

OUR FATHER

The Lord's Prayer, Summer 2023: Matthew 6:9

July 2, 2023

*This, then, is how you should pray:
'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name'
Matthew 6:1*

Approaching our Father

"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven

⁵ "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

"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 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.'*

Matthew 6

1. Jesus assumes we will be praying (but not like the pagans because we have a new audience!)
2. Jesus presents a pattern for prayer (adoration, consecration, supplication, intercession, protection)
3. Jesus reveals the Father's priority for prayer (and a way to pray the Beatitudes!)
4. Jesus prepares his disciples for the power (and danger!) of prayer (we'll look at John 6 on Wednesday night)

Heidelberg Catechism, Part III: Gratitude

Lord's Day 46

Q 120. Why did Christ command us to call God “our Father”?

A. To awaken in us at the very beginning of our prayer what should be basic to our prayer—
a childlike reverence and trust that through Christ God has become our Father,
and that just as our parents do not refuse us the things of this life, even less will God our Father refuse
to give us what we ask in faith.¹

¹ [Matt. 7:9-11](#); [Luke 11:11-13](#)

Q 121. Why the words “in heaven”?

A. These words teach us not to think of God’s heavenly majesty as something earthly,¹
and to expect everything needed for body and soul from God’s almighty power.²

¹ [Jer. 23:23-24](#); [Acts 17:24-25](#) ² [Matt. 6:25-34](#); [Rom. 8:31-32](#)

Lord's Day 47

Q 122. What does the first petition mean?

A. “Hallowed be your name” means:

Help us to truly know you,¹ to honor, glorify, and praise you for all your works
and for all that shines forth from them: your almighty power, wisdom, kindness,
justice, mercy, and truth.²

And it means, help us to direct all our living—what we think, say, and do—
so that your name will never be blasphemed because of us but always honored and praised.³

¹ [Jer. 9:23-24](#); [31:33-34](#); [Matt. 16:17](#); [John 17:3](#)

² [Ex. 34:5-8](#); [Ps. 145](#); [Jer. 32:16-20](#); [Luke 1:46-55, 68-75](#); [Rom. 11:33-36](#) ³ [Ps. 115:1](#); [Matt. 5:16](#)

A Father who provides (remember the “how much more” principle)

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?”

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

⁵ Then he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread,’ ⁶ because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.’

⁷ “Then the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ ⁸ I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man’s boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

⁹ “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

¹¹ “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Luke 11

1. God’s provision really is good (see James 1:17-18)

2. The Father’s provision is most powerfully seen in his provision of Jesus (see Genesis 22 and Romans 8:31-32)

3. How is this Father who provides everyone’s Father?

1. We all are his children as image bearers

²² Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴ “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷ God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

²⁹ “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by man’s design and skill. ³⁰ In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent”

Acts 17

2. Followers of Jesus are his children because we bear his name

⁶ Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

John 14 (see also Matthew 18:20; John 17:11-12; Ephesians 3:15; Revelation 22:4)

Digging into the Father's name

The first sentence declares *to whom we are to pray*--"Our *Father* who is in heaven." We are not to cry to saints and angels, but to the everlasting Father, the Father of spirits, the Lord of heaven and earth. We call Him Father, in the lowest sense, as our Creator; as Paul told the Athenians, "in him we live, and move, and have our being--we are also his offspring." ([Acts 17:28](#).) We call Him Father in the highest sense, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, reconciling us to Himself, through the death of His Son. ([Col. 1:20-22](#).) We profess that which the Old Testament saints only saw dimly, if at all--we profess to be His children by faith in Christ, and to have "the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." ([Rom. 8:15](#).) This, we must never forget, is the sonship that we must desire, if we would be saved. Without faith in Christ's blood, and union with Him, it is vain to talk of trusting in the Fatherhood of God.

J. C. Ryle

1. We have a Father who rescues

¹⁰ *And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way . . . and joyfully* ¹² *giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.* ¹³ *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,* ¹⁴ *in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

Colossians 1

2. We have a Father who adopts

¹² *Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it.* ¹³ *For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,* ¹⁴ *because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.* ¹⁵ *For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."* ¹⁶ *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.* ¹⁷ *Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

Romans 8 (see also 8:31-32 for more on the Father's giving)

3. We have a Father who guards (and really desires our prayer!)

⁴ *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!* ⁵ *Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.* ⁶ *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* ⁷ *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 3

Resources for further study

The poster for Matthew does a good job of showing the 5 Parts of the gospel, reflecting a “new Torah”, can be found at <https://bibleproject.com/downloads/posters/>

Here are some of our growing number of prayer resources:

Lora Copely’s “Extraordinary Prayer” article at <https://www.abideproject.org/articles/extraordinary-prayer>

Becket Cook’s story of his mother’s prayer at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFWl9eWkmWg>

Larry Stockstill has a good summary of the pattern of the Lord’s Prayer at <https://larrystockstill.com/blog/prayer-template>

Keller has a good listen at <https://gospelinlife.com/downloads/the-upside-down-kingdom-5106/> or the .pdf version at <https://www.scribd.com/document/258555474/Upside-Down-Kingdom-Tim-Keller>

Keller also has an 8-part series on the Lord’s Prayer on .mp3 at <https://www.monergism.com/lords-prayer-8-part-mp3-sermon-series>

Sinclair Ferguson’s sermon on this text at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ne2B6v6rzQc>

[Monergism.com](http://www.monergism.com) has many resources on the Sermon on the Mount at <https://www.monergism.com/topics/sermon-manuscripts-mp3s-scripture/matthew/sermon-mount-ch-5-7>

Ryle has a commentary of Matthew 6 at <https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/m06.htm>

The CRCNA has lots to offer, see https://www.crcna.org › files › the_lords_prayer

Bob Deffinbaugh has a sermon on this passage at <https://bible.org/seriespage/fatal-failures-religion-3-externalism-matthew-61-18>

Spurgeon has an interesting prayer take is at <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/the-secret-of-power-in-prayer/#flipbook/>