

Praying Like Jesus
Powerful Prayers | Matthew 6:9-13
Southern Hills Baptist Church
July 3, 2016

INTRODUCTION

If you have your Bibles go ahead and open up to Matthew 6. We will be in verse 9 momentarily.

Welcome! I say it every week and I mean it every week. I am happy to be here with you studying God's Word. I hope that you are ready to hear from God's Word!

Wrapping Powerful Prayers

Tonight we are concluding our series, Powerful Prayers. I hope this series has been an encouragement to you. I can personally testify that it has been for me. I can see the impact that these studies on prayer have had on my personal prayer life. Over the past few months I have seen my prayer life change in a number of ways. **My favorite area of growth during this study has been how I have started praying Scripture more.** Man, oh man, I have been reminded of how much I love praying God's Word. Specifically, I have been praying **Colossians 1:9-14 for Rachel, the girls, and all of you.** It has been such a blessing to me and I am so excited to see God answer those prayers!

Share the Impact

I would love to hear from you after service if you have seen or noticed any change or growth in your prayer life as we have studied these prayers. I am sure the different prayers we have studied have impacted each of us uniquely. We have studied a variety of prayers...

- A desperate prayer for deliverance
- A broken-hearted prayer of repentance
- Prayers for spiritual strengthening
- A prayer of praise
- A prayer in the midst of hardship and frustration
- A prayer in the midst of fear and dread
- Even a prayer of complaint

Easily Neglected, Sorely Missed

Again, this study has been really good for me. **Prayer is one of those things that is so easy to neglect, but once you find yourself praying faithfully after a season of drought you want to kick yourself for having squandered opportunities** to have been going before God to share your heart and needs. Can you relate? If you were in a season of drought in your prayer life my hope is that you have once again tasted the sweetness of going before God in prayer.

One More Prayer

Before we say our goodbyes to our series on prayer we have one more prayer to consider and it is maybe the most obvious prayer in the Bible, it is where many would have likely started this series, The Lord's Prayer.

A Special Prayer

This is a special prayer for many reasons, here are a few...

First, it is a prayer that Jesus models for His disciples to teach them how to pray. **How amazing is that? We get to learn to pray from God the Son**, we get to learn to pray from the One who talks to God more than anyone else, the One who is one with God and knows how God should be approached!

Secondly, when Jesus talks to God what we wind up **hearing is an internal conversation amongst the Trinity**. What a unique thing to be able to listen in to, we are getting one side of a conversation between God the Son and God the Father. Very cool.

Finally, prayer reveals a great deal about what is on your heart and what you value. **As Jesus prays we get to hear what matters to Him!** What a cool thing to be able to get insight on!

Let's Pray

Before we begin our study let me open up our time with a word of prayer...

Father, teach us to pray. Let us learn from your Son. We want to pray like Him. Shape our hearts to be like His. Give us His passions and loves. Give us hearts that hunger to come before you with our needs and even to just spend time with you. We pray these things in Jesus name, Amen.

Our Text

Let me read our text for the evening. Hear the Word of God...

Matthew 6:9-13

[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.

Pray Like This...

The very first thing to note before we even start to get into the prayer of Jesus is that He introduces the prayer by saying, "Pray like this..." That is to say, this is how we should pray, not what we should pray. There is an important difference. **Jesus is giving us an example to pull from, to guide us, to inspire us. He isn't giving us a script to recite.** Now, don't get me wrong, if you were to pray this prayer word for word from a believing heart that is wonderful. As I mentioned praying Scripture from a believing heart is beautiful. With that said, what I want to point out is that this prayer is not mandated. There isn't anything magical about the word formation. Some have made it out to be this way, but Jesus tells us that we should pray like Him, meaning it is meant to be a guide for us.

