

PERFECT PRAYING—PART 2 **The Lord's Prayer—Matthew 6:5-8**

I. INTRODUCTION

II. THE TEXT

KJV—9 *After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. 14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

NIV—9 *This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” 14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

NASB—9 *Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 ‘Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. 11 ‘Give us this day our daily bread. 12 ‘And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 ‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]’ 14 For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.*

ESV—9 *Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread, 12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

The Message—*With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this: Our Father in heaven, Reveal who you are. Set the world right; Do what’s best—as above, so below. Keep us alive with three square meals. Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others. Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil. You’re in charge! You can do anything you want! You’re ablaze in beauty! Yes. Yes. Yes. In prayer there is a connection between what God does and what you do. You can’t get forgiveness from God, for instance, without also forgiving others. If you refuse to do your part, you cut yourself off from God’s part.*

III. BACKGROUND

A. CONTEXT

- 1. After warning disciples against babbling many words—like pagans**
 - a. Economy of words

- Only 71 words in Greek
 - Only 66 words in English
 - Only 49 words in Latin
- b. Simplicity—He doesn't give long list of physical needs—[like pagans?]
1. Only one physical need—food—is addressed
 2. Later in Sermon—Jesus says pagans run after three needs—food, drink, clothing
- c. Not like pagan prayers
1. Which were exact/precise liturgical formulas
 2. Did not seek to 'invoke' God—instead we come into God's presence
 3. God is present—alert—caring—and ready to converse
 4. Not impersonal and detached—not addressed to 'god'—but to 'Father'

2. Parallel passage = Lk 11:2-4

- a. Context
1. As Jesus was making final journey from Galilee towards Jerusalem
 2. After these events:
 - After—sending out of 70
 - After—parable of Good Samaritan—to the lawyer who tested Him
 - After—incident between Mary and Martha
 3. Before these events
 - a. Parable of persistent friend begging bread from neighbor for visitors
 1. Suggests—it is good to be persistent with God—confident He will answer
 2. But not vain babbling—that lacks confidence that the gods were even listening
 3. This parable followed by “ask, seek, knock” passage from Sermon on Mount
 - b. Divided kingdom parable to those accusing Him of being demon-possessed
 4. While Jesus was praying
 - Disciples asked Him to teach them to pray
 - Just like John taught his disciples
- b. Text

Jn 11:2-4—*When you pray, say: Father, hallowed by Your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.*

- c. Earlier Lukan manuscripts omit these phrases from Matthew’s account
 1. “Who art in heaven”
 2. “Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”
 3. “Deliver us from evil”

B. HISTORY

1. In the *Didache*
 - Late 1st or early 2nd century—*The Teachings of the Twelve Apostles*
 - Chapter 8—directs Christians to pray the Lord’s Prayer three times daily
2. Roman Catholics call it the ‘Our Father’—*Pater Noster*
3. One of four principal parts of current Roman Catholic Catechism
 - a. Profession of Faith—Apostles’ Creed
 - b. Celebration of the Christian Mystery—the Sacraments
 - c. Life in Christ—especially the 10 Commandments
 - d. Christian Prayer—The Lord’s Prayer
4. Doxology later added at end—mainly now in Protestant traditions
 - a. “For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen”
 - b. Earliest evidence: in 4 Old Latin manuscripts pre-dating Vulgate (before late 4th century)
5. Became known as the Model Prayer
6. Used as framework for theology

For example: Calvin framed *Institutes* on it—with 10 Commandments and Apostles Creed

7. Similarities with **Jewish prayer**
 - a. During evening prayers—after reading Psalm 134—their responses include:

Magnified and sanctified **be his great name** in the world which he hath created according to his will. May he **establish his kingdom during your life** and during your days, and during the life of all the house of Israel, even speedily and at a near time, and say ye, Amen.

- b. “Hallowed by Thy name”—in the Kaddish—hymn of praise in Jewish Prayer Book
- c. “Lead us not into temptation”—in the Morning Blessings
- d. Some Jewish communities say the following at evening prayers:

Our God in heaven, hallow thy name, and establish thy kingdom forever, and rule over us for ever and ever. Amen.

C. STRUCTURE

1. Address to God—“Our Father, Who art in heaven”
2. Seven petitions
 - a. First three petitions—relate to God
 - His name
 - His kingdom
 - His will
 - b. Last four petitions—relate to our needs
 - Our daily needs
 - Our forgiveness (and relations with others)
 - Our protection from temptation
 - Our deliverance from evil
3. Doxology—not in original biblical text

IV. EXPLANATION

A. THE COMMAND

“Pray then in this way”

- a. Then in this way
 1. Jesus sets the example—I am showing you how to do it!
 2. Meant as an illustration
 - a. Jesus gives the framework—attitudes—and basic categories of godly prayer
 - b. It contains everything we need in perfect prayer that pleases God
 - c. But He is not limiting disciples to rote recitation of just this exact prayer
- b. Verb ‘ you pray’

1. Imperative

- a. Not just descriptive— “when you are praying”
- b. Instead—a command—not just a suggestion
- c. In other words, “You are to pray—and do it this way!”

