



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

*Special Study:* **THE LORD'S PRAYER**  
Matthew 6:9-13

In the previous study, the Lord has already taught us how to pray and how not to pray. ***"When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are."*** ***"When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do."*** ***"Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret."*** But what do we ask our Father in the closet? ***"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father ..."***

***"We know not what we should pray for as we ought"*** (Romans 8:26). The Epistle to the Romans was written after the Cross, after Pentecost, after the establishment of the Church. If believers in the apostolic period did not know ***what*** to pray for as they ought to know, we obviously need to tell the Lord as the early disciples told Him, ***"Lord, teach us to pray"*** (Luke 11:1). In the Lord's Prayer, He has taught us and given us the pattern or model of prayer. The prayer is brief but the Lord has compressed so much in the short prayer. Though it has only sixty-six words in its original Greek version, it is so encompassing that none else but the Son of God could have given us such a model. The Lord's Prayer is not meant to be repeated every time we pray. Neither Christ nor His disciples repeated or recited the prayer before or after Pentecost. The prayer is to guide us on how to pray and what to pray for. ***"After this manner therefore pray ye ..."***

## **FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IN PRAYER**

Matthew 6:9-13; 1 John 1:3-7; Psalm 94:19,20; 1 Corinthians 10:20,21; Ephesians 2:12-19; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Ephesians 5:11-14; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

From the very first words and throughout this model prayer, we learn that effective praying demands fellowship and relationship with God. Starting from ***"Our Father which art in heaven"*** and learning to understand one phrase after the other, we see Christ's emphasis on a Father-child relationship, Deity-worshipper relationship, Sovereign-subject relationship, Master-servant relationship, Benefactor-beneficiary relationship, Saviour-sinner relationship, Guide-pilgrim relationship. Having a right relationship with God is essential and indispensable in prayer. Prayer is not just a religious duty: it is a family privilege.

In Christ's teaching and in the christian life, prayer is not mechanical but spiritual. In saying, ***"our Father, our daily bread, give us, forgive us, lead us, deliver us"***, we come to God with an unselfish spirit, a dependent spirit, a penitent spirit, a humble spirit. Praying with concern for ***"Thy Name, Thy Kingdom, Thy will, Thy glory"*** we see the need for a childlike spirit, a reverent spirit, a loyal spirit, a submissive spirit, a confident spirit in prayer. Such fellowship with God as Father demands faith, exultation, love, loyalty, obedience, worship, submission, humility, intimacy, praise. Prayer, then, as Jesus taught and demonstrated, comes from the heart, not just from the head or merely from our lips.

## **FOCUS ON GOD IN PRAYER**

Matthew 6:9-13; Genesis 18:23-26; Exodus 32:11-14; Joshua 7:6-9; John 17:20-23; Romans 15:5,6,9; Ephesians 3:14-21; Philippians 1:9-11.

Starting with God's praise and priority and ending with God's power and pre-eminence, with everything within the prayer, this model prayer concentrates and focuses on God. God's honour and glory has always been the concern and focus of true believers in prayer. When Abraham prayed for Sodom and Gomorrah, the righteousness and glory of God was his focus. In the prayers of Moses for Israel, pleading for His mercy on the nation, the honour and glory of God's name before all other nations was the central and strong point in his plea. As Joshua prayed with great burden and fervency, his heart was focused on God's glory. Hear him as he prayed: ***"O Lord, what shall I say, ... and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great Name?"*** David likewise strongly desired God's glory in presenting his personal requests before God. ***"And now, O LORD God, ... do as Thou hast said. And let Thy Name be magnified for ever"*** (2 Samuel 7:18-26). Elijah's notable prayer was a self-effacing prayer, for God's glory and exaltation only. ***"Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the LORD God"*** (1 Kings 18:37). The Lord, Jesus Christ, is our model and perfect Example. In all things and particularly in prayer, the glory of God was His aim, goal and desire. Even when He was in deep sorrow, His mind was fixed on God's glory in prayer: ***"Now is my soul troubled. Father, glorify Thy Name"*** (John 12:27-30).

## **FATHERHOOD OF GOD IN PRAYER**

Matthew 6:9; John 8:41-44; Matthew 13:38-43; 1 John 3:8-15; Ephesians 2:12-18; 2 Corinthians 6:17,18; 1 Peter 1:14-19; Matthew 7:7-11.

More than anything else and more than anyone else, our Lord, Jesus Christ, emphasized the Fatherhood of God in prayer. ***"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ASK OF THE FATHER in My Name, He may***

**give it you**" (John 15:16). (See also Matthew 6:6,8,32; 7:11; Luke 11:13; John 11:41; 12:28; 14:16; 16:23; 17:1,5,11). He, Himself, always prayed to God as Father and He has given us the same privilege.

We become the children of God and He, then, becomes our Father when we repent of all our sins and believe in Christ as our Saviour and Lord. God is not a Father to all people who live on earth. He is the Creator of all people but sinners, living in sin and in enmity against God, are children of Satan. Repentance and faith in Christ reconcile us to God and the middle wall of partition between us and God is broken down. Our sins are forgiven and the power of sin is broken and destroyed; we are no longer slaves of sin or captives of Satan. We no longer live like children of Satan, we are no longer controlled by the overpowering influence of sin. God has now imparted His nature to us and we live in newness of life. Christ "**is not ashamed to call us brethren**" and God is not ashamed to call us His children. Now, we can pray: "**Our Father which art in heaven**".

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