Don't Know How to Pray

One other quick note about Jesus' opening words. He is teaching His people to pray. **What does it mean when you have to be taught something? It means you don't know it naturally.** Who taught you to breathe? No one, right? Who taught you to swallow? No one, you were born knowing how to do these things. Prayer is a different story however. We are not born a praying people. I doubt I have to convince you of this. I would just ask you to consider how faithful you are in prayer and the vast majority of us would hang our heads in shame. So...

- if you don't know how to pray
- if you always wonder if you pray well
- if you question yourself as you pray

Know this, Jesus knew you needed help and thus gave us this guidance.

Roadmap

The prayer that Jesus modeled for us can be divided up into 3 sections.

- Addressing Our God of Intimate Love and Unrivaled Power...
- ...To Seek the Glory of God...
- ... By Seeking Our Needs.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

ADDRESSING OUR GOD OF INTIMATE LOVE AND UNRIVALED POWER... (9b)

Jesus opens His prayer by addressing God in a way that shows the **beauty and complexity of who God is to us**. His address shows God to be **close and intimately interested and involved in our lives**, while **also being holy, otherworldly, and all-powerful**. This simple address shows us that we should call upon God in an intimate way, all the while holding God with incredible reverence and having unshakable confidence in God. Both sides of God are captured with the simple address of, "Our Father in Heaven."

1. OUR FATHER

The first aspect of this address is the recognition of God as Father. If you were here on Father's Day you should have a really good foundation to pull from when we consider what it means to have God as our Father as we spent an evening considering the Fatherhood of God just two weeks ago. I won't walk us through that entire sermon again, but at a high level what we need to know about having God as our Father is that **we are loved, dearly, deeply, and intimately**.

1 John 3:1a

[1] See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

Near, Not Far. Engaged, Not Uninterested.

Jesus wants us to start our prayers by remembering that **God is not far, distant, and uninterested, but rather He is close, engaged in our lives, and He loves us intensely**. These are hallmarks of a good father, aren't they? Good fathers are involved in their kid's lives because they love their kids, they want the best for their kids. So they don't just sit on the sideline of their lives, but they are involved and they work to provide and care for them.

A Better Love

This is true of God towards His children, but it gets even better because God loves us perfectly, shows us a grace that we will never plumb the depths of, and has unfathomable wisdom.

Matthew 7:11

[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!

How Do Kids Approach Their Dads?

Knowing this should impact the way we go to God in prayer in a big way. Stop and consider this, **When a kid knows their Dad loves them, when a kid knows their Dad loves to do good for them, how do those kids approach their fathers? Are those kids hesitant to go to their fathers? Are they gun-shy? Do they hold back concerns that are on their hearts?**

What Good Dads Hear

No! Dad's that love their kids regularly hear calls and questions like...

- Dad! Look at this!
- Dad! I need help!
- Dad! Can you open this?
- Dad! Can you reach this?
- Dad! Can you fold this?
- Dad! Can I have this?
- Dad! Is this for me?
- Dad! Ice Cream!

I am far from a perfect Dad, but even in my great imperfection I have kids who have no hesitancy in asking me whatever pops into their head. Why is this? They know I love them. Now, they don't always get what they want, but even when this is the case I believe they understand that the answer of "no" or "not now" comes from a place that is looking out for their best interest.

Jesus Wants Us to Remember Who God Is - Father

As Jesus opens up His prayer by addressing God as Father these are the images that He is working to evoke. The God that we pray to is one who is near us, not far, and He has a heart for us, He loves us more than we can even imagine.

Overthinking – Stunted Growth

If we would open up our prayers by taking time to remember these truths it would really grow and change our prayer lives. **The struggle that some have with prayer is that they overthink it all.** They think too much about prayer itself. **Our focus shouldn't be on the act of prayer so much as it should be on our Heavenly Father.**

Prayer is a Windshield

Prayer is like a windshield, when you start staring at it, rather than through it, you are doing it wrong. Windshields are meant to be looked through, not at, right? Prayer works in the same way. Our attention shouldn't be on prayer, but on the one we are praying to.

Who Are We Praying To?

