

31:03

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

pray, prayer, Father, God, throne, word, prayers, worship, sin, total dependence, holy, attitude, life, heaven, church, unbelievers, dependent, notice, verse, worship service

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Key Verse: Luke 11:1

“It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.”

Overview

If you were to attend a typical mainline American church today, what elements would you find during the service? The two most basic ones would be music and a message. You would probably hear some announcements and then be encouraged to watch as those on the stage perform their duties. Sadly, this is how many churches conduct their worship service. What this conveys to the people is that this is how we worship God. What is missing from the worship service of these mainline churches is the reading of God’s Word and prayer.

Reading the Bible and prayer go hand-in-hand. If we don’t understand God’s Word and His purpose for our lives revealed in His Word, then we will not know how or what to pray. God wants His church to be a church that is centered on His Word and growing in the knowledge of His Word. However, God also wants His church to be a praying church. How do we pray? Jesus teaches us how to pray in Matthew 6:9-13.

How do we pray? Matthew 6:9-13

- 1. The _____ of Our Prayer (v. 9)
- 2. The _____ of Our Prayer (v. 9)
- 3. The _____ of Our Prayer (v. 9)
- 4. The _____ of Our Prayer (v. 10)
- 5. The _____ of Our Prayer. (vs. 11–13)

“Our prayers are to be primarily concerned with the exaltation of the name, kingdom, and will of the Lord Jesus Christ. Prayer is primarily worship which inspires thanks and personal purity.” —John MacArthur

Application

- 1. How important is prayer in your life?
- 2. What are ways you can grow your prayer life?
- 3. Spend time praying with one another.

Date: Sunday Jan 9, 2022 **Scripture:** Mathew 6:9-13 **Title:** Prayer – How do we pray

Can someone read our key verse for us there the top of your sheet, Luke 11:1 please?

So Jesus' disciples come to Him, and they ask Him, to teach them how to pray. Isn't that interesting? So many of us think that we know how to pray, right? How many unbelievers think they know how to pray?

I'm praying for you... Oh, that's great... unbeliever praying for me. Wow, you must know how to pray. And yet the disciples who were closest with Christ, and whom He called, asked Jesus, this very thing, teach us to pray. Implied -- we don't know how to pray. We, we see You, we witness you, we watch how You pray, we see You get up early in the morning to go and meet with the Father. And there is something that happens in that time between You and the Father. And we can see Your relationship with the Father, there is something that's going on there. And we want to know what it is. Teach us how to pray. They asked him that. And so He teaches them how to pray.

We're going to be looking at Matthew's account here this morning in Matthew 6. So if you have your Bibles, just open up there to Matthew 6, we're going to be working through the Lord's Prayer. What is called the Lord's Prayer there in Matthew 6. Let's look at our overview here.

If you were to attend a typical mainline American church today, what elements would you find during the service? The two most basic ones would be music and a message. You'd probably hear some announcements and then be encouraged to watch as those on the stage perform their duties. Sadly, this is how many churches conduct their worship service. What this conveys to the people is that this is how we worship God; music and a message. That's it. That's how you worship God.

Music, turn on a little music on the radio station. Listen to a message every once in a while. That's your worship of God. But what is missing from the worship service of these mainline churches is the reading of God's Word and prayer. The reading of God's Word and prayer.

Look at a second paragraph there. Reading the Bible and prayer go hand in hand. They go hand in hand, if we don't understand God's Word and His purpose for our lives revealed in His Word, then we will not know how or what to pray. They go hand in hand. That's why -- if you hopefully if you were here last week, you received one of these or you picked up one of these Bible reading plans here. Pick one up there, they still have them on the table this morning. You need to get one of those, pick these up and go through this.

But if you look, there are four steps there that you can look at, on how to prepare yourself to pray or to read God's word. And the first step there is prayer. I pray that God would help you understand His Word. And then step number four is pray. Pray that God would help you take the truth that you have just read and apply it to your life.

Reading God's Word and prayer go hand in hand, we must be people of His Word. And because we are people of His Word, we are also people who pray. And our prayer life then is fed by God's Word. It must be fed by God's Word. Because how does God reveal His will to us? Through voices in our head? Through signs, TV screens? No. Right here in His Word, this is how God reveals His will to you and I,

right here. And so if we want to pray according to His will (which is what we want to do, right?) how do we know what His will is? It's right here in His Word.

And so reading the Bible and prayer, that's why when we have that time in our worship service, we have scripture reading and prayer. We stand together and we read God's Word together, and then we pray together; corporately as a church. Because they go hand in hand. It's God's Word that teaches us how to pray. That helps us to know what we are to pray.

