

The Lord's prayer - A model prayer

In our last lesson, we talked about some expert advice that Jesus gave us about prayer. This week, we will look at the model of prayer that He gave us. I don't know about you, but I find it quite amazing that God knew people would need not just advice on how to pray but that they would need someone to give them words to say as well.



Jesus taught his disciples a model prayer in Matthew 6:9-13:
9 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.
Matthew 6:9-13

When Jesus taught his disciples, he said, "In this manner" or in other words, "Follow this pattern. Do like I do!"

There are a few key parts of this prayer that we see.

- 1) **Worship and Thanksgiving: Our Father in heaven...** First, when we pray, we should address Our Heavenly Father. Opening our prayer in this way helps us remember that we are praying to our loving Father who is eager to hear our voice. When we open in prayer, we should come and worship God for who He is.

In the Bible, the name of God is an expression of who God is. A very practical way to begin worshipping God for who He is in the place of prayer is to focus on His very name, thanking Him for who He says He is and how we see that in our lives.

- 2) **Prayers for God's Glory: Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.** When we ask God to let His kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven, we come into agreement with what God's will is and pray that it will happen here. There are a few basic parts to this:
 - a. **Hallowed be Your name.** Pray that more people will see God as a holy God and that more people will acknowledge the truth about who God is.

b. Your kingdom come. The kingdom of God is the rule of God. When we say, Your Kingdom come, we are asking for God to come and reign in our midst, destroying the power of darkness, bringing His reign which produces righteousness, peace, and joy.

Romans 14:17 “for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

Praying for God’s kingdom to come is asking for God’s saving power to greatly increase or be seen on earth so that even unbelievers can see it and turn to God.

c. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. This prayer includes our personal obedience and His kingdom purposes. His will is His commands and our assignment, which can be to a ministry or even to a job. When we pray that God’s will would be done we exalt His will over ours.

In this verse, we also see that God’s will is done perfectly in heaven. It is not perfectly done on earth. When we pray, we ask that God’s will be done perfectly on the earth as it is done perfectly in heaven. We will talk more about praying the will of God in the next lesson.

3) Prayers for our own needs to be met: 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. We see three kinds of needs that we are asking God to meet in these verses.

- a. **Our physical needs: Give us this day our daily bread.** Bread here is talking about our daily needs. God wants us to have enough. This request is for our *daily* provision, protection, and direction (spiritual and physical). We do not pray because God does not know about our needs (Mt. 6:7-8), but because asking Him is a way to help us strengthen our relationship with Him and to express gratitude for His work in our lives (Ps. 50:15). Asking God to provide for our needs does not mean we should not work. One of the ways God provides through us is through work (2 Thes. 3:10).
- b. **Praying for forgiveness.** Forgiveness has to do with our relationship with God and people. We ask God to forgive us of our sins against Him. We ask Him to forgive us for the ways in which we have sinned against or hurt others. We also ask God to forgive others and to help us forgive those who have sinned against us and hurt us.

The proof that we have been freely forgiven is that we gladly forgive others. The man who knows he has been forgiven is compelled to forgive others. ¹²*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (Mt. 6:12)*

Jesus did not say, “Forgive us our debts *because* we forgave our debtors.” Believers are freely justified by faith, so we ask for forgiveness to restore our fellowship with God (1 Jn. 1:9), not to be saved from hell.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful...to cleanse us from unrighteousness. (1 Jn. 1:9)

c. **Praying for deliverance from evil.** When we pray, we can ask God to deliver us from evil in two ways.

i. **Overcoming temptation.** First, we can ask that God will empower us to overcome temptation and not give into it.

1 Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

God wants to empower us to overcome sin. We can pray that He will help us when we are tempted to find the way of escape.

ii. **Winning the Battle.** Next we can pray that God will help us overcome the spiritual forces of darkness around us. The Bible tells us that we are in a battle of a spiritual nature.

Ephesians 6:12 - For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

We are in a battle that is being fought between the forces of heaven and the forces of hell. The devil, God’s enemy, wants to keep God’s will from being done on earth and to keep God’s beloved children in slavery to sin and lies.

At times it can feel like we are in a specific storm attacking us, a time when three components come together—when *demonic activity* is heightened, our *lusts are aroused*, and *circumstances are optimum* for sin.

Praying for God’s help in these times expresses humility that depends on God’s strength and acknowledges our weakness. It is also very good to pray for God’s deliverance from any lies, strongholds of the enemy or sin. We are encouraged to stand steadfast and pray. Like a soldier would stand firm and ready before a battle even begins, we are encouraged to put on the armor of God and pray at all times.

Ephesians 6:13,18 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand... And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

When Jesus closed his prayer, He returned to praising God. We encourage you to do the same. Jesus said,

Matthew 6:13 For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

After you have given your cares to your loving Father, worship God and acknowledge His authority in your life.

To sum it up, the model of prayer Jesus taught us went like this:

- a) Pray to our Father
- b) Worship God and thank Him for who He is and what He's doing in our lives.
- c) Ask for God's rule, his ways, (His Kingdom) to come.
- d) Ask for God's will to be done in our lives, our situations and the world.
- e) Ask for God to give us what we need: provision, protection, and direction
- f) Ask God for forgiveness for us and others.
- g) Ask God to help us overcome temptation.
- h) Ask God to help us win the spiritual battle.
- i) Close just like we open, by praising God and worshipping Him.