2. ‘You’

- a. Pronoun inserted—not understood
- b. Shows contrast with ‘they’—i.e. the pagans and the hypocrites
- c. Personalized—Jesus focuses attention on His disciples
- d. Plural
 - 1. For all of us—each and every one of us—to pray
 - 2. Corporate—together—for all of us to pray

c. The imperative nature of the prayer

1. Three sets of imperatives

- a. First imperative—gives the command/direction—you must pray
- b. Second and third sets—give the content—contained in the prayer itself

2. Two sets of imperatives—in the content of the prayer itself

- a. Second set of imperatives—related to the divine framework

1. The three imperatives

- Hallowed be Your name
- Your kingdom come
- Your will be done

2. Purpose of imperative mood—emphasize certainty of God’s nature/providence

- b. Third set of imperatives—related to our needs

1. The four imperatives

- Give us our daily bread
- Forgive us our trespasses
- Lead us not into temptation
- Deliver us from evil

2. Purpose of imperative mood
 - a. Gives us no right to demand things from God!
 - b. But tells us to have confidence when we ask
 - c. We can rely on His ability to deliver—and we can ask boldly

Heb 4:16—*Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

3. Fulfillment of the third set (personal needs) is possible because of the second set
4. Later [added] doxology—the purpose of all imperatives is to focus on God in three ways
 - To accomplish Your kingdom purpose
 - To manifest Your power
 - To bring You glory

B. THE ADDRESS

“Our Father in heaven”

- a. Our Father
 1. Our
 - a. Jesus—the Son—identifies Himself with us—He too prays to ‘our Father’
 - b. Jesus—shares His relationship with the Father—with us!
 - c. We too are to share that relationship with others—not “My Father”
 - d. Collective nature
 1. Here Jesus shifts from the closet to corporate prayer
 2. But not a fixed formula for prayer—so it can be done privately too
 2. Father
 - a. Jesus has already referred to “Father” three times in Sermon
 1. **5:16**—so they will glorify your Father who is in heaven
 2. **5:45**—so that you may sons of your Father who is in heaven
 3. **6:1**—you will receive no reward from your Father who is in heaven
- b. Not Abba

1. Not the intimate term—which *can* be used in prayer
 - a. Used only three times in NT
 - **Mk 14:36**—Jesus in the Garden, asking Abba Father to take the cup
 - **Rom 8:15**—having received Spirit of adoption, we cry Abba Father
 - **Gal 4:6**—we’ve received the Sprit in our hearts crying Abba Father
 - b. Each time—added to the term ‘Father’
 - c. Imploring cry—beseeching the Father
 2. Usage of ‘Father’ may suggest:
 - a. Providential care—Father Creator who providentially controls all
 - b. Grander term of awe—for God who is lifted up—in heaven—over all
 - c. More inclusive term—Father of all humankind—not just our own ‘dad’
- b. In heaven
1. Every use of the term in the Sermon on Mount—identifies Him as being in heaven
 - a. The previous three usages—**5:16; 5:45; 6:1**
 - b. Also later in the Sermon
 1. **6:32**—*Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things*
 2. **7:11**—*how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him?*
 3. **7:21**—*but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter* [heaven]
 2. Reminder—God is transcendent—unlike pagan gods—who were simply ultra-mortals

C. THE SEVEN PETITIONS

1. The First Three [Divine] Petitions

- a. The First Petition—“Hallowed be your name”
 1. Hallowed
 - a. Not an adjective—but a verb!
 - The name that was ‘holied’

- b. Aorist—passive—imperative
 - At once—and for all time
 - Self-naming holiness
 - Based on inherent—self-holiness

2. Hallowed name

- a. Pure and **reverential** aspect—the name Jews did/do not even pronounce!
 - The great I AM—**Ex 3:13-15**
- b. Name of Him who is—separate—high and lifted up—**transcendent**
- c. Anticipates ‘name above all names’—[Lord]—later given to Jesus—**Ph 2:9**

3. Two possible applications

- a. Eschatological—fulfillment of prophecy

Ez 36:22-27—*Therefore say to the house of Israel, “Thus says the Lord God, ‘It is not for your sake, O house of Israel that I am about to act, but for **My holy name**, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. I will vindicate the **holiness of My great name** which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. The nations will know that I am the Lord,’ declares the Lord God, ‘when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.*

- b. Everyday obedience—response of God’s people—anticipated by Isaiah

Us 29L23—*But when he sees his children, the work of My hands, in his midst, They will sanctify My name; indeed, they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob and will stand in awe of the God of Israel.*

- b. “Thy/Your”—introduces three eschatological petitions—focusing on God’s coming

- ❖ Thy Name—be holied!
- ❖ Thy Kingdom—come!
- ❖ Thy Will—be done!