Let's look at our next little sentence there. The second sentence in that second paragraph, God wants His Church to be a church that is centered on His Word, and growing in the knowledge of His Word, and that is our church. However, God also wants His church to be a praying church. So how do we pray? Well, Jesus teaches us how to pray in Matthew chapter 6: 9-13. And that's what we're going to work through here this morning. So how do we pray then? How do we pray? Well, let's look at our first point here, in verse nine of Matthew chapter 6. Actually, can someone just read verses 9-13 for us, please?

“Pray, then, in this way:

‘Our Father who is 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 also have forgiven our debtors.

‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

1. The Approach of our Prayer

Let's look at our first point here on your sheet -- what we'll call The Approach of our Prayer. The Approach of our Prayer. We see this in verse 9. Look at what it says there in verse 9. Pray then in this way: Our Father". Our father, our father.

Who are we approaching when we pray? The Father. We are coming before God the Father, as we bow our heads to pray, as we get on our knees to pray, we are coming before the Father, the Creator of the universe. But notice, it doesn't just say, Father, or the father. But notice what Jesus says there. What does He say?

Our Father, our Father, how can we call God our Father? We must be born again. We must be His child. Kids don't walk up to me -- random kids don't walk up to me and say, Father, right? Because I'm not their father. But I do have four that do that. Because they belong to me, they are my child. And therefore they call me father. Fathers, they call you father, your children call you father, because they are your child. And therefore when we come before God, we are coming as His child. We are a child of God. And therefore we call Him our Father.

And so the only way that you can then have real prayer, true prayer, true communion with the Father is, to first of all, be His child. As I said, there, there are many people, unbelievers that say, 'Oh, you just went through this tragic thing in your life. You're in my prayers.' That's, that's great. That's a nice little cliché that you have. But you don't know the Father. And so when you pray, you are not praying to the God of this universe. You're praying to some, some god that you've made up in your mind that you've created in your mind because you're not His child. So that's nice that you want to pray for me. But really, if you think about it, that person is not praying for you, because their prayer is not reaching to heaven. It's not going to the Father because God is not their Father. When we pray, we say, Our Father. We have a special relationship with Him. He is our Father because we are His children, because He has saved us -- because He has redeemed us. And now we can come before Him, and we can call Him Father. That's the approach of our prayer. We call Him our Father. And the only way that we can call Him our Father is first we must be His child.

2. The Aim of Our Prayer

Let's look at our second point here. The Aim of our Prayer. The Aim of our Prayer. Notice what he says there. He doesn't just stop with "Our Father." He says "Our Father who is in heaven." Where are our prayers aimed? Where do we aim our prayers? We aim our prayers upward to heaven, to our Father, who sits on the throne in heaven. Notice He doesn't tell us to pray to our Father, who's at home, sitting on the couch watching TV, or at work making a bunch of money. No, our Father who is in heaven. In His throne room. He directs us to where the father is... heaven, where God is sitting on His throne. And so when we pray our prayers, think about this... when you when I pray as a child of God, our prayers go all the way up to heaven, to where the Father is, and where the Son sits at His right hand ... who is a mediator for us as we are praying to the Father.

Our prayers go all the way up there. That's where they are aimed. That's where we are going with our prayers. We don't just pray, and they just go off into the distance and get lost. No, they go up to the ear of the Father... of our Father, who listens to us because we are His children. And that's a special thing. Listen, when you think about that, that God is the Creator of the Universe. God is the One who created Adam and Eve, who created the world, and spoke it into existence in six days. That God, you and I are able to talk with Him. And our prayers when we pray, they reach His ear. And He listens as we, His children, pray to Him. It's special. It's a special thing that we have as believers that unbelievers don't have. Their prayers will never reach heaven. Because they don't know the Father. The only prayer of an unbeliever that will reach heaven is the prayer of what? Salvation. "Father save me." And He'll hear that prayer and He will save that person. But every other prayer, it doesn't get there, because they don't know Him. But we aim our prayers to heaven, where the Father sits, where the Father is.

3. The Attitude of Our Prayer

Let's look at our third point. Point number three, The Attitude of our Prayer. The Attitude of our Prayer. Notice what he says there again, in verse 9, at the end of verse 9, "Hallowed be Thy name." What does that word "Hallowed" mean? Well, it means to make holy, or to purify, or to sanctify. That means that when we come before the Father, we recognize that God is holy, and reverent. And then we approach Him. Our attitude as we approach Him is that we are to revere Him. He's the God of all creation. He's the God (and think about this.) -- He is a holy and perfect God who has been sinned against by you and I, and yet He still hears our prayers. But He is holy, holy, holy (Isaiah chapter 6. Right?). That is our God, as Isaiah had that vision of the throne of God. That's what he cried out, holy, holy, holy. He could hear the angels there, saying, "Holy, Holy, holy" because He is a holy God. And that's what our attitude must be. As we approach the throne of God. We must realize and recognize and remember how holy He is.

