



SERIES: MY PRAYER LIFE

The Lord's Prayer

Life Reference: Matthew 6:9-13

Focus Verse:

"After this manner therefore pray ye" (Matthew 6:9).

"Honey, when you take the trash out, latch the gate so the dog won't get out." My mother's statement was not a request but directions for how to perform the chore we both knew I was going to accomplish.

The simple phrase, "After this manner therefore pray ye," reveals that God makes some assumptions about my performance too. He isn't wondering whether I am going to pray; he is not requesting or begging me to pray. To God, prayer is a given.

Jesus took time to teach us how we should pray. He cautioned us against "vain repetitions" (Matthew 6:7), told us to avoid praying to impress others (see Matthew 6:5-6), and gave an outline to follow.



Before we look at the individual statements that comprise this outline—or the Lord's Prayer—let's take a moment and read it in its entirety.



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*“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptations, but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.
A-men.”*
–Matthew 6:9-13

Life Reflection:

Do I understand what I am praying when I repeat the Lord's Prayer?

It is possible for us to learn the Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer without understanding or even considering their meaning. More than great literature, each statement in God's Word is rich with meaning.

The Lord's Prayer is no exception. Each segment—each phrase—is important in how we see God and increases our understanding of Him.

- **“Our Father which art in heaven”**

Life Reflection:

How does that statement make me feel?

What emotions are evoked when I relate to God as Father?



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Sadly, in our society today, many fathers do not fulfill the role God intended. Many people grow up without a father, with one who was distant, or abusive. Pain, shame, rejection, and fear can fill our hearts and minds if we were raised in a home where the father was unkind.

It is critical that we understand that God is not like any earthly father. Regardless of our natural father's good qualities, no man compares with God—our Father. If you are a parent, consider for a moment the kind of parent you desire to be. God is better than what you can even imagine!

Although it seems that we are the ones who come to God, it was in truth His idea. He made all the arrangements for us to be in close, intimate relationship with Him. With birth into the Kingdom of God, we enter into a special relationship with God. It is a privilege to be His child. Many benefits are inherent with this amazing kinship.

• **“Hallowed be thy name”**

According to the Living Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary, "hallow" means: to consecrate; to honor as sacred.

Isaiah told of a vision. In it, he saw God, surrounded by celestial beings who cried, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord" (Isaiah 6:3).

It is important that we understand that God is holy, and everything about Him is holy.

"I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me" (Isaiah 46:9).

Throughout the Word of God, we glimpse various aspects of God's character. The following are Old Testament names that were used for God:

El Shaddai	He is sufficient.	Genesis 17:1
Jehovah-Jireh	Jehovah is my provider.	Genesis 22:7-14
Jehovah-Rophe	Jehovah heals.	Exodus 15:22-26
Jehovah-Nissi	Jehovah is my banner.	Exodus 17:15-16
Jehovah-M'Kaddesh	Jehovah who sanctifies.	Leviticus 20:7,8
Jehovah-Shalom	Jehovah is peace.	Judges 6:24
Jehovah-Tsidkenu	Jehovah our righteousness.	Jeremiah 23:5,6





Jehovah-Rohi	Jehovah my shepherd.	Psalms 23:1
Jehovah-Shammah	Jehovah is there.	Ezekiel 48:35

There is an important balance that is created when we grasp that God is both our Father and He is a holy God. He is loving, yet fair and just. Knowing these basic truths about God gives us assurance as we continue praying the Lord's Prayer.

- **“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”**

Life Reflection:

How do we pray God's kingdom come on earth?

What impact is this prayer going to have on my life?

This simple phrase is actually a submission of our will to God's. Because of His authority, power, greatness, we must pray His kingdom come and our kingdom go.

But since He is more than sovereign Lord, He is also still our Father. He is safe; we can willingly submit to His will. Our future, desires, needs, and life are safe with Him.

Pray that God's will be done in:

- Our life
- Our family (spouse, children, other family members)
- Our church (pastor, leadership, faithfulness of the people, harvest)
- Government (city, state, and national/judicial, legislative, and executive)





- **“Give us this day our daily bread”**

Life Reflection:

I want God to bless my life. How do I acquire His blessings?

When praying for God to meet our needs:

- Make sure we are in the will of God (prayer life, faithfulness, work habits, obedience in giving).
- Believe it is God's will to bless us.
- Be specific.
- Be patient.

- **“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”**

Life Reflection:

Does God's forgiveness depend on my forgiving others?

Yes, it does. A direct correlation exists between our forgiving others and God's willingness to forgive me.

“And When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses” (Mark 11:25,26).

Pray daily:

- Ask God to forgive you for wrong thoughts, words, and deeds



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- Forgive those who have wronged you
- Ask God to help you have a forgiving attitude

"Create in my a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me"
(Psalm 51:10).

- **"And lead us not into temptations, but deliver us from evil"**

Another way to pray this line is to say, "Lead me not into trials, and deliver me from a bad attitude." Some trials are divinely permitted for our spiritual development. Other trials we bring on ourselves.

We can pray:

- Lord, help me to learn character, maturity, Christ-likeness without needing to go through adversity.
- Lord, help me to overcome the temptation of the evil one which destroys and kills.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers (various trials) temptations; Knowing this, that the trying (testing) of your faith worketh (produces) patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire (complete), wanting (lacking) nothing" (James 1:2-4).

"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 of escape that ye may be able to bear it" (I Corinthians 10:13).

- **"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. A-men"**

The kingdom, power, and glory all belong to God. He desires to be honored. Our prayers should begin and end with affirming our love and adoration for God. He is the Almighty God, our loving Father, and dearest Friend!





Life Response:

We can know everything there is to know about prayer but if we do not pray, we are not affecting the kingdom. Don't wait until the "perfect time" to pray. We never "find" time to pray; we make time to pray.

Make prayer a priority now.

More Prayer References:

Luke 11:1-4
Matthew 5:9, 16
Malachi 1:11
Matthew 26:42
Psalm 103:20
Proverbs 30:8
Matthew 6:14-15
Matthew 18:21, 22
II Peter 2:9
John 17:15

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