

4.23.21

Matthew 6:8-13

Entering Into God's Throne Room Correctly – The Lord's Prayer

As we move on in our study of Matthew, we come to one of the teachings of Jesus concerning prayer.

If you remember from last week, we read about how Jesus pointed to some individuals who enjoyed being flamboyant in their prayer life. They enjoyed praying long and lengthy prayers so they could be viewed by the masses as super spiritual. In reality Jesus said they were not. They were just doing it for show.

Here is the verse we find this in. **Matthew 6:7, “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.”**

I don't think most of us have to worry about many too words in our prayers. If anything we are probably using too few words in our praying.

When Jesus gives His disciples what is called the Lord's prayer, it is a prayer that is designed to help us to properly enter into God's throne room correctly and a bit more thoroughly than His disciples, and most of us. Here Jesus is teaching us that our prayers really should be more than just spot praying here and there when we have a need.

He is teaching us as we come into the throne room of the Creator of the Universe, seeking grace and mercy, we should slow down and give God the honor and glory He deserves before we jump right into asking for our needs to be met.

Over the years, the Lord's Prayer has had to withstand considerable abuse, especially from children trying to learn it from a mumbling congregation. One little boy thought that God's name was Harold. Another begged, give me today my jelly bread. Another child in New York prayed lead me not into Penn Station. I guess Penn Station must have been a scary place to go.

As we recite the Lord's prayer each Sunday it can easily become something we just do and not something we fully enter into. But Jesus, the Son of God, knew what the best way to enter into His Father's presence so He gave us this prayer in a very specific way and in a very specific order.

In the Gospel of Luke, the setting was a bit different and we read the following.

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 taught his disciples..'"

The disciples of Jesus had seen something special happening as Jesus spent time in prayer. I believe they had witnessed great communion, great interaction between God and Jesus and they were hungry to experience it as well.

Let's examine the verse few lines of the Lord's Prayer.

Matthew 6:9, "Pray, then, in this way: Our Father, who is in heaven, Hallowed by Your name."

Pray in this way Jesus says.

By positioning ourselves in a quiet place and starting with the line, Our Father, we are stating a great truth that I pray has occurred in each of your lives.

You are no longer just John, born of John senior and Betty here of earth. You are no long Cindy, born of Mike and Delores. You are Chris, Maggie, Lori, Mike, John & Cindy who are now sons and daughters of the Creator of the Universe.

Romans 8:15b, “...you have received a spirit of adoption as sons (and daughters) by which we cry out (and pray), Abba! Father!”

I believe one of the great tragedies of the Christian Church over the years has been the lack of teaching what it means to be a child of the most high God.

So many of us had such poor examples of physical fathers that we struggle to understand what it means to have a Father who loves us and would do anything for us. Even if you did have a good example of a physical father, one who was loving, kind and encouraging, it pales in comparison to knowing the love God, as our Father, has for us.

It is true, as we will see in a minute, there is a reverence that is due the Creator of the universe but that is not what God is hoping will happen first when you come into His presence. He is hoping you have entered into a such an deep understanding of the love that He has for you that you can call Him Abba, Father, from the depths of your heart.

This is one of the areas I know most people struggle. I struggle sometimes believing just how much God loves me. I constantly have to stay in communion with Him because the world, Satan and even my own flesh tries to tell me I'm not good enough, spiritual enough, obedient enough to receive God's unconditional love.

But as I spend time with Him, reading about His grace and mercy towards me, His son, the truth of His love overwhelms me and draws me into Himself.

God's love, grace and mercy is something I believe that each one of us needs to spend time in almost daily. We need a daily inoculation of His love don't we.

If this is something you struggle with I have many resources but one is listed in your bulletin.

Captured by Grace, David Jeremiah.

I firmly believe that unless you have tried diligently to understand and receive as fully as you can, the love God has for you personally, your spiritual growth will be severely handicapped. You will come to scripture and feel condemned. You will always feel condemned by others and in return have a nature of condemnation towards them.

It is the truth that will set you free and it is what it means to be a child of God that is that truth. It is this truth that will position you in a place to be able to pray in its fullness, My Father, who art in heaven.

Boy, I think we could almost stop right there couldn't we? The Fatherhood of God. Do you know how your children, when they were young, their faces would light up when you came home. How they ran to meet you and were sad when you were leaving? This is God when you come to Him. His face lights up, His arms are open wide and His embrace, His embrace, well, you just melt into His embrace. There you find nothing but love and acceptance.

O church, I cannot find the words to express how important this is to your life. Receiving the fullness of God's love. Put all your studies aside until you have set the foundation of your Christian life upon this truth. When you do, so many other truths and understanding will open up to you.

As you think about this prayer, do as Jesus said and begin by saying My Father, and then

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal God's Fatherhood to you.

As we move on in the Lord's prayer Jesus teaches us that yes, God is our Father but He is the Lord God Almighty, Creator of the Universe, Giver and Sustainer of all life in heaven and on earth. Hallowing His name in the beginning of our prayers helps us to set God apart in our thinking. We are treating Him with the reverence due Him.

Isn't it true in your life, I know it is in mine, that when we come to God in prayer it is quickly without much thought about who we are coming into the presence of?

