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## Spiritual Formation Part 31

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### Matthew 6: 5-15

#### The Model Prayer Part 2

This model of prayer (as all models must be) places the emphasis on God and His glory, not on us! This is called 'brevity' (brief and sincere), that we ask that God be glorified before we can seek our request in a clear and concise manner. The more time you spend in prayer the more you will grow in your Christian formation. However, be sure you are not praying in circles with vain repetitions. Rather, cover more ground with requests for others and praise for God. (See *Our Pattern for Prayer* below.)

- *Father* is the Aramaic word for *daddy* or *papa* a very dear, intimate, personal honor to the head of the family. This is also a name of reverence and devotion, and not to be taken as we say *daddy*. It is not a cheap saying, or a word to put God in just a *friend* category. We are adopted in His family, and He loves us ever so deeply. Yet, He is still God and sovereign!
- *Hallowed be Your Name* refers to the holiness, mightiness, omnipresence (He is everywhere transcending time and space), and omnipotence (All powerful) of God. He is the holy Judge, Creator, Savior, and Sustainer of all things. So, we are commanded to keep His name holy, as in the first two commandments. In Jewish teaching, right living declares God's name as hallowed (Isa. 5:16; 29:23; Ezek. 36:23; 38:23; 39:7, 27; Zech. 14:9)! If they lived profanely, it made God's name profane amongst the nations (Ex. 20:7; Jer. 34:16; 44:25-26; Ezek. 13:19; 20:14; Amos 2:7)!
- *Kingdom come* is an essential theme in Matthew. (See our theological note on it in the study of Matthew 3:1-12.)
- *Your will be done*, further expounds that we are to seek His character and sovereignty in all things, and not bully what we want over what He has called us to do! His needs must precede our needs, because He wants what is best for us!
- *Give us our daily bread* is not just a request for food, but also a seeking of what is necessary for now and for the future (Prov. 30:8; Matt 6:19-34). It is imagery, comparing to the manna for the wandering Jews. As God provided for them, He will also provide for us. (There are three views on this: Some see this as the bread for the Lord's Supper, and is called the *Sacramental View*. It could mean this, but it is reading into the text what is not really there. And, this is not the main intention of Jesus in this prayer. Some see this as the life fulfilled in the coming Kingdom. The third view is a request for provisions for our needs. This is what it plainly means; the other two views are not unbiblical, but are only possible secondary meanings.)

- *Forgive*, we have to realize that we are all sinners, we still have sin and we still do sin. Thus, we always need to not only be aware of it, but also repent from it and seek forgiveness. This is a must, daily act, not just when we think about it, or wait until we are convicted. We must be willing to seek forgiveness daily from God and others!
- These are spiritual debts; it is not necessarily referring to property or money transactions. Although, with discernment, it can be applied to all types of debts with forgiveness.
- The Jewish understanding of Sin was a debt to God that needed to be repaid through redemption and sacrifice. If you are not able or willing to forgive others, God will be able, but unwilling, to forgive you! We are to forgive others in response to the fact that we have been forgiven. However, the forgiveness we may give to others will never compare to the forgiveness Christ has given us! (See our Character study on Forgiveness.)
- *Do not lead us into temptation* means *help us not sin when we are tested or going through trials, and help us through them* (Psalm 141:3-4). Trials are a primary means for growth and maturity. It does not mean to keep us from them altogether. If that were so, we would never grow spiritually.
- We have to be persons who has received grace with the knowledge of what we have been forgiven before we can really, truly forgive others.

True prayer comes from a sincere and humble Christian, offered with a merciful spirit, one who is not interested in making a public display for the sake of pleasing others or seeking prestige. Prayer will help us see His perfection, and receive His mercy and grace to help us, and others through us, in times of need, so we can find that peace that guards our hearts and mind (Phil. 4:6-7; Heb. 4:14-16). In order for this to happen, we must be willing and able to open and surrender our heart and Will to Him. If not, we will be living on the wrong floor of life!

#### **Our Pattern for Prayer** (Matthew 6:7-15, Luke 11:1-13)

- **Acknowledgement for who God is**, this worship as *worship*: Praise and adoration of Him who is worthy of eternal praise (Is. 6:1-8, Rev. 4,5)
- **Response of our personal adjustment.**
  - **Recognition** of God's Person, purpose, provision, and Presence.
  - **Confession**: cleansing; commitment of all to God.
  - **Petition**: Asking and receiving God's offer of grace and help, as He promised.
  - **Response**: Letting God be God to us, in us, and through us.

- **Communion** with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, three as One.
- **Intercession:** Ministering before, and with God, for others.
- **Thanksgiving:** Honoring God with our trust and obedience.
- *Amen* means *so let it be!* It is an affirmation of the goodness and power of God who has heard and is acting upon the prayer offered *with thanks giving!*

**Questions:**

1. Did you have a favorite prayer as a child that you may have recited at bedtime? If so, did that prayer give you comfort and understanding about God?
2. How much time do you give to your personal prayer requests, and how much time to other needs, to others, etc.?
3. *Your will be done*, further expounds that we are to seek His character and sovereignty in all things, not bully what we want over what He has called us to do! His needs must precede our needs, because He wants what is best for us! What is in your life and in your church that would keep this from fully happening?
4. *Give us our daily bread* is not just a request for food, but a seeking of what is necessary now and in our future. What would be some of the other things you can, and should be praying for?
5. We are to forgive others in response to the fact that we have been forgiven. However, the forgiveness we may give to others will never compare to the forgiveness Christ has given us! So, what blocks your seeking forgiveness from Christ and others?
6. Many people are surprised to find out that *Do not lead us into temptation*, refers to keeping us from sinning when we are tested or are going through trials, and helping us through them, not just keeping us from them.
7. Why would people be surprised to discover this, given the fact that trials are a primary means for growth and maturity? All the disciples, as well as Christ, suffered greatly, as did countless saints over the last two thousand years.
8. How can you make sure that your prayers to the *Father, daddy, or papa* stay very dear, intimate, and personal yet remain honoring, not putting God in just in a friend category (i.e. He loves us ever so deeply, yet He is still God and sovereign)?
9. What can you do to keep your eyes on God, not on people?

10. Prayers are not just selfish wish lists to get God to cater to our needs and whims; rather their true purpose is for us to be shaped by what He has revealed, and to grow in character, perseverance, and maturity. So, how can this be made real in you and your church?

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