



## OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN

*This is part 2 of the PrayER – Learning From Jesus How To Pray sermon series*

### SUMMARY

God knew that as we make our way through life that there would be certain elements and circumstances that would come into our life that were simply greater than we are. His solution to the problems of our life was to make Himself and His resources available to His people. The means by which we can tap into the presence, the provisions, and the power of God is prayer, and yet, most of prayer lives are struggling to show any signs of life. In this series of thoughts, we are taking our prayer life to the emergency where we will learn from the Great Physician how to pray.

### REVIEW

Last week, we looked at Luke 11:1 where we found the key statement for this entire series of thought – “*Lord, teach us to pray.*” We stepped back and we found that the book of Luke is the Gospel of Prayer. Luke, more than any of the other Gospel records, emphasizes the prayer life of Jesus Christ.

Jesus’ prayer life was one of submission and dependence.

Jesus’ prayer life was one where He repeatedly withdrew to a secret place to spend time communing with His Heavenly Father.

Jesus' prayer life was one where He prayed about how His decisions would impact those around Him.

Jesus' prayer life was one where He spent time praying for those that He had the responsibility of delivering huge news to.

Jesus' prayer life was one that changed His countenance.

## MESSAGE

Matthew 6:5-15 says, *"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*

If you're in the habit of marking things in the Word of God, I'd like to draw your attention to verse 9 where the Bible says, *"...Our Father which art in Heaven..."*

For a few moments, I'd like to consider this thought: **OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.**

When we compare the record of Matthew and Luke, we get an understanding as to the context of Jesus' instruction. In Matthew, we find that Jesus has just completed what is known as the Sermon on the Mount (which some have suggested was about a forty-minute-long message). Having completed His sermon, Jesus withdraw Himself from the forefront and He entered into a time of prayer. As He's praying, at least one of His disciples (we're not told which one) comes to Jesus and says, *"...Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples"* (Luke 11:1).

Now, there's quite a bit for us to unpack there. The first question that we need to ask is simply this – how did John teach his disciples to pray? Fair question...right? So, I began to dig into the Scriptures to find out how John taught his disciples to pray. However, other than this statement that John taught his disciples to pray, there really wasn't much else said about it. I think that the overall intent of that statement is that something was different about how John and how Jesus prayed.

While prayer was in no way a foreign concept to the disciples, it had been reduced to the simple repetition of words meant to simply acquire the attention of people that were around them. Neither Jesus or John prayed that way, and it stood out to this disciple.

Now, let me be clear. Jesus was not condemning a person for standing while praying, Jesus was not condemning people for praying in public, and Jesus was not condemning people for praying long prayers. The truth of the matter is that Jesus, during His earthly ministry, did all three of those. But there was absolutely something noticeably different than the prayers of those that stood daily in the temple praying prayers that were simply filled with pride and seeking the applause of man.

Now, here's what I love about this passage, this disciple came to Jesus and ask the Lord to teach him to pray, and Jesus immediately began to do so. Over the next several weeks, we want to simply make our way through this model prayer in an effort to breathe new life into our own prayer lives.

#### 1) We need to pray according to our **ADOPTION**

Matthew 6:9 says, *"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven..."*

The first two words of this prayer are so incredibly powerful. This prayer begins with the words *"...Our Father..."* Now, all of these years that I have read this passage, I have simply assumed that the phrase *"...Our Father..."* was a collective statement that was meant to include all of the disciples. While that isn't an incorrect way to consider that statement, I need to remind you that there was only one disciple that came to Jesus and asked Him to teach them to pray. Jesus responded by saying when you pray pray after this manner *"...Our Father..."* Jesus was including this disciple and Himself. Our Father. As a child of God, we need to understand that Jesus' Father has become our Father. We've been adopted into the family of God and as a child of God we have been granted the privilege and the opportunity to enter into the very presence to make our requests known to our Father.

The word *pray*, in verse 9., is a very interesting word. It carries with it the idea of being face to face with someone. That's close! Now that is what made this prayer so difficult for the disciples to pray. You see, the nation of Israel knew what it meant to pray, but they had to do so from a distance. The average everyday Jew in the Old Testament could not enter into the Holy Place of the Tabernacle or the Temple. That was a place that was reserved only for the priests. In addition, the High Priest was the only one that was given the responsibility once a year to enter into the Holy of Holies, into the very presence of God. All of that changed when Christ was crucified. The veil of the Temple was torn in two granting access to God to all of His children.

Hebrews 4:16 says, *"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*

So, for Jesus to tell this disciple, and by extension all of His disciples and us as well, to enter into the very presence of God as a son would a father was a concept that was hard for them to understand. The *Father* in Scripture is the one who provides and protects and, if necessary, lovingly chastens and comforts his own children! That's Who God wants to be to us.

Romans 8:15 says, *"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."*

1 John 3:1-2 says, *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...(2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God..."*

## 2) We need to pray according to His **AUTHORITY**

Matthew 6:9 says, *"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven..."*

In the family relationship, the father is the head. He is the ultimate authority. When we take our circumstances and struggles to God, we are to take them to Him as our Father. There is nothing that is in your life or that can ever come into your life that must not surrender to the authority of God. If God says stop, it will stop. If God allows it, that means that He has a purpose. Either way, He is sovereign, and He is the One in control.

## 3) We need to pray according to a right **AFFECTION**

Matthew 6:9 says, *"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven..."*

Our prayer-life is not simply a way for us to get what we want; our prayer-life is us surrendering to the Lord's will. When we pray, our desire must be to please our heavenly Father.

Colossians 3:2 says, *"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."*