That's why I've told you this before, when I was a youth pastor, they used to have these shirts and hats that they would sell at these booths at these Christian rock concert things and all this stuff that said, Jesus is my homeboy. What a lack of reverence. Jesus is not our homeboy. He's our King. He is Holy, He sits on the throne. We are to worship Him and He is the only One who was worthy of our worship. And so when we approach the throne, the attitude that we have is not... and I hear this even from... it just makes me cringe when I hear this even from pastors on stages, where they say, "Hey God." No, that's not how we approach the God of all creation. When you just flippantly approach God, and you just say, "hey God," what a lack of reverence. That's how you talk to your friends, your peers. Hey, so and so. But when we talk to the Father, when we approach the throne of glory, we don't just come with an attitude of, "Hey, God." No, we must realize and recognize who He is. That He's the Holy God, of all creation.

And so then our attitude in prayer is an attitude of worship. As we come before Him in reverence, understanding and realizing who He is, we then worship Him. Prayer is an attitude of worship. It's an aspect of our worship, that we worship God in our prayer. And as we come before Him, then we offer up our requests to Him, we ask of Him, we don't come and demand of things of God, we come and request. We don't tell God what He needs to do. No, He's already told us what He does and who He is. That's why I said, God's Word and prayer go hand in hand. We realize and recognize who He is through His Word. And then we come before Him with that reverence and holy attitude-- and then we request, and we ask of Him, but we ask "Oh, God, may Your will be done."

Wasn't that even the prayer of Christ in the garden? He didn't make a demand to the Father. He didn't say "I command You, I demand that you take this cup from me, Father." No, he said, Oh, Father, remove this cup from me. But not My will. But Your will be done. I'll drink the cup, Father, because it's Your will. He didn't come and demand from the Father. He came with a humble attitude, humble and reverential attitude of worship before the Father. And that's the attitude that we must have when we pray.

4. The Alignment of our Prayer

Let's look at our fourth point, point number four, The Alignment of our Prayer. The Alignment of our Prayer. Notice what he says there's it continues on in verse 10, 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.' (Matthew 6:10)

Notice the three "Your"s there in verses at the end of verse 9 and in verse 10. You see Your name, Your kingdom, Your will. Yours, it's all about God. It's about Him. When we come to pray, how often are our prayers all about us? Most of the time, right? If we're honest with ourselves, most of the time, it's all about me. Okay, God, here I am. And God, this is what I want. God, this is what I'm asking. And we, we forget that. No, wait, wait, wait. When we come and approach the throne of God, it's about Him! Does He want us to ask and make requests? Yes, we're going to look at these. He wants us to ask of Him, to show dependence upon Him. But when we come before Him, we need to realize and recognize that it's all about Him. Your kingdom, Your will. It's for Your name. It's all for Your glory, God. That needs to be our attitude in our prayer, and how we align our prayers. Prayer is not trying to get God to align with our will. But it is aligning our will with God's will.

We are not trying to change the mind of God because you cannot change the mind of God. You can't. He is sovereign, His plan is already perfect, and you cannot change the mind of God. But God can change you. And that's what prayer is about. It's about my heart being changed, not me trying to change God. No, but God changing me. So that my will would line up with His will. Think about this, if we think that we can pray and change God's will. What are we telling God? What are we telling God? My way is better God. God, I know what is best. I know You created the universe. I know You spoke it all by the power of Your word. But God, listen, as your creation, fallen, sinful... God, I know better. Let me tell You, God...

If we come before God with that kind of attitude, what we are telling God is that God is no longer on the throne. I'm on the throne. But when we come before God, we are aligning our will with His will. That's what we are doing.

MacArthur says this, prayer is not asking God to do my will, it is bringing myself into conformity with His will, is asking Him to do His will, and to give me the grace to enjoy it. Give me the grace to enjoy this, Father. Whatever your will is, that is what I want to have done.

Some of you may have heard this illustration before -- this illustration of a boat, being in a boat, and you take an anchor and you're on the shoreline, and you take the anchor, and you were to throw the anchor onto the shore. And you begin to pull that yourself towards the shore, what's going on there? Are you pulling the shore towards you? No, you're pulling yourself towards the shore. And that's what happens in prayer. Prayer is that is anchoring ourselves on the Father, and then aligning our will towards His. We're not trying to change His will to my will. No, I am aligning my will with what His will is. That's what happens in prayer. And that's what we need to be focused on as we pray. And so that's the alignment of our prayer.

