

(title) There is an interesting statement in Luke 11:1. *And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.* Here one of Jesus' disciples asks Jesus to teach him how to pray; but not just how to pray but to pray like John taught his disciples to pray. What I find interesting is John teaching people to pray. Now John's disciples were predominately Jewish and should know something about prayer. Nothing is said about what John taught about prayer, but apparently he not only baptized in the Jordon River and teach about the kingdom being at hand, but he taught people how to pray.

Another thing I find interesting in this text is how similar it is to the model prayer Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6), but they appear to be different accounts. This passage was delivered at another time, and in another place, and upon another occasion. For one thing, Jesus was praying when one disciple approached him and asked for his teaching. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus was preaching to a multitude, not praying.

While I find these points of interest, the real focus of our thoughts will be on the value and beauty of "how to pray." *Luke 11:2-4 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. (3) Give us day by day our daily bread. (4) And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.*

***OUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.*** Here we see an introduction to our prayers, which are to be addressed to God, our Father in Heaven. Father is an endearing term. This may be the most moving part of the prayer. Yet we can easily pass by it. And we easily begin our prayers with "our Father" without realizing the gravity of these two simple words. The Jews did not begin their prayers this way. There is no evidence that God was ever directly referenced as Father in prayer by the Jews. Jesus referred to God as Father on other occasions. Perhaps none more familiar than when he was dying on

the cross, Jesus cried out and said, "*Father forgive them for they know not what they do.*" But Jesus did not teach us to pray to "my Father" but to "OUR FATHER." As a Christian we are children of God and heirs according to the promise.

So our prayers are to God, our Father. I want to emphasize this because on occasion you hear people pray to Jesus. In fact there is a song that says, "*Come Let Us Have A Little Talk with Jesus.*" While I like the tune of the song, Jesus said to pray to Our Father." But with that said, there is biblical evidence where prayer was offered to Jesus. But Jesus bids his disciples to pray after this manner. The expression "after this manner" means "something like." So it is appropriate to address your prayers to Our Father in Heaven, our Heavenly Father, God in heaven, etc as they are in the manner of what Jesus was teaching.

Along this line, there is a growing movement to pray to the creator of the universe as "mother", representing "mother earth." Not Biblical. Our prayers are addressed to "Our Father." Father implies a father/child relationship. No one has the right to address a person as their father other than the child. So it is the child of God, the Christian that has the privilege to pray to God in heaven. ***John 9:31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.*** So prayer is a blessing afforded to the one who does the will of God, i.e. becomes a child of God.

We also note the object of prayer "Our Father" is further described by the place of his residence, "in heaven." Now in a sense God is everywhere, but the heaven of heavens is the place where He most eminently displays his glory, and this may teach us to look upwards in prayer and seek those things which are above where our Father dwells. ***Colossians 3:1-2 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.***

***HALLOWED BE THY NAME.*** Not only do we pray to God, but our prayers should not be trivial or said in bitterness and anger; but in holy reverence. Our *thoughts* of

God are to be pure, lofty, holy. We are to “*Hallow His Name.*” In so doing we will magnify, lift up and glorify his name because of who He is and what He has done. In prayer we are not making God Holy, we are declaring his holiness.

***THY KINGDOM COME.*** There are two things that are different for us today than when Jesus taught his disciples to pray. These differences are brought about by the death of Jesus on the cross. One is the status of the kingdom and the second is Jesus as our mediator in prayer. At the time of this teaching, the kingdom was yet to come. ***Matthew 3:1-2 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, (2) And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*** So Jesus instructs these disciples to pray for the coming kingdom. However this would not be instruction to us because now the kingdom has come and exist in the form of the church. ***Colossians 1:12-13 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: (13) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*** Notice at the time Paul penned these words, that the kingdom was no longer in the future, but was now in the present, and it existed in his Son, which makes reference to the church.

It would be inappropriate for us to pray for the “kingdom to come”, but we can pray for betterment of the kingdom today. It’s good to pray for the church and that God may bless and prosper the church.

