

“Following the Call” by Charles E. Moore

II. Kingdom Devotion – Our Father Ch. 30

Last week we discussed **Luke 11:1** – “One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” What is prayer, how do you pray, and does prayer work?

Matthew 6:9 – “**Our Father in heaven...**”



Cyprian of Carthage (ca. 210-258) was a North African early Christian bishop and saint. Cyprian was a bishop of Carthage and an early Christian writer of Berber descent, many of whose Latin works are extant. He is recognized as a saint in the Western and Eastern churches. He was born around the beginning of the 3rd century in North Africa, perhaps at Carthage, where he received a classical education.

“And so, dear friends, since we call God our Father, let us remember to act like children of God, so that he may find pleasures in having us as his children, just as we do in having him as our Father.”

What does **Cyprian** mean when he says, “act like children of God”?

What pleasures does God have as having us as his children?



N.T. Wright (1949 -) is a British New Testament scholar and retired Anglican bishop. He is an English New Testament scholar, Pauline theologian and Anglican bishop and was the bishop of Durham and Lord Spiritual in the UK Parliament from 2003 to 2010.

“The word “Father” concentrates our attention on the doubly revolutionary message and mission of Jesus. It is the Exodus-message, the message that tyrants and oppressors rightly fear.”

How is the word “Father” perceived in the secular world?

How was the use of that word for God taken in the time of Jesus? What is **Wright** telling us?

“This revolution comes about through the Messiah, and his people, sharing and bearing the pain of the world, that the world may be healed. This is the kingdom-message, the Advent-message.”

By being a follower of the Messiah, do you feel that you share in bearing the pain of the world with Christ?

“Saying “Our Father” isn’t just the boldness, the sheer cheek, of walking into the presence of the living and almighty God saying “Hi, Dad.” It is the boldness, the sheer total risk, of saying quietly “Please may I, too, be considered an apprentice son.” It means signing on for the kingdom of God...”

What is **Wright** saying here about calling God our Father? What comes with that connection to the almighty God?

“Our task is to grow up into the “Our Father”, to dare to impersonate our older brother, seeking daily bread and daily forgiveness as we do so:...”

If you are a child of God just as Jesus is, have you ever thought of Jesus as your older brother? How does this make you feel?



Hannah Whitall Smith (1832 - 1911) was an American lay evangelist and suffragette. She was a lay speaker and author in the Holiness movement in the United States and the Higher Life movement in the United Kingdom. She was also active in the women's suffrage movement and the temperance movement.

“Because we are the children and he is the Father, we must let him do the father’s part. Too often we take upon our shoulders the father’s part, and try to take care of and provide for ourselves. But no good earthly father would want his children to take upon their young shoulders the burden of his duties, and surely much less would our heavenly Father want to lay upon us the burden of his...”

Imagine a father making his children work and provide for themselves in this world. Can you see what **Smith** is saying about what our relationship with God the Father should be? How do you think it should be?

“And why it is that so few of his children trust him can only be because they have not yet found out that he is

really their Father.”

Most people in this world today are raised with the mentality that they must provide for themselves. That “God helps those who help themselves”. How is this contrary to what Jesus taught us about our relationship with God?



Teresa of Avila (1515 - 1582) was a Spanish Carmelite nun, mystic, and saint. Also called Saint Teresa of Jesus, she was active during the Counter-Reformation. Teresa became the central figure of a movement of spiritual and monastic renewal, reforming the Carmelite Orders of both women and men.

“Avoid being bashful with God, as some people are, in the belief that they are being humble.”

What is Teresa telling us our relationship with God should be like? How do you talk with God?

“Have nothing to do with that kind of humility, daughters, but speak with him as with a father, a brother, a lord, and a spouse – and, sometimes in one way and sometimes in another, he will teach you what you must do to please him.” Have you ever thought about talking to God as if he were such a relative as this?



Dom Helder Camara (1909 - 1999) was a Brazilian Roman Catholic archbishop and human rights activist. He was a self-identified socialist and an advocate of liberation theology.

“If he is “ours”, (our Father), then we are all brothers and sisters...” “We call those blood-brothers who have the same blood of the same father in their veins. So there you are: Christ shed the same blood for you, for me, for Antonio. So we’re brothers in the blood of Christ.” Have you thought of the fact that we all pray to

our Father in heaven and that makes us brothers and sisters? How does that change how we are to treat each other?