5. The Appeal of our Prayer

Finally, point number five, The Appeal of our Prayer. The Appeal of our Prayer. Notice there in verse 11. Give us this day our daily bread. 12 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (Matthew 6:11-13)

Now notice how long it took finally, to get to us. As Jesus starts this off, it's all about who? The Father. And even though He gets to this point where now it's us...who is it still all about? The Father. Because notice what He says, Give us our bread, our daily bread, total dependence on God the Father, for our daily food -- for our daily needs. We are totally dependent upon Him.

Then He goes on and He says, Forgive us our debts. Total dependence upon the Father for forgiveness. And what are we acknowledging in that when we say forgive us our debts? What are we acknowledging? That we've done what? We've sinned. We are acknowledging that we have sinned against the Father, we have sinned against You, Father, oh, please forgive us. And listen, He is the only one who can forgive us, right?

And so therefore, if I want my sins forgiven, I'm totally dependent upon Him, because He's the only one that can forgive me. Total dependence on Him. And then He says, do not lead us (because we are totally dependent upon His leading)...otherwise you and I would walk right into temptation. We would walk into temptation, and we would fall in that temptation --if we're not dependent upon the Father. Because every one of us, our heart is bent towards what? Sin. But we need the Father -- Oh, Father, please do not lead me into temptation. I need your leading in my life, so that I will not sin against You. Because I hate sin. And I don't want to sin against You, Father, but God I can't do it on my own. If I try and do it on my own, I'll fall into sin every time. I need your leading, Father. I'm totally dependent upon You.

And then He says, deliver us. There are for us' there -- give us; forgive us; do not lead us; and deliver us. Because we are dependent upon Him, keeping us from evil, deliver us Father from evil. We are totally dependent upon Him in everything. We need His grace to keep us from sin. That's our appeal in our prayer. That word "appeal" there is an earnest request for help. It shows our total dependence upon God, we need Him to meet our daily needs. We need Him for forgiveness of our sins, we need Him to lead us in the way of righteousness. Because left on our own, we would walk right into sin every time. The appeal here is begging God for help. Because you and I are helpless. We can't do it on our own. We need Him. We beg God.

Notice what this prayer does. Notice how, when Jesus teaches His disciples to pray, notice what it does here. Notice who it elevates. It elevates God. It puts Him on display. It puts Him on the throne. And what does it do to us? It puts us low. And that should be the posture of our prayer. Oh Father, I'm not even worthy to come before your throne, because I've sinned against You. But Father, thank You for the work that You have done in my life. You have saved me, You have redeemed me, You have accomplished my salvation, You have done it all Father, and now I'm able to come before Your throne because of You. Not because of me. Not because of how good I am. I'm not good. But You are Father, and You have changed my heart. You have redeemed me. And now I have access to Your throne, not

because of me but because of You. It puts God on the throne, and it makes us low ... down where we belong.

That must be how we pray. Look at this quote down at the bottom of the page there. MacArthur says this, "Our prayers are to be primarily concerned with the exaltation of the name, kingdom and will of the Lord Jesus Christ. Prayer is primarily worship which inspires thanks and personal purity."

That is, that is so, so good. I would highlight that I would put that somewhere in your Bible, to help you realize and recognize and understand what prayer is. It's all about God's name. It's all about His kingdom. It's all about His will. And it's how we worship. It's how we worship.

Look on page 2, our application. How important is prayer in your life? Anybody have a perfect prayer life? If you raise your hand you would be lying and need to repent. Because none of us have a perfect prayer life. We can all pray more, every one of us. But let me ask you how important is prayer in your life?

Prayer shows our total dependence upon the Father. And we must live every day of our life. dependent upon the Father.

What are ways that you can grow in your prayer life? There's some right there even on that Bible reading, right? That helps you to grow in your prayer life there. Before you open your Bible, pray. Ask God to help you understand His Word as you're about to get into it. And then as you read His Word, pray and thank God for what He's revealed to you through His Word. Those are ways that you can grow in your prayer life.

So what we're going to do now for the rest of our time here this morning is we're going to spend time praying. Here's the thing. We gather together in groups and pray with one another. Let's pray specifically for things that are going on in our lives. Specific prayer requests in your life. Yes, we need a building-- we know that. But pray specifically with one another. And then watch and see how God answers those prayers. As we get specific, God wants us to be specific in our prayer life. Because we're specific in our prayer life, then we can see how God answers to those things. Don't just be general. But open up your heart to your brothers and sisters and ask them and say, I need prayer in my life for this specific thing. Will you please pray with me? Will you please pray for me? I need prayer. Write down those prayer requests and pray for them this week. So let's spend some time with one another. Gather together in small groups here and let's spend the rest of our time here this morning praying for one another.