***THOU WILL BE DONE:*** We should pray with a desire to see God’s *will* done, and put first. Notice, Jesus teachings on God’s interests first; it is *His name*, *His kingdom*, and *His will* that are primary. Prayer isn’t a tool to get what we want from God. It is a method to get God’s will accomplished in us and by us. Most of us remember Jesus expressing this sentiment while in the garden of Gethsemane just hours before his death. “*Thy will be done*” demonstrates submission, and acknowledging our willingness to accept God’s will is a measure of faith.

**(3) GIVE US DAY BY DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.** Bread is a substance of life and was critical in the lives of the people during Jesus' day. This passage teaches us that it is appropriate to pray for the essentials of life. Thus far Jesus has focused his teaching on prayer on God, his kingdom, and God's will being accomplished on the earth. **NOW WE TURN TO OUR NEEDS.** I would like for us to realize that we can talk to God about our physical needs. In fact, our Father wants us to talk to him about our physical needs. As a parent, we want our children to talk to us about the things they need. We want them to speak to us about what is going on in their lives.

But notice that the focus of these words is on what we need today. There is the word "*daily*". The Greek word rendered "*daily*" occurs only here and in Matthew 6. I am not praying about the problems of next week, next month, and next year. I am going to God today and talking to him about my needs today. Tomorrow, I will talk to God about tomorrow's needs and problems.

It's alright to pray about the little things to God. Our Father is not too busy for us. Just because He is the behind the creation of the universe yet being the Almighty does not mean that we cannot speak to him, even about the little things in our lives. One reason it is important to bring our Father the little things is because it will help us prevent those little things from turning into big things. Don't wait for catastrophe to talk to God. Making godly decisions and seeking godly direction can help us keep away from a mess of problems.

**(4) AND FORGIVE US OUR SINS; FOR WE ALSO FORGIVE EVERY ONE THAT IS INDEBTED TO US.** Matthew puts it this way. *Matthew 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* Unforgiving is unforgiven. Receiving forgiveness is proportional to your willingness to forgive. It's not uncommon to hear someone pray, "*Father forgive us of all our sins*" which is find so long as we understand that by saying such we are saying that we are willing to forgive all the sins of others against us.

In Matthew 18 Jesus tells about a man who owed his lord an enormous debt but the debtor forgave that debt. Then the man that received forgiveness of his debt refuse to forgive another man that owed him by comparison a small amount; this man was willing to receive forgiveness but not extend forgiveness. When his lord heard about this attitude, he was angry and reinstated the original enormous debt to the man. ***Matthew 18:34-35 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.*** Now here is the point for us to grasp. ***(35) So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*** The burden of forgiveness is something we must bear if we expect to be forgiven by our heavenly Father. ***Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.***

Forgiving means you don't let the past sin committed toward you by another affect your present behavior toward that person. You put the past behind you as if it never happened. That's not forgetting the past, but forgiving the past and the Lord expects us to do just that and pray will help us to this end.

***(4) LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION; BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL*** We all face temptation to do wrong. Jesus is saying for us to ask our heavenly Father to help deliver us from that temptation. Now he will not spare us from temptation but will help us to resist it. ***James 1:13-14 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: (14) But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*** Notice v 14 does not say "if" man is tempted but "when" man is tempted. Temptation will come. But here is the comforting promise and answer to prayer. ***1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*** When that temptation comes from the evil one, pray about it and then look for the escape route.

What Jesus said to this disciple is also fitting for us today. What is not mentioned in Luke 11 but included in the Matthew 6 account is our attitude in prayer. During Jesus ministry in Luke 18 he speaks of the hypocritical way in which the Jewish leaders were praying for show. In that parable Jesus compared the prayer of a haughty Pharisee to a publican and the publican simply said in v13 ***God be merciful to me a sinner.*** Then Jesus said in v14 ***I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*** Prayer should be offered with humility.

One final note regarding prayer that is not included in this episode is “*praying through Jesus.*” ***1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*** This means that access to God is through Jesus. This is way we offer our prayers “through Jesus name.” We pray to God through Jesus. ***Colossians 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*** We are to give thanks to God and the Father of Jesus for all things but we are to give these thanks through Jesus.

So there are some things to learn about prayer. We’ve been talking about prayer. This is a blessing for the Christian.

Invitation - Are you a Christian?