And who are we praying to? Jesus tells us we pray to our Father God, who is near us, who cares for us, who loves us, who is for us, who is engaged and active in our lives.

2. IN HEAVEN

The second description of God in Jesus' opening address tells us something else about who we are praying to. While the God we are praying to is near us and loves us intimately, He is in heaven. When Jesus speaks of God being in Heaven the image that would have been evoked in the minds of his hearers could best be summed up by Psalm 103:19...

Psalm 103:19

[19] The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.

Heaven is where the throne of God resides, where God rules. **The fact that God lives in Heaven speaks to His power, His sovereignty. He sits over all of creation as its owner, its ruler.**

He Is Strong!

This is essential for us to remember because the God that we are praying to isn't just kind and loving like a good father, but powerless to affect any real change. No!

- The God that we are praying to **hung the stars** in the sky.
- He set the **boundaries for the oceans**.
- He has **written history** from beginning to end.
- He has **toppled nations** and rulers.
- He **set our world in motion** and hung it on its axis.
- He **lit up our sky** with a ball of fire that we call the sun.
- When He talks, **creation and nature listen** to the voice of their maker.

Nothing Too Hard for God

Listen to what Jeremiah confesses of God...

Jeremiah 32:17

[17] 'Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.

There is nothing too hard for God! This is essential for us to remember when we are praying. We need to know that our prayers are not merely hopes that are being mentioned to someone who loves us, but rather our prayers are requests being offered to the omnipotent Creator of all things. **God is not just a sympathetic ear, He rules over all and does as He pleases amongst the nations. Without this truth why would we even pray? It would be pointless**, sure maybe God loves us, but if He doesn't have the power to answer prayer then we might as well be talking to our earthly father.

That isn't the case though. We are to pray to Our Father In Heaven.

Loving and Powerful

Let's put both of these components of Jesus' address together. We need both of the descriptions that Jesus has given.

1. We need to know first that **God has a heart and a desire to help us** and He does! He is our **Father!**
2. Then we need to know that **God is able to do something about our prayers** and He can! **He rules** from His throne in Heaven!

Jesus' Desire for our Prayers

As Jesus is teaching His disciples to pray He wants them to **go to God eagerly, like a child running to his father for help**. And he wants them to **go to God confidently, knowing that God is strong enough** to bring about exactly what is needed.

How Do You Approach God

Would you say that these attitudes characterize your prayer life?

- Do you **eagerly run to God** with everything that is on your heart? If not, you need to know God as Father more deeply.
- Do you **go to God confidently**, believing that He can answer your prayers or do you feel like your prayer requests are just a roll of the dice? If your confidence in God waivers in your prayers you need read through the Scriptures looking at the power of God and how He exercises His will over the nations.

Summary

Jesus' simple address of, "Our Father in Heaven" is meant to remind you that God is near and that He is strong. This is a reminder we need and a wonderful way to open our prayers.

Transition – Structure Overview

Let's continue in our study. We have considered the address that Jesus opened up with. As Jesus continues He offers up 2 sets of requests.

The first set of requests seek out God glory...

- Hallow your name
- Bring your rule
- Do your will

The second set of requests seek out our needs...

- Provide for us
- Forgive us
- Guide us to holiness

When you bump these two sets of requests up against each other the differences are obvious. The first set is lofty, majestic, and global as they seek God's glory over all of creation. The second set get down to our every day lives. They are a bit more mundane and common.

More Unity than Meets The Eye

While the differences between these two sets of requests is obvious **I think there is more unity and harmony between them than meets the eye. All of these requests are working towards the same goal, the same end, just as different levels.** The goal that all of these requests are working towards is glory of God. This is where Jesus explicitly opens up the prayer, but this goal, this desire flows through to the final set of requests as well, which we will see in a moment.

Let's continue looking at each component of Jesus' prayer as He Seeks the Glory of God...

