

Sermon on the Mount – Matthew 6:9-15 Bellevue Church of Christ – Fall 2015

2. Prayer

A. Petitions of Praise

Why is it important to start prayers off with praise to God?

-He is worthy!
-As a reminder to us.

*Isa 40:27-28
*Rom 11:33-36

B. Petitions of Need

-Physical & Spiritual

Why can we have boldness to make petitions of God in prayer?

We have the ultimate high priest moderating on our behalf:
-Heb 4:14-16

Because of this we can have confidence in making **specific** requests of God in prayer (1Sa 1:11), provided that we ask with the right motivation (Jam 4:2-3)

After warnings about how not to pray (7-8), Jesus gives his disciples a model prayer. This is how [not what] you should pray.

⁹Pray then like this: "Our **Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.**"

i.e. Holy

Occurs 20 times in Matthew

¹⁰**Your kingdom come, your will be done,** on earth as it is in heaven.

His name is **Holy**
His kingdom is **Sovereign**
His will is **Perfect**

¹¹Give us this day our **daily bread,**

¹²**and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.**

¹³**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

¹⁴**For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,**

¹⁵**but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

Compare to Lk 11:1-4

How do we cultivate a desire to praise God?

(1) Study the Word of God

Study Challenge

Every day for 30 days, read 5 Psalms and 1 chapter of Proverbs

(2) Observe Creation
-Rom 1:19-20

Kingdom

-The reign of God

What is Jesus' asking for when he says "Your kingdom come?"

3 Petitions + 3 Petitions

- The first three petitions of praise (9-10) stand independently from one another

- The last three petitions are linked in Greek by "ands," almost as if to say that life sustained by food is not enough. We also need forgiveness of sin and deliverance from temptation.

Pre-requisites for Effective Prayer:

Two relationships (Mt 22:34-40; Ex 20:3-17)

(1) Vertical - "Our Father" (v.9)

--John 3:3-8; Rom 8:14-17; Mt 5:3-12; 2Ti 3:10-12

(2) Horizontal - "As we forgive" (v. 12)

--Mt 18:21-35; 25:31-46; Jam 1:27

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The Model Prayer

This prayer is a model or a template that shows the substance of our prayers to God. It was not meant to be used as a mantra that we repeat over and over again. Let's look at the substance of the prayer.

Matthew 6:9-13 (ESV)

⁹ Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. ¹⁰ Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread, ¹² and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

This is another occasion when Jesus was with his disciples, and was asked for help in prayer. The prayer is similar to model prayer in Sermon on the Mount.

Luke 11:1-4 (ESV)

¹ 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." ² And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. ³ Give us each day our daily bread, ⁴ and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation."

Two Pre-Requisites for Effective Prayer

Vertical and Horizontal Relationships

In the Lord's model prayer, Jesus highlights two types of relationships that must be in order for our prayers to be most effective. These two relationships are the vertical relationship with our heavenly father, and our horizontal relationships with our fellow man. These two relationships are the basis for all of God's commandments, and are emphasized throughout scripture.

Matthew 22:34-40 (ESV)

³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ And he said to him, "You shall **love the Lord your God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall **love your neighbor** as yourself. ⁴⁰ **On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.**"

Exodus 20:3-17 (ESV)

1. You shall have no other gods before me. (vertical)
2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image. (vertical)
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. (vertical)
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (vertical)
5. Honor your father and your mother. (horizontal)
6. You shall not murder. (horizontal)
7. You shall not commit adultery. (horizontal)
8. You shall not steal. (horizontal)

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- 9. You shall not bear false witness. (horizontal)
- 10. You shall not covet. (horizontal)

1. Vertical Relationship - "Our Father"

I am extremely proud that I can call my earthly dad, "father." He is the hardest worker I have ever known. He was very successful in business, though he did not have the educational pedigree that one would expect. He is very well respected in his community, and now that he has retired, he has dedicated a significant portion of his time to mission work and to supporting mission efforts around the globe. Now what gives me the right to call him "father?" It is because of my physical relationship with him. I was physically born of him. As proud as I am to be able to call my earthly dad, "father," I am ever more privileged to be able to refer to the almighty creator as "Father." Now what would give me the right to call Him, "Father?" It is because of my spiritual relationship with Him. I have been spiritually "born again" of the creator. This was something that Nicodemus did not understand.

John 3:3-8 (ESV)

³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

What characterizes this spiritual relationship with the creator that allows me to call him "Father." Paul said that we can be adopted as sons and fellow heirs with Christ provided that we suffer with Him.

Romans 8:14-17 (ESV)

¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ **and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.**

Suffering is the pinnacle of righteousness (right relationship with God), and exemplified in the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. In order to reach a point of being persecuted for our beliefs, we have to allow our faith in Christ to infiltrate all areas of our lives.

Matthew 5:3-12 (ESV)

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵ "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷ "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

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¹⁰ “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “**Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.**

¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The reason why spiritual maturity results in suffering is because genuine righteousness is always offensive to the world.

2 Timothy 3:10-12 (ESV)

¹⁰ You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ¹¹ my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. ¹² **Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,**

2. Horizontal Relationship - “As We Forgive”

The only thing that limits the amount of mercy we can receive from God, is the amount of mercy we are willing to show to our fellow man. This is particularly frightening to me, because it is something that I struggle with. If you asked my parents, my wife, my co-workers about my ability to let go of a grudge, or to forgive those who have wronged me, I would be afraid of their answer.

Matthew 6:14-15 (ESV)

¹⁴ For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵ but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 18:21-35 (ESV)

²¹ Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven. ²³ “Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵ And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

Again, the mercy we show to others is described a “pure and undefiled religion.”

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James 1:27 (ESV)

²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Ultimately we will be judged on the mercy we were willing to show to others.

Matthew 25:31-46 (ESV)

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ ⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

The Substance of the Model Prayer

1. Praise with Humility

- a. God is worthy of praise / infinite in every way / beyond our comprehension
- b. To remind us of who we are addressing / to remind us of how we compare to God

Isaiah 40:28 (ESV)

²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.

Romans 11:33-36 (ESV)

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! ³⁴ “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” ³⁵ “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” ³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

How do we cultivate a desire to praise God? Study the Word / Observe the Creation (Rom 1:19-20)

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*Study Challenge – Every day for 30 days, read 5 Psalms and 1 chapter of Proverbs.
Which one of these two men in Luke 18 knew who they were addressing? Who prayed with
humility?*

Luke 18:9-14 (ESV)

⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰ “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

2. Petition with Boldness

We can have boldness in approaching the throne of God. Not boldness because of ourselves, but boldness because of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Boldness because Christ is now our ultimate High Priest / Mediator.

Hebrews 4:14-16 (ESV)

¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hannah was very specific in her request to God. We can also take our specific requests to God, because we have confidence in our High Priest.

1 Samuel 1:11 (ESV)

¹¹ And she vowed a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head.”

Reasons to be specific in our requests:

- a. It is a demonstration of our faith in God*
- b. Allows us to see how God is working in answering our prayers*

However, James gives us some guidelines on making specific requests to God. It comes down to a matter of motivation:

James 4:2-3 (ESV)

² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

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*Only **you** can answer the reason why you are asking God for something. What is your motivation? Note that Jesus says “Give us this day, our daily bread.” Only enough to deal with the current need.*

Matthew 6:25-34 (ESV)

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁸ And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. ³⁴ “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.