8)**, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord." Although, one thing is for certain. Right here, even right now God is building His kingdom. God is calling on all of His children to come to Him, to believe in His Son Jesus of whom He sent to die on a cross for our sins, and to give eternal life to all who will believe in Him. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (**John 3:16-17**) It is certainly not up to us to decide who He is calling into His eternal kingdom. I kind of think that if we were privy to who was going to be in heaven and if we knew all the good and bad that they did on this earth we would be very much shocked. The Apostle Paul wrote, "For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base [or worthless] things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence." The mighty and glorious misfit children of God! Certainly not for what we have done but that Jesus had paid the price for us to be called into "the glorious liberty of the children of God." (**Romans 8:21**) It is for certain that God is presently building His kingdom. He's finding out who wants to be a child of the Most High God. Who wants the righteousness of God? Who wants to be joint-heirs with Jesus? (**Romans 8:17**) Who wants to reign for all of eternity with Jesus Christ our Lord? God knows what He is doing. God knows what He is to do to bring into His kingdom all those that He has purposed. We don't. We need to seek His will not our own. We need to get on His script not Him on ours. "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Next, "Give us this day our daily bread." Jesus went so far as to say not to worry about what we will eat or drink or wear that God would provide. What did He say after that? "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." (**Matthew 6:33**) As a child of God, He will take care of you. Guaranteed. One thing that can be expounded upon in seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness is that we continue to seek for

His kingdom and righteousness **not just for ourselves** but for others as well. Loving God is equivalent to loving others as Jesus pointed out in God's great commandment (**Matthew 22:37-40**).

Then we have, "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Another way of saying that is to pray, "help me to overcome, Lord". Temptation will surely come our way, and evil is always around us. But we will overcome who are in Christ Jesus! "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." (**1 John 5:4**) "The just shall live by faith." Faith in Jesus! Looking to Jesus, in all things, the author and finisher of our faith. (**Hebrews 12:2**) Jesus got us to this place and He promises us to carry us to the end, to finish the work that He has begun in us. (**Philippians 1:6**) We must always keep in mind and in our heart that God Almighty IS God Almighty." "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (**Ephesians 2:4-10**)

Therefore, with Jesus' prayer we are to recognize God as God Almighty, to recognize that He has the perfect plan in all of this, in building His kingdom, for us to share the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that He is leading us to **overcome**, to be His child of God, for all or eternity. Amen.