One of the things England has done over the years is develop a certain protocol concerning coming into the presence of royalty. There are certain ways that you handle yourself when it comes to the Queen. Bowing, waiting to hear from her before talking. Answering questions and not asking questions and a number of other do's and don'ts. She is to be respected above all.

Here in the United States we aren't accustomed to this kind of formality. In fact, it seems we have drifted further and further away from any kind of formality concerning most things. Funerals and perhaps weddings are still formal and people try to be on their best behavior. Well, maybe not at the wedding receptions but at the wedding itself.

But Jesus is teaching His disciples to slow down in their prayers. Give more thought to what exactly it is that you are doing and who you are interacting with. Use this opening as a time of praise and worship.

I have listed for you names of God and their meanings. You can use some of these as you hallow His name. Each one is from the Bible and describes an attribute of God. As we think about them and pray over them I believe we get a greater understanding of who God truly is.

Names of God

The structure of the prayer Jesus gives us indicates that when we come to our time of prayer, we are not to be concerned with our sins or our struggles, not at first anyway. That comes later in the prayer. Focus first on getting your relationship correct with God then you will be in a better place to ask for some of the other needs, things or people you want to lift up in prayer.

This brings us into the second line of the Lord's Prayer.

Matthew 6:10, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

When we pray Thy kingdom come I believe we really stating a number of godly truths.

2. We are asking for Jesus to come back and begin His physical rule on earth

Jesus is coming back to rule and reign on the earth. It is one of the foundations of our belief.

Acts 1:9-11, "And after Jesus had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.'"

There is a day, I pray that is not in the too distant future, that Jesus will return and set up His kingdom here on earth. All wrongs will be made right, all tears will be wiped away, sickness, death and all sin will be no more.

3. We are asking for God's kingdom rule to wash over the earth in the here and now

Things are quickly spinning out of control. All sense of common sense seems to be lost as the liberal faction of this nation presses its agendas upon us all. I was reading yesterday about the controversy concerning transgender individuals participating in the gender they identify as.

In a lot of states they are passing laws that prohibit boys playing on girls teams and girls playing on boys teams but they are getting a lot of kick-back from the liberal side. It seems to me that high school and college sports as we know it will change. The unity once enjoyed in competition will be a thing of the past.

As we see these things occurring we can only shake our heads at the absurdity of it all. But we can also pray. God, please let your kingdom rule occur here on earth as it occurs in heaven. Let righteousness and holiness be the standard.

4. We are asking for God's kingdom principles to rule our lives

We hallow God's name by allowing God to develop His kingdom principles in our lives. When this occurs in our lives and in the lives of others, change occurs within in us and within society.

I think it is important to mention here that Christ-like attributes are not given to us in their fullness immediately when we become Christians. It is a process that begins when we give ourselves fully over to God and we never reach full maturity until we leave our physical bodies and exchange them for our new spiritual ones.

I remember thinking that when I gave my life over to Jesus I was going to have a Saul to Paul experience. Almost instantly my old life was going to be and I was going to become a super spiritual Christian. Over

time I learned this was not the case. It was not the case for Paul and it is not the case for new Christians.

It takes time doesn't it? Time to let the old you die off and the new you to begin to emerge. But there are things we can do including asking for God's kingdom principles to begin to rule in our lives.

Paul tells us in **Romans 12:2**, "...to be transformed by the renewing of your minds..." and then in **2 Timothy 3:16-17**, "All scripture is profitable for training in righteousness..."

Praying is a good start but placing the word of God in your heart is a big part of your transformation process. Look at...

Luke 8:15, "And the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word (of God) in a honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance."

Perseverance in prayer and perseverance in the word of God. These are two ways that God will begin to work in your life and you will see transformation.

Real briefly look at the second part of this verse.

"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

When we pray Thy will be done you are not only asking to live by God's kingdom principles but you are asking that God direct your every step.

5. We are asking for God's will to be done in His way and in His timing

You are agreeing with Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane when He prayed if there is any other way but not my will but Yours be done.

In wrapping up the first two verses of the Lord's Prayer it is important to consider the order in which Jesus gave us this prayer. Jesus did not start with us asking that our needs be met as in give us this day our daily bread. He didn't even begin with us asking that our sins be forgiven or asking for strength over temptation.

Jesus began by showing us that we should come into the presence of God Almighty with praise and glory as we consider Him as our Father, Creator and Lord.

By beginning our prayers with Hallowed be the name of our Father who art in heaven, Jesus was helping us to get off on the right foot with God. Helping us come into the throne room of God as His child but with reverence and humility. Submitting our lives to Him by asking for His kingdom principles to rule our lives and to adjust our wills completely over to His.

There is so much God wants for us. So many things He will pour out in our lives. But it begins with this.

James 4:3, "You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures."

Can you see through Jesus' teaching on prayer, He is helping us overcome our natural tendency to be selfish in our prayers. He teaches us to focus on God first and by doing this, when it comes time to pray for your needs, your heart will be in line with His.

Jesus does teach, ask you and you receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it will be opened to you but there is a proper way to ask, seek and knock on the throne room of God.

This I believe, is the teaching of Jesus concerning prayer.

Lets pray.

