



The Good News

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The Lord's Prayer (part 1)

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There are many people who are familiar with the “Lord’s Prayer”. Their level of familiarity will depend on what they have been taught concerning the prayer. Many believe that if you just say the words you will be saved, as if there were some “magic” to the words themselves. The question we want to consider this morning is this: If anyone were to ask you concerning the Lord’s Prayer, (i.e. “Do you say it?” “What does it mean?” etc.), what would you say about it? Does it hold some special power to forgive sins? Is it even applicable to say today? Let us consider these questions as we break down this prayer from Jesus.

Context: In any study of the Bible, it is always imperative to establish the context of the passage in question, so that proper attention can be placed on interpreting meaning. We find in **Luke 11:1** that certain of Jesus’ disciples came to Him and asked Him, “*Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.*” From the get-go, we find that Jesus is not praying alone to the Father. Rather, He is giving an example of how His disciples should pray. So what elements should be included in our prayers to God?

“Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name”
– To some, this might seem like a simple address, as one might find on an email or letter, but our prayer will never get lost in limbo like an email without an addressee. Rather, Jesus is teaching that we are to identify God as our Father. This is especially applicable considering the Jews often referred to God as the God of their fathers. Even today, young people sometimes consider God as “my parents’ God”, as opposed to “my God”. This also serves to identify where “our Father” is - in heaven. This can serve to help us focus our thoughts and requests to be more spiritually appropriate. We also find that this term “*hallowed*” means “*to sanctify; make holy*”. We identify that

God’s name is to be set apart in our minds as holy and special, not to be used lightly. Let us never consider prayer a trivial thing, as calling on the name of the Lord is a holy thing.

“Your kingdom come” – There has been much debate over what this means and whether or not it is still applicable today. The term for “*kingdom*” here simply means “*rule*” or “*domain of authority*”. In context, it seems Jesus is referring to the church, as prophecies of Daniel often referred to the coming of the “*kingdom*” being the establishment of the church. However, it can still be considered appropriate to say this as the fullness of the kingdom has not yet come, and it will only be fully realized when Jesus returns, and Judgment takes place. We find numerous places in the NT where writers pray for Jesus’ swift return, realizing what a glorious Day that will be for the all the saved. We should always pray with a mind on God’s kingdom, as the church, as it will be one day in Heaven.

“Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven”
– This is an especially important element of any prayer, understanding that God’s Will always takes precedent, and we should always be submitting to His Will.

Next week we will consider the rest of the Lord’s Prayer. But these first three elements help us to pray to God with a proper mind: identifying the holiness of God, welcoming God’s rule in our life (in the church and in Judgment), and submitting to God’s will in all things, no matter what His answer is to our prayers. These three characteristics in prayer are keys to praying properly and submissively to God.