...TO SEEK THE GLORY OF GOD.... (vs 9c-10)

1. HALLOW YOUR NAME

The first request of Jesus is for God's name to be hallowed. The name of God in the Bible is equivalent to the person of God. When you see the name of God talked about it isn't merely referring to a word, God's name. it is referring to the person of God. So the prayer of Jesus is that God. Himself. would be hallowed.

Hallow – Set Apart

What does it mean to be hallowed. The word, “hallow” means to be sanctified or in less theological terms, it means to be set apart from that which is common.

Packing Analogy

Let me explain it with a packing analogy, as pretty much all Rachel and I have been doing over the past few weeks involves packing. Sorry, you were bound to get at least one packing or moving illustration tonight. As we packed up our home there were boxes that we labeled as miscellaneous. They had a hodgepodge of things in them. To make it in a miscellaneous box you had to be an item that we didn't care too much about, a common item. The items we cared about more went in smaller boxes where the items were grouped with like things. Still, there were items that we cared about even more and when we packed we set all of these items aside in a separate pile so that they wouldn't get loaded in the big moving truck, but rather they would be loaded up in our car so they could be moved with special care. These items were set aside from all of the other common items we had.

Computer, Books, and John Calvin Bobblehead

I only have a few items that I value enough to be set aside, like my computer, some of my favorite books and my John Calvin bobblehead, they carry special value to me. Because they carry special value they got special treatment, they were set aside.

Treasure God Supremely

Jesus' prayer is that we would treasure God supremely above all others, above everyone and everything else in life, and because we treasure Him above all, then we would set Him apart. Jesus is praying that God would be the great treasure of our lives and that we would treat Him as such, that we would honor Him, that we would obey Him, that we would live like He mattered more than anything else to us.

Treasuring God Summed Up

This part of Jesus' prayer is probably best summed up by Paul from Philippians 3...

Philippians 3:7-8

[7] But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. [8] Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

These are my favorite verses in all of the Bible. **They remind me of the all-satisfying reality of Jesus. They also show us what it is like to hallow God's name or to treasure God.** Everything else pales in comparison. Paul says that in comparison to knowing Jesus everything else is trash. Thus Paul was willing to give up anything and everything that got in the way of pursuing Jesus.

Starting with Me

I so often fall short of these verses, as do you, so as we pray we ought to pray that God's name would be hallowed, starting in our own hearts.

Loving Prayer

This is such a loving prayer to pray. There is no greater joy than knowing God and treasuring God. It is what we were created for. **So to pray that God would be treasured supremely by all is a prayer for all to find new depths of joy that will eternally satisfy.**

Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be Your name... Your Kingdom Come...

2. BRING YOUR KINGDOM

The next request of Jesus is that God would bring His kingdom. What we need to understand about the kingdom of God when it is talked about in the Bible is that **it refers to the rule of God**. This is important. Kingdoms imply rule, right. Kingdoms imply a region of some kind that lives under the rule of a king. So **Jesus is asking that God would bring His rule**.

There are a couple of aspects to this request.

Future Kingdom

The future aspect of the Kingdom is what we commonly think of as eternity where the Kingdom of God is finally and fully established. Jesus will take rule over the world as the recognized King of kings and Lord of Lords. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Him as Lord.

Present Kingdom

The other aspect of the kingdom is the present reality. Right now, today, God rules over all things as He sustains and manages creation, however, not all submit to His rule, right? God's rule is embraced, submitted to, and celebrated within the hearts of believers, within the church. So the rule of God up to this point has only been established within the hearts of believers.

What is Jesus Asking For? God's Rule

So with all of this in mind, what Jesus is praying for at this point is that more people would find their hope and satisfaction in God and that His kingdom rule would extend to their hearts. Jesus is also praying for God's full and final reign to be brought about where justice will prevail in full effect and the promised salvation of God would be realized in total.

