



*Prayer
&
Providence*

Lesson 2 – Learning to Pray



“LORD, hear my voice when I call; be gracious to me and answer me. My heart says this about you: “Seek his face.” LORD, I will seek your face. Do not hide your face from me; do not turn your servant away in anger. You have been my helper; do not leave me or abandon me, God of my salvation. Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD cares for me. Because of my adversaries, show me your way, LORD, and lead me on a level path.”

(Psalm 27:7–11, CSB)



Learning to Pray

- When did you first learn to pray? How were you taught?
- Not everyone grows up in a Christian home where prayer is taught. Where do we go to learn?
 - **To the scriptures**
 - **To the 'Master Teacher' – Jesus**
 - **Listening to others**
 - **The Psalms**
- What did the disciples of Jesus observe Him doing?



“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.” (Mark 1:35, ESV)

“But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.” (Luke 5:15–16, ESV)

“Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. And after he had taken leave of them, he went up on the mountain to pray.” (Mark 6:45–46, ESV)

“Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.” (Luke 9:28–29, ESV)



Jesus' Teaching About Prayer

“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, ESV)

- Why did they ask Jesus this? Didn't they know how to pray?
 - **Used to communal prayers**
 - **Priests often prayed for them**
 - **Some of Jesus' prayers were likely different than what they were used to**
 - In private, perhaps in silence, less ceremonial
 - His practice inspired them to want to learn more
- If they needed to learn to pray, we do as well!



The Context (Mt. 6:5-8)

- Proper motivation and audience (vv. 5-6)
 - **Not like the Pharisees**
 - Hypocrites prayed to be seen by men
 - **Prayer is primarily personal**
 - The Lord is your audience
 - **Communication and relationship**
 - “We do not pray to tell God what he does not know, nor to remind Him of things He has forgotten. He already cares for the things we pray about ... He has simply been waiting for us to care about them with Him.”
(Philip Yancey)



The Context (Mt. 6:5-8)

- Proper perspective (vv. 7-8)
 - “... heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do”
 - “do not babble repetitiously like the pagans” (LEB)
 - Referring to the repetition of mantras or mystical incantations
 - **Not condemning persistence**
 - We can still be persistent, and pray for the same thing using the same words (Lk. 18:1-8; 2 Cor. 12:7-9)
 - He wants us to be sincere and meaningful



Jesus' Teaching About Prayer (Mt. 6:9-13)

- What are some general things you notice about this prayer?
 - **Short**
 - **Simple**
 - **Not pretentious**
 - **Straightforward**
- In my Bible the heading for this section says 'The Lord's Prayer.' Why might that not be a good title for it?
 - Telling them to pray like this
 - Would not need to ask for forgiveness
 - Better: the 'disciples' prayer' or 'the Lord's example prayer' or 'the Lord's model prayer.'



The Lord's Model Prayer (Mt. 6:9-13)

- Invocation – “Our Father in heaven”
 - Respect and intimacy; a proper way to begin a prayer
 - Children communicating to "our Father in heaven"
 - Humbles us; reminds us we are dependent we are on God
 - Gratitude and privilege
 - Jn. 1:12-13
- Continues with seven petitions in two sections
 - Glorifying God
 - Personal needs



The Lord's Model Prayer – Glorifying God (vv. 9-10)

- “Hallowed be Your name”
 - A person's "name" refers to their character, identity, authority; embodiment of who they are
 - "hallow" – set apart, to regard or reverence as holy
 - Ps. 148:13; Isa. 5:15-16; Isa. 33:22
- “Your kingdom come”
 - Kingdom = kingship, royal power, rule; cf. Lk 19:12-14
 - King exercises rule; subjects expected to obey
 - Express desire for all creation (including you and me) to submit itself to God's rule and reign



The Lord's Model Prayer – Glorifying God (vv. 9-10)

