

Life in the Red – 2

“The Model Prayer”

Mt 6:5-7

5 “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

7 And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words”

E.M. Bounds, who is well-known for his writings on the subject of prayer, said it best, “Prayer honors God; it dishonors self”. The scribes and Pharisees never understood that truth. And, we must understand Jesus taught us to glorify God when we pray.

Prayer begins and ends not with the needs of man but with the glory of God (*John 14:13 Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*). We should be concerned primarily with who God is, what He wants, and how He can be glorified.

Mt 6:9-13 The Model Prayer

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.

This prayer, often called the “Lord’s Prayer” is not a set group of words to repeat. When Christ said to “pray, then, like this,” He didn’t mean pray with these exact words.

His intention was to give them (and us) a pattern for the structure of their own prayers. This is clear in fact that He had just warned them of the dangers of meaningless repetition.

The Model Prayer Guide

1) Adoration of the Father

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...”

a) God is our Father

Prayer should always begin with the recognition that God is our Father, the One who gave us life and who loves us, provides for us, and protects us.

Jesus used the title *Father* in all of His prayers, except one.

The revelation of God as Father:

- (1) Breaks the bondage of fear.
- (2) Removes loneliness.

Heb 13:5 Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

(3) Builds our faith.

- (a) Confidence in His love: Mt 7:11 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!
- (b) Confidence in His resources: Eph. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

God is "our Father, who is in heaven." All the resources of heaven are available to us when we trust God as our heavenly provider.

b) Make His name holy

"Hallowed be your name..."

- i) The word "hallow" a form of the Greek word *hagiazō*, which means "to make holy." Words from the same Greek root are translated "holy," "sanctify," and "sanctification".
- ii) To hallow God's name is to honor, glorify, and obey Him as the one and only completely perfect God.

2) Intercession for the Kingdom

"your kingdom come..."

- a) Our greatest desire as believers should be to see the Lord reigning as King in His kingdom, having the honor and authority that have always been His now manifesting in our lives and in our world.
- b) What are some elements of the Kingdom?
 - i) The Kingdom of God must come alive inside us first.

Kingdom of God is not seen merely by outward signs. Jesus said, the Kingdom of God is within us! (Luke 17:21 NKJV)
 - ii) The Kingdom of God is for those who are childlike in their faith (Matthew 18:3).
 - iii) The Kingdom of God is... righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17)

- iv) The King of God is Power. For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power (1Corinthians 4:20)

3) Direction concerning his Will

“... your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

- a) One of the dilemmas Christians have debated for centuries is whether God accomplishes His will regardless if we pray or don't pray.

When we don't pray does His will fail?

None of us can comprehend completely how prayer functions in the infinite mind and plan of God.

- b) Jesus taught us to Pray!
 - i) If God did not respond to prayer, Jesus' teaching about prayer would be meaningless and all commands to pray pointless.

Our task is not to solve the dilemma of how God's sovereignty works with human responsibility but to believe and act on what God commands us about prayer.
 - ii) Luke 18:1 Jesus told his followers, “... that they ought always to pray and not lose heart.”
- c) Praying for the will of God
 - i) Pray first for His will to be revealed.
 - ii) Pray against the interference of the enemy.
 - iii) Pray for His will to manifest in the proper time.
 - iv) Pray for faith to obey the will of God.

4) Presenting Personal Needs

“Give us this day our daily bread...”

- a) Pray for the necessities of life
 - i) The Greek word translated *bread* not only represents food, but is also symbolic of all our physical needs.
 - ii) This would include everything necessary for the preservation of this life. Not just bread, but all kinds of nourishing food, a healthy body, good weather, a house, financial blessing, good government, and peace.
- b) Pray in faith with boldness

- i) Praying in confidence is expressed in the word “give”. Even though God may have already provided the necessity, we are encouraged by Him to ask for it.
 - ii) Perhaps because God our Father wants to know us in relationship and does not want to be merely a distant benefactor.
- c) Pray daily

Once again it seems like Jesus was encouraging us to work on our daily communion with the Father.

5) Personal Cleansing and Forgiveness

“and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors”

- a) The word “debts” means “sin,” and Jesus pictures sin as something that requires reconciliation with God.
- b) Christ Jesus is teaching us that sin and our tendency to sin is a serious problem that must be dealt with daily.

When sin rules: NTS - SLIDE

- i) It dominates the mind (Romans 1:21).
 - ii) It dominates the will.
 - iii) It dominates the emotions and the affections (John 3:19).
 - iv) Sin brings men under the control of Satan (Ephesians 2:2).
 - v) Sin subjects men to misery (Isa. 48:22).
- c) Confession is good for our souls.
- i) Sin that is not confessed cannot be forgiven: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).
 - ii) To confess means basically to agree with, and when we confess our sins we agree with God that they are wicked, evil, defiling, and have no part in those who love God.
 - iii) Danger: If you don’t confess your sins, you will become hardened.

Christians who are hardened and insensitive to sin lose their joy because they don’t have a loving, intimate fellowship with God.

The Joy of the Lord is your strength and it comes from a right relationship with God.

6) Waging War against the Evil One

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

- a) This verse reminds me of a similar instruction Jesus gave Peter, James, and John, when they kept falling asleep during an incredibly intense prayer battle.

Matthew 26:40;41 “And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour? **41** Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

- b) Here is the right time to pray:

- i) “God watch over me”.
- ii) “Reveal to me every area of weakness. Help me see the dangers that you see”.
- iii) “God give me strength to stand against the tempter”.
- iv) “Deliver me from every demonic plan working against me”.