

Sunday, September 20, 2020 am

TEACHINGS OF JESUS (19)
Sermon on the Mount (18)
A Model Prayer
Matthew 6:9-15

As we continue our examination of the sermon on the Mount as a part of the teachings of Jesus (2020-21), today we want to focus on the model prayer Jesus taught. This of course in the midst of Jesus contrasting the self-righteous, glory seeking actions of the “hypocrites” and how true righteousness will govern our worship and service to others. We have thus far addressed proper giving and last week we talked about how to pray. In this lesson, we want to notice the model prayer our Lord gave on that occasion.

Concerning “the Lord’s prayer” – it is often quoted ritualistically and can be subject to “vain repetition” as we addressed last week. Second, this is not really a prayer Jesus uttered thus making it “the Lord’s prayer”, rather it is designed to teach us HOW to pray and what to pray for, described by some as “the model prayer”. When I think of “the Lord’s prayer” I think of John 17 where Jesus submits to the Father having finished His work, He prays for His apostles and others as they brought in the kingdom, and finally for all disciples of all time and the true unity we should have.

Last week we also mentioned that the Bible has much to say about prayer and it is worthy of intense study because of its importance in the life of a Christian. It is HOW we communicate TO God. And addressing what to pray for cannot possibly be covered in a single lesson. So today, let us consider what Jesus addressed in this model prayer as it is certainly a good start.

I. Addressing God

a. Our Father –

- i. Prayer should always begin with addressing God. We should thank Him and acknowledge who He is in some way. Typically, prayers are filled with requests, which God wants us to do (cf. Matthew 7:7-8, James 1:5-6, 1 John 3:22, etc.). But consider, if you need something from someone, do you burst in immediately demanding, or do you first show appreciation and gratitude for the one to whom you are making requests.

In our prayers, we are approaching our Creator with needs of various types, some of which have an impact on our eternal destiny. It only makes sense that we begin such an exercise by acknowledging Him. This is what Jesus did with this Model prayer and in His prayers (cf. John 17:1, Matthew 26:38, etc.)

Do not forget that with a father there is love, caring, provision and inheritance.

- ii. First this shows relationship. We ought to continually realize how blessed we are to be children of God. 1 John 3:1 speaks of this.
- iii. Second, notice the OUR Father – Jesus was not just speaking of Himself alone (He did that in His personal prayers – cf. John 17:1), but of all God’s followers.
- iv. Third, consider that with the idea of a father is authority – God has all authority and we are to honor that. Such as is further emphasized in the remainder of that verse.

b. Who is in heaven –

- i. Reminds us that God is of another realm. This can also point to our origins as this world had to be created out of another realm (the theory of general evolution – something from nothing is foolishness). As such, He is not confined to natural limitations.
- ii. As such, He is to be treated as Higher than us – His ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9)

- iii. Heaven is His dwelling place, and a place associated with holiness – Psalm 15:1, *Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?*
- c. **Hallowed be Your name** –
 - i. The word *hallowed* is associated with holiness. And the point is that God ought to be addressed reverently.
 - ii. Isaiah 57:15 says, *For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* God dwells with those who are humble before Him.
 - iii. Psalm 111:9 says, *He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever: Holy and awesome is His name.*
 - iv. In our prayers we ought to always address God reverently. He's NOT just "one of the guys." He's not your "buddy", though He is your friend. When we approach Him there MUST be a sense of awe, even at the mentioning of His name.
1 Peter 1:15 notes that as *He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.*
- d. **Your kingdom come** –
 - i. This phrase is a challenge to us today because when Jesus taught this, the kingdom had not yet been established (cf. Matthew 3:2, 4:17, 10:7, Mark 9:1, etc.) , so if this is His meaning, we cannot even pray this prayer as worded. The kingdom was established on Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2.
 - ii. However, with modification in wording or understanding, we could consider it. It ought to be our desire that the authority of God (His kingdom) rule in the hearts of all men (or more than right now). Could we and should we be praying that more souls will be won into His Kingdom? Should we pray that His kingdom prevails more greatly in this world?
But then again, if that is our prayer, just say so!
Consider this thought along with the next phrase.
- e. **Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven** –
 - i. Again, may that ALWAYS be our prayer. Jesus Himself set the example while in the garden of Gethsemane – Matthew 26:39.
 - ii. May we as we pray, do so with what God wants as our main desire (1 John 5:14). And may we be willing to accept His will even if it doesn't agree with ours.

II. Our personal needs

- a. **Give US this day our daily bread** –
 - i. This would be a reference to our daily needs. This is a gratitude for sustenance right now and not asking for our wants and extended needs.
This is about being content (Philippians 4:11) Be reminded of the prayer of Agur in Proverbs 30:8-9, *Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches— Feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the Lord?" Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.*
Prosperity can be a dangerous thing, and we must take note because we live in a prosperous nation.
And it is also with an understanding that we will do our part – cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:10
 - ii. Again, this is an acknowledgment of OUR brethren. Do we think about one another in our prayers and our needs? Do we pray for our brethren's needs AND if we know they are there and we can help, are we ready with a helping hand? (cf. James 2:14-17).
- b. **Spiritual needs – Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors**
 - i. Because we are all sinners, we all need forgiveness.
Consider the word used here for our sins is "debts" - something that we owe. It means we

are guilty and need to have that debt forgiven. Jesus paid the price! Romans 5:8, 1 Peter 3:18, etc. And therein we have hope.

Even as Christians, when we sin – we need the blood of Jesus (1 John 1:7-9)

- ii. But note the qualifier – the only part of this prayer that is elaborated upon had to do with forgiveness. See vs. 14-15, where we are told the way God is going to forgive us is how we forgive others. That is a sobering thought!

Do you want to be forgiven by God? Do you NEED His forgiveness? Then you better forgive. It is emphasized. IN Matthew 18 where Peter asks Jesus how often he needs to forgive his brother “Up to seven times?” Jesus said, 70 X 7, (18:22) which means you go WAY beyond what is normal! He follows this up with a parable (Matthew 18:22-35) about a servant that owed 10,000 talents which is a ridiculously huge number. The servant pleaded forgiveness and was forgiven. But later he would not forgive a fellow servant of a few weeks wages. This caused the master to become angry and demand the entire original debt be paid. NOTE the conclusion in vs. 35, “So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”

c. Spiritual needs - Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one –

- i. First, know that God does not tempt us (James 1:13) but He allows us to be tempted. Those temptations can make or break us spiritually and in other ways. When we resist or overcome them, they make us stronger (James 1:2-3).
- ii. This is a prayer requesting His help and guidance as we deal with our temptations – give us what we need to overcome. Consider 1 Corinthians 10:13 and 2 Peter 2:9, just as God could deliver righteous Lot from Sodom, He can deliver us out of temptation. That is what we should be praying for.

d. Conclusion (13)

- i. ***For yours is the kingdom, power and glory forever.*** Some translations may not have this phrase because it is NOT found in early mss. BUT it is noted in many translations including the NASB (not found in ESV). Time will not permit a detailed discussion of this, BUT there is little doubt as to the truth of this “benediction” (closing remarks of a prayer). To God belongs His kingdom, His power AND glory.
- ii. As we conclude our prayers, let us, in the name of Jesus, acknowledge the greatness of God.

And thus we see a model prayer which is simple, humble and complete. In this prayer, Jesus helps us understand how important simple communication with God is, and the righteousness we need as we approach Him in prayer. And we need to approach Him in prayer with a desire that our will align with His will. Anything less than this will be inadequate. So how is your prayer life? Think about it!