- “Your kingdom come”
 - **Jesus taught disciples while kingdom was “at hand”**
 - Cf. Matthew 3:1-2; 4:17
 - **The kingdom has already been established**
 - Cf. Colossians 1:13; Revelation 1:6
 - **Instead of praying for kingdom “to come” we can pray:**
 - That we continue to submit as citizens of kingdom
 - That others will submit to the gospel of the kingdom
 - That the kingdom would come into the hearts of men today (Lk. 17:20-21)



The Lord's Model Prayer – Glorifying God (vv. 9-10)

- “Your will be done”
 - **Jesus – doing the will of the Father**
 - Jn. 5:30, Jn. 6:38 ...
 - **Should be our desire as well – we must come to know His will**
 - **“on earth as in heaven”**
 - “Doing God’s will on earth, ‘as in heaven,’ gives to life on earth a heavenly aura of beauty, righteousness, peace and glory.” (Homer Hailey)
 - **Makes a connection**
 - Mt. 12:50
 - “Only those who make the Father’s will the supreme object of their own will can have this relationship and pray to Him acceptably” (Hailey)



The Lord's Model Prayer – Personal Needs (vv. 11-13)

- Give us this day our daily bread (6:11)
 - **We acknowledge our dependence on God**
 - He is the giver of all good gifts; James 1:17
 - He supplies seed and bread; 2 Corinthians 9:10
 - **We trust Him to sustain and provide as we work**
 - He commands us to work; 2 Thessalonians 3:10
 - He gives us the strength to work; Ecclesiastes 5:19
 - He sustains our lives; Acts 17:24-25, 28



The Lord's Model Prayer – Personal Needs (vv. 11-13)

- And forgive us our debts, as we also... (6:12)
 - **“Debt” and “debtors” = not financial obligations**
 - Matthew 6:14-15 → “trespasses”
 - Luke 11:4 → “sins”
 - **Jesus illustrates connection in Matthew 17:23-25**
 - Servant owed 10,000 talents → 200,000 years labor
 - Servant begged, and king forgave him the debt
 - Servant failed to forgive, king revoked forgiveness
 - **When we sin against God, we take on a debt we can't pay on our own**
 - Rom. 6:23; since we were forgiven by grace through faith in the sacrifice of Christ, God expects us to graciously forgive



The Lord's Model Prayer – Personal Needs (vv. 11-13)

- And lead us not into temptation
 - Trials, testing, proving, temptation – the context must determine
 - **God doesn't tempt us to sin**
 - James 1:13-15
 - **But does He test our faith**
 - John 6:6; Hebrews 11:17
 - **We pray with confidence that God will not lead us into unnecessary or impossible trials**



The Lord's Model Prayer – Personal Needs (vv. 11-13)

- Deliver us from evil
 - Some translations have “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one”
 - **Deliver us from the devil who tries to deceive us**
 - **Provide the way of escape from our temptations**
 - *“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.”* (1 Corinthians 10:13, ESV)



The Lord's Model Prayer – Closing

- “... For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.” (Matthew 6:13, NKJV)
 - **Not in all manuscripts – so ESV and NASB and CSB do not contain this**
 - **Praise**
 - Always fitting to add words of praise
 - **Amen**
 - Literally – so be it; verily; truly
 - Ending a prayer with ‘amen’ is certainly appropriate
 - At the end of all four gospels and at the end of all the books of the N.T.
 - Other places where it is at the end of some commendation or prayer on behalf of brethren by Paul



“In Jesus’ Name”

- John 13-16
 - **Jesus makes several references to asking in His name**
 - **Specifically to His apostles**
 - **Not a magical formula**
 - Can't pray for whatever we want and expect God to answer our prayers just because we said, "in Jesus' name"
 - **It is fitting though to end prayers this way**
 - Praying "in the name of Jesus" influences entire prayer
 - We pray for God's glory; John 14:12-14
 - We pray according to His character and will; John 15:16
 - We pray knowing that He mediates our relationship with God; Jn. 16:23-24



Next Week – Lesson 3 – The Constancy of Prayer