

Series: Sermon on the Mount  
Title: Simple Prayer  
Text: Mt 6: 7-13  
Date: October 11, 2009  
Place: SGBC, Princeton, NJ

Just as the Lord taught that sin is a matter of the fleshly heart, now he teaches that the fruit of the Spirit—of love and grace toward God and men—is a matter of the heart made new by God. Last time, we looked at our Lord's command to "pray in secret." Prayer is secret—spiritual--between God who is secret and the spirit he has made within us, which is secret. Even when assembled with our brethren, prayer is immediate communion between no one else but God and his people. This time our Lord instructs the believer to pray in simplicity.

**Matthew 6: 7: But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do:**

Men who do not know God think that prayer turns God to sinners. They think the more words repeated, the more prayers spoken, the more people praying will obligate God to hear. Prayer is not the child turning the Father to us, but prayer is the Father turning his children to him.

**Matthew 6: 7:...for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8: Be not ye therefore like unto them:**

This is the Master speaking! Do you believe the Lord Jesus Christ? Has he given you a heart to walk after his commandments? He says to every believer not to pattern your prayer after the heathen.

**Matthew 6: 8:...for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.**

What comfort! Your Father KNOWETH. Your Father knoweth your NEED. Your Father knoweth BEFORE you ask him. The more we know the Father the more our petitions become direct and simple, with one single desire.

In the most solemn moment of all, when the greatest need that any Man has ever has ever had was in view, the prayer was this:

Matthew 26: 39: O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*.

After This Manner Therefore Pray Ye

What our Lord is about to teach us is not that these are the only words to be used when praying to the Father. But rather, in each statement, he teaches us to guide and restrain our petitions no further than the pattern he gives here.

**Matthew 6: 9:...Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10: Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.**

**Our Father which art in heaven**

When a vessel of God's mercy has been regenerated and given the spirit of adoption, the child of God cries, Abba, Father. We acknowledge that our Father is the holy God. We acknowledge his rightful authority and place, as well as our place. He is our Father, we are his children. He is in heaven, we are below. He is our King, we are his subjects. His will is absolute; our will is for his to be done.

By acknowledging him to be our Father in heaven we confess we believe him when he says that through the blood of his Son he accepts us and has given us liberty to approach him and that he will hear our petitions. We

confess that we believe that he is *able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us* (Eph 3: 20.)

Here are our petitions:

### **I. Hallowed be thy name.**

Prayer confesses his name is holy. Every aspect of the salvation of wretched sinners declares that his name is above every other name. By electing whom he would unto salvation in his Son, Christ Jesus, our Father declares that his name is holy. By honoring his own law on behalf of his children through his Son he declares his salvation is holy. By making his Son, who knew no sin, to be sin, to satisfy his holy justice on behalf of each of his elect, making his chosen children the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus--our Father declares that his love, his mercy and grace, his longsuffering, his abundant goodness and truth, his reservation of mercy for thousands, his forgiveness of iniquity and transgression and sin, is for the sole purpose of magnifying his holy name. His good pleasure to save his children—to regenerate them, make them willing and to keep them by his power—by the means that wise men call foolishness is for the sole purpose to stop all man’s boasting and that those who glory shall glory in only his holy name. Therefore, our desire in all our petitions is that he do for us only that which magnifies his holy name, both in our hearts and before all the world.

### **II. Thy kingdom come.**

First, we ask our Father that Christ our King Priest come into our hearts, that our hearts might be established in him. Secondly, by his Word and his Power, we pray for Christ our King to take up dominion in the hearts of his redeemed that are yet in darkness. Thirdly, we earnestly and joyfully await our Lord’s return, that final and glorious consummation when he shall deliver us into the new heavens and new earth where we shall dwell with him eternally.

### **III. Thy will be done in earth, as in heaven.**

We know:

Daniel 4:35:...he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

We acknowledge that we would have it no other way. Our prayer is: Father, in glorifying your holy name, in establishing your kingdom, thy will be done on earth, as in heaven. May God be glorified!

Next we come to our needs. The Lord says there are three things we need: daily bread, forgiveness, and deliverance.

### **IV. Give us this day our daily bread.**

We know he shall...

Isaiah 49: 16: Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls *are* continually before me.

Psalm 37:25 I have been young, and *now* am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

But our Father will have us to ask him. Even in our daily portion of bread, we acknowledge that we can not provide for ourselves. Our Father is our provider.

### **V. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

We know that Christ has put away our sin by his one sacrifice.

Hebrews 1: 3:...when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Hebrews 9: 12:...by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

1 John 3:5: And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

But as long as we are in this body of death, sin is mixed with all that we do. Asking forgiveness, we confess to our Father that we are yet, sinners. Asking his forgiveness we confess our sin is against God. Asking his forgiveness we confess that only our Father can forgive us. Forgiving others freely, we confess that our Father has forgiven us freely by his grace in Christ Jesus our Substitute and shall forgive us.

1 John 1:9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

#### **VI. Matthew 6: 13: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:**

The Lord is not teaching us to pray that we are never tried of God. Trials are necessary and good for us, however we may suffer under them. But rather, we ask our Father not to allow the power of evil to overcome us, but deliver us from the evil. Again, we have the promise of the Father that:

1 Corinthians 10: 13: God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

But casting all our care on Christ, on our Father, is the Way. His grace is sufficient to enable us to bear the trial. So our Lord instructs us as he did his apostle in the garden of Gethsemene:

Matthew 26:41: Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

We ask the Lord to keep us every moment, to deliver us, acknowledging that we have no strength of ourselves.

Verse 13 is not in some of the ancient texts. But the words expressed here, strike me as what it is to pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **VII. Matthew 6: 13: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

As we saw in a former lesson, "Amen" is the name of Jesus Christ. The Kingdom is God's and His Son is our King. All power is God's and he has given our Lord Jesus the Crown rights who possesses all power in heaven and in earth. The glory of God is seen in the face of Christ Jesus the Son of God.

In all the needs we saw here, Christ has the Preeminence: we need the Living Bread daily, the Manna from heaven, we need to be found in Christ where we have complete forgiveness by his blood, and we need to be kept in Christ Jesus our Sanctuary where no evil can come near.

So in all we pray to our heavenly Father in the name of his Son and our Salvation.