

THE LORD'S PRAYER - Part I The Person of Prayer

Text: Matthew 6:9a

Key Word: Prayer

Key Thought: Prayer must Be Directed to the Right Person

The Lord's Prayer is a model for us to follow when we make our requests known unto God. It is one of the shorter prayers recorded in the Bible. Most children memorize it and learn to appreciate it. Some children make a few mistakes but then again so do we in our understanding.

Our Father, Who are in heaven, Hello! What be thy name?"

Our Father, who art in heaven, Howard be thy name. Give us this day our Jelly Bread."

"Lead us not into Penn Station"

"Deliver us from weevils"

"Our Father, who art in heaven, How'd you know my name?"

It's very interesting also to listen in on our children's prayers.

****** "Little Susie concluded her prayer by saying, *'Dear God, before I finish, please take care of Daddy, take care of Mommy, take care of baby brother, Grandma, and Grandpa . . . and please, God take care of yourself, or else we're all sunk!'*" ******

I think we can all agree that it is not just children that need to grow in their understanding of prayer. The Lord's Prayer is an excellent example to follow. Over the next seven weeks I plan to focus on the significance of each portion.

I. OUR FATHER

Verses 5-8 of this chapter teach how NOT to pray. Jesus wanted His disciples NOT to allow their prayers to become formalized and lose their meaning. The Jews followed two prescribed daily prayers. One was called the "Shema" which consisted of three short passages of Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 11:13-21; and Numbers 15:37-41). These prayers were to be recited as early as possible. Usually they were completed before 9 Am.

I. OUR FATHER (Contd.)

The second prescribed prayer was called "**Shemoneh 'esreh**" which means "**the Eighteen**" comprising of 18 different prayers. These are still an essential part of every synagogue service. Even today, an orthodox Jew devotes himself to pray at 9 Am, noon and 3 Pm. The main problem with these prescribed customs is that they can lose their meaning as changes take place in each generation. Jesus wanted to keep prayer as a vital part of every believer's growth.

One thing must be said before we begin to understand the teaching of our Lord. Jesus was speaking to His disciples. The Lord's prayer is not a child's prayer. It was not intended to be a family prayer. Only a true disciple can pray this prayer with full meaning.

The first part of the prayer has to do with God and His glory; the second part consists of three petitions dealing with our needs and necessities. Prayer MUST begin with our appreciation and understanding of whom God is. It must never be an attempt to bend His will.

Until we know the Person of Prayer we will never reach our Potential of Prayer. There are many facets of truth about God in this simple title of "FATHER." One of the main things that happen when we understand the Father, is the restoration of several important relationships.

A. It Settles our Relationship with the Unseen World

B. It Settles our Relationship with the Seen World

C. It Settles our Relationship with Each Other

A. It Settles our Relationship with the Unseen World

1. The Character of God's Name

It is probably safe to say that most people in our world today have no idea who God really is. They believe some warped teaching that God is angry with them and continues to pour out His punishment on this world. The term "*an act of God*" is often used to describe the effects of terrible disasters even though many who use the term don't believe God is in control of the universe. I believe that this is a subtle attempt to bring a false accusation against the noble character of God.

2. The Privilege of God's Name

Every family is known by its surname. A father with a good reputation brings many blessings to his family.

"A good name is more desirable than great riches."

Proverbs 22:1

A. It Settles our Relationship with the Unseen World (Contd.)

2. The Privilege of God's Name (Contd.)

1638 Penny's Father Didn't Laugh

*** When he was teenager, Jim Penny worked for a grocery man in Hamilton, Missouri. He liked the work and had plans to make a career of it, One night he proudly told his family about his "foxy employer." The grocer had a practise of mixing low quality coffee with the expensive brand and thus increasing his profit. Jim laughed as he told the story at the supper table.

His father didn't see anything funny about the practise. "Tell me," he said, "if the grocer found someone palming off an inferior article on him for the price of the best, do you think he would think they were being foxy, and laugh about it?"

Jim could see his father was disappointed in him. "I guess not," he replied. "I guess I just didn't think about it that way."

Jim's father instructed him to go to the grocer the next day and collect whatever money due him and tell the grocer he wouldn't be working for him any longer. Jobs were not plentiful in Hamilton, but Mr. Penny would rather see his son be unemployed than be associated with a crooked businessman.

J.C. Penny came that close to becoming a grocer instead of the owner of a dry goods chain and the nation's leading merchandiser. ***

3. The Duty of God's Name

One of the main duties of every father is to supply for the needs of his family. A father is one who protects, provides, teaches, encourages, disciplines, loves and cherishes his family. We must approach God with this unwavering belief if we are to be effective in our prayer.

B. It Settles our Relationship with the Seen World

There are many things we cannot understand in this world because we don't know God the Father as well as we should. Life is full of chances and changes. When we think that life should be full of roses and tranquillity we find it difficult to understand why certain trials come our way. **Remember that God organized this world not for our comfort but rather for our equipping.** Pain is one thing we often consider as a terrible thing. Yet a person who can't feel pain is a danger to himself and others. Pain is God's signal light to inform us of danger problems.

B. It Settles our Relationship with the Seen World (Contd.)

If we can enter our times of prayer with an insight as God sees things we can better understand why we are suffering in certain ways. Why does God encourage us to be patient, loving, kind, caring, forgiving, generous etc. when these things can often be very difficult to do?

C. It Settles our Relationship with Each Other

If we understand that we have a Father who is in control we can better cope with the problems of life. Our prayers will become **OMNIDIRECTIONAL** instead of **UNIDIRECTIONAL**.

This prayer teaches us to pray "**OUR FATHER**" not "**MY FATHER**." This prayer never includes the words I, Me, or Mine. Isn't it better to use words like We, Us, and Ours. **God is not anyone's exclusive possession**. The Lord's prayer guides us into the reduction of ourselves as we continue to exalt God. It creates an even ground to stand before God.

It also helps us to realize that God has placed us into a family. This alone can heal us of thoughts of self-despising which is the other side of the coin. Blessed are those who give us back our self-respect. The Lord's prayer is a model for ensuring positive relationships at all levels. It begins with our relationship with God in the unseen world. It moves into the relationship of the seen world which helps us understand ourselves. Then it finally flows into the lives of those around us.

******* One day in the history of Rome one of its Emperors was given the privilege of marching his troops through the streets of Rome after a great victory. They were parading all his captured trophies and prisoners.

The streets were lined with cheering people. The tall legionnaires lined the streets to control the crowds. At one point along the triumphal route there was a platform where the Empress and her family were sitting joining in the pride of the victory.

As the Emperor came near his youngest son jumped from the platform and burrowed his way into the crowd. He dodged between the legs of the soldiers and ran toward his father's chariot.

One soldier stooped down and briskfully swept the boy into his arms saying, "*You can't do that! Don't you see who that is in the chariot? That's the Emperor.*"

The young boy cried out with great joy, "*He may be your Emperor, but he's my father!*" *******

The Lord's prayer allows us to run up to our Father's chariot of victory and declare to everyone that we have a personal relationship with Him.

Do you know the **PERSON of PRAYER** today? Have you entered into the kind of relationship that millions of people have in order that you know Him as your heavenly Father? We can go no further in this prayer until we enter this stage of relationship. Remember that this is the prayer of a disciple - one who has surrendered his/her life to God the Father.

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Date: Feb 18/18

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: And Because We Are Sons - D

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The Person of Prayer

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