1. Unifying theme of petitions = **kingdom**—in second petition

- a. John the Baptist and Jesus came proclaiming the coming Kingdom of God

- b. Result: restoration of original theocracy
 - c. Sermon on Mount describes/explains the Kingdom ethic
2. The Hallowed Name—in first petition—carries this ‘kingdom’ tone
- a. **Thy** kingdom—is linked to **Thy** name
 - b. The Father is **majestic**—the King of the coming kingdom

Ps 93:1—*The Lord reigns, He is clothed with majesty; the Lord has clothed and girded Himself with strength; indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved. Your throne is established from of old you are from everlasting.*

- c. The Father’s kingdom glory—He shares with His Son—who inherits the name

Heb 1:3-4—*And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.*

- d. So—Jesus is speaking of the Name—that He anticipates sharing!

3. The Will that is to be done

- a. The natural corollary to inauguration
- b. The will of the king—becomes two things
 - 1. The law of the kingdom
 - 2. The pleasure of His subjects

- c. The Second Petition—“Your kingdom come [on earth as it is in heaven]

- 1. Verb—“come”—is imperative

- a. The **certainty**—God’s kingdom is coming

- 1. Already inaugurated—John the Baptist and then Jesus had announced its arrival

Mk 1:14-15—*After John was put into prison, Jesus went into Galilee proclaiming the good news of God, saying, “The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news.”*

- 2. Since it has begun—we have confidence—now!—to make these petitions

- b. The **urgency**—our attitude

- 1. Expect—its fulfillment is imminent

2. Readiness—be prepared for it
- c. Our **agency**—i.e. our action
 1. Our participation—helping to prepare the way
 2. Our plea—calling on God to finish His work

Rev 22:20—*He which testifies these things says, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

- d. Summary—our response—we should:
 1. Expect its fulfillment
 2. Be ready for it—prepared
 3. Our participation—in helping to prepare the way
2. [On earth as it is in heaven]
 - a. Phrase applies not just to 2nd phrase—“Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”
 - b. It also applies to His coming kingdom
 - c. So—it should be understood: “Your kingdom come—on earth as it is in heaven”
 - d. Reiterates Jesus’ proclamation of the inaugurated kingdom
 - e. God’s ultimate goal—to restore earth to its original goodness
 1. Earth itself groans for this redemption—**Rom 8:20-22**
 2. Ultimately there will be a “new heaven and a new earth”—described in **Rev 21**
 - a. Old heaven and the old earth will pass away
 - b. There will be no more sea—dividing the firmament below and the one above
 - c. The new heaven will have come to earth—the new earth will be ‘heavenized!’
 - f. The Fatherly heaven
 1. This is the dwelling place of “Our Father who art in heaven”—**verse 9**
 2. So heaven is not just a ‘place’—but His home—and our future home

Jn 14:2—*In my Father’s house are many mansions . . .*

- d. Your will be done on earth—[as it is in heaven]

1. Verb—‘be done’—is imperative

All the previous ‘kingdom’ conditions apply

- The certainty—gives us confidence
- The urgency—attitude of preparation
- Our engagement—our responsibility to act—to proclaim

2. Verb meaning—‘be done’

a. Not the verb—‘to do’—**ποιεω**

b. Instead— ‘to become’—**γινομαι** = to exist

c. Translation

1. Passive verb = be finished—be accomplished
2. What God intended from the beginning—will finally be fulfilled
3. Not just that we will do things that God wants
4. But His whole purpose shall superintend—and guide everything
5. His whole purpose shall be accomplished—fully and in every way
6. The perfect fulfillment of God’s will

Rom 12:2— . . . *so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

3. As it is in heaven

a. Not only ‘as’—**ωσ**— ‘as in heaven’

b. But ‘even as’—**και ωσ**—‘just as in heaven’

c. Not only ‘like’ heaven—not just similar

d. But perfect fulfillment—earth will conform exactly to heavenly pattern

2. The Last Four [human] Petitions

a. **Give us today our daily bread.**

1. Representative of **all** daily needs

- Later in Sermon other basics—drink and clothing—are dealt with

2. Fragility of life and paucity of resources

3. People lived from day to day
 - They had no reserves
 - There were no preservatives
 - Access to resources and distribution systems were limited
4. Another indicator that most of the people following Jesus were poor
5. Jesus Himself lived a life of vulnerability—and dependence on others
 - a. He stayed at the home of Peter in Capernaum
 - **Mk 1:29**—where He healed Peter’s mother in law
 - **Mk 2:1**—when He returned ‘home’ in Capernaum
 - **Mk 3:20**—He entered a house/home, so crowded He could not eat
 - **Mk 7:17**—entered house after discourse on clean/unclean
 - **Mk 9:33**—in house when He asked disciples why they were arguing
 - **Mk 10:10**—in house when disciples asked about divorce
 - b. Apart from this—He had no place to stay

