

## THE LORD'S PRAYER – PART 1

Matthew 6:9-13 ... “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.”

You may have memorized the Lord's prayer as a child. Most Christians can recite it. But I've found that many do not fully understand it, or why Jesus demonstrated it to his disciples. First, Jesus was not prescribing a specific prayer that he wanted everyone to repeat. His intent was to model an approach to prayer that God appreciates. In the three verses before today's passage, Jesus taught about prayer in general and criticized those who recited long prayers in public to get attention or showoff. He said we should go to a quiet place alone to talk to God. He also criticized what he called “vain repetitions;” repeating phrases or certain sentences over and over again, saying that God knows what we need before we ask, so repeating ourselves accomplishes little.

Today we will look at verses 9 and 10 of this model prayer. We know it is a model, not a specific prayer, because Jesus says “In this manner, therefore, pray.” When we use the term “in this manner,” it means speak like this, but not with these specific words. “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,” opens the door to God's ears, as it recognizes that God is supreme and is to be honored above all others. Satan hates this because when we pray to God and honor him, it blocks satan's influence over us. Satan cannot harass you if you are giving the glory to God.

“Your kingdom come,” is not a request, but our recognition and acceptance that God's kingdom reigns eternal. In fact, the entire Lord's prayer is our recognition of God's sovereignty, not a series of requests. Likewise, “Your will be done,” is our acknowledgement that God's will and plan for his creation cannot be detoured, delayed, or altered. What God put in motion at creation, is on his timetable and his detailed plan. Everything God planned has already happened, is in the process of happening, or will happen in the future. “On earth as it is in heaven,” is our confession that we know God is firmly in charge of his creation, both in heaven (his charge over his angels and the universe) and on earth.

We will continue with this in our next devotional.

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