***Mt 8:20**—The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.*
 - c. Women followers took care of His needs

***Mk 15:40-41**—Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the Mother of James the Younger and Joses, and Salome. In Galilee they had followed Him and cared for His needs. Many other women who had come up with Him to Jerusalem were also there.*
6. Imperative verb—“Give us this day . . .”
 - Not presumptuous
 - But confident in His ability to provide
 - And expression urgent dependence on Him
 - Daily bread
 - Not assuming God is
7. “Daily bread” meant
 - Need for daily dependence/reliance on God
 - Need for daily/regular prayer to God
 - Also—no assumption that God is obliged to help us store for the future
8. Not connected to communion—i.e. the Lord’ Supper
 - a. Early church began to say—Lord’s Supper should be taken every day
 - b. Roman Catholic Church—sees sacramental aspect in this verse—taking daily mass

- b. **And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.**
1. **ὀφείλημα** = can mean two things—either debt or sin
 - a. Literally = debt—what is owed—legal due
 - b. Metaphorically = guilt—sin
 2. Both aspects already addressed in Sermon—reconciliation **5:23-26**
 - a. Sin/offence—need for reconciliation regarding offense/sin by brother—**5:23-24**
 - b. Debt—settle matters with your adversary who is taking you to court—**5:25-26**
 3. Note—other words for ‘sin’ are used elsewhere in Sermon
 - a. Luke’s version (**11:4**) says ‘sin’—**ἁμαρτία** = missing the mark
 - b. Below—**6:14-15**—Matthew uses different word—**παράπτωμα** = falling away
 4. Assumptions
 - a. That God’s forgiveness is a basic human need
 - b. That we have already forgiven others
 1. Based on earlier call to be reconciled in **5:23-24**
 2. Beyond assumptions—this is required—see below **6:14-15**
 5. Implications
 - a. We will be forgiven in the same way we have forgiven others
 - b. Similar to instructions on judging and measuring
 1. In this Sermon—**As you judge, in the same way you will be judged**—**7:1-2**
 2. With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—**Mk 4:24**
 6. Jesus also taught this point—in the Parable of Unmerciful Servant—**Mt 18:23-34**
- c. **And lead us not into temptation**
1. **πειρασμός** = trial
 2. Same word used in **James**
 - **1:2**—rejoice when we encounter many trials
 - **1:12**—blessed is the man who perseveres under trial

3. Can mean either trial or temptation
 - a. Depends on context—whether godly trial or human temptation
 - b. **James 1:13**—says God does not tempt us—towards sin
 - c. But God does allow us to be tried
 - **James 1:2**—to strengthen our faith—resulting in perfection
 - To refine our faith—ending in salvation

I Pe 1:6-9—*In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.*

- d. Jesus is not saying God Himself might tempt us towards sin
- e. But Jesus could be saying three things
 1. It is all right to pray that we not face trial
 - Jesus Himself prayed this way in the Garden!
 2. And it *could* be translated—Father, don't let us be sinfully tempted
 - a. In this case it would not be God causing the temptation
 - b. But God allowing us to be led into situations where we will face temptation
 - c. The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert—to be tempted by Satan!—**Mt 4:1**
 3. Or it could mean—don't let us yield to temptation
 - See Jesus' exhortation to Peter in the Garden

Mk 14:38-9—*“Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? ³⁸ Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”*

- d. **But deliver us from the evil one.**
 1. **πονηρός** —is used in two ways
 - a. **Evil**—bad activity and its results

- Could be human evil—sinful actions
 - Or natural evil—disasters and diseases
- b. **Evil one**—the perpetrator of evil—Satan
2. First century sense of evil
- a. Stronger awareness of satanic activity
- b. Even greater sense of vulnerability to natural disaster/disease
3. Much of Jesus’ prophetic ministry dealt with these ‘evils’
- Exorcizing demons
 - Healing various diseases
 - Resurrecting the dead

D. CLOSING INSTRUCTIONS/WARNING

14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

1. Parallel passage—**Mk 11:25-26**

- a. Earlier versions have only **verse 25**

***Mk 11:25**—And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”*

- b. Later versions have **vers 26**

***Mk 11:26**—But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions.*

2. This does not mean God is unwilling to forgive recalcitrant sinners
3. Instead—it reveals their incapacity to receive God’s forgiveness
4. Forgiveness is only possible if the repentance is genuine
5. Genuine repentance means one truly examines the heart and has reconciled with others