God's Kingdom and the Church

Now, understand, that **God is using the church to usher in His kingdom in the present, which is setting up the full and final kingdom of God that is to come. So when we pray for God to bring His kingdom, we are praying for God to use us to spread a passion for the supremacy of God to all people. It means that we are to go and live our lives under the rule of God now, giving people a glimpse of the future kingdom that is to come.**

- We do this by **gladly telling** people of the **Gospel**
- We do this by **sacrificially loving** others
- We do this by **caring for those who have been marginalized**
- We do this by **living in unity as the church**
- We do this by **feeding the poor**
- We do this by **loving our enemies**.

Living Beautifully to Show True Beauty

We do all of this and everything else that the Scriptures outline **so people can see the beauty of living under the wise and gracious rule of God so that people will ask us what changed us**, what brought us together, what leads us to these lives of beauty and then we can continue to herald the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the entry point to the kingdom of God.

When we pray for God to bring His kingdom we are asking for God to change hearts and for God to execute His eternal plan, but we have to know that God does much of that work through us, His children.

The Kingdom and God's Glory

I am sure this is easy to see, but this all ties back into the glory of God. God is magnified and made much of as His kingdom extends into new hearts and one day the whole world as He recreated Earth and fills it with His people.

Transition

The request for God to be glorified continues with Jesus asking for God to bring His will....

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

3. YOUR WILL BE DONE

The last request of Jesus in the first set of requests is that God's will would be done. There are a couple of elements to this request.

Execute God's Sovereign Will

One is that Jesus is praying for God's sovereign will to be executed. In some ways this is a restatement of the request we just considered, where Jesus prayed for God's kingdom rule to come. **God has mapped out all of time. He has a plan for all of history** that will culminate in His glory being greatly manifested as He brings about the salvation He has promised to His children, while exacting justice on those who have rebelled. God has written out this story from beginning to end. There are no missing details, no plot holes, or situations that have been left to chance. **Jesus is praying for God to exact His perfect will just as He has planned.**

God's People Live God's Will

Another aspect of this request is that God's creation would live in obedience to His will. **God's will isn't something that is only executed in the abstract or in situations around us, it is carried out in the details of our lives.** We have been given God's will and can live in obedience to it, carrying out God's will or we can live in opposition to God's will. Jesus is praying for God's will to be done in our lives.

As we put it all together the common theme once again is the glory of God. Jesus is praying for God to be glorified by seeing God's perfect will being realized by His creation gladly carrying it out.

Application

Let's pull back for a moment and consider what these 3 requests teach us about our prayer lives.

1. Headlining Your Prayers

First, stop and consider what headlined Jesus' requests. I think this is significant. It is clear that **Jesus' prayer was organized and thought out with great intention** as we see these two sets of three requests. So I very much believe **what we see first in this prayer is revealing what was most important to Jesus.** And what was that? The hallowing of God's name or to say it more plainly, the treasuring of God above all.

Prayers Reveal Hearts

I call this out because it is a special thing to get insight into the prayer life of Jesus. **Our prayers reveal our hearts in significant ways** and what is on Jesus' heart?

- A love for God

- A desire for God to be magnified.
- A longing for people to find their heart's satisfaction in God.

So this begs the question, **what does your prayer life reveal about what you value most?** I want to encourage you to examine your prayer lives and consider just this. **Take time to think through what headlines your prayers most regularly.** There are lots of great things we can pray for. Our prayers should be very diverse in the kinds of things we are asking for. With that said, as believers who have been shown unspeakable grace, who have been called into fellowship with the infinite God of Creation, God should be our heart's desire and the pattern that Jesus has set forth by asking for God's name to be hallowed and treasured and His kingdom rule to come and His will to be done is wonderfully instructive as to how we can make our prayers God-centered.

2. Who's Kingdom, Who's Will?

Something else that we ought to consider after having thought about these first three requests from Jesus is, **who's kingdom rule do you pray for or who's will do you pray would be accomplished?** Certainly, no one goes to God asking for their personal kingdom to be established, but **if we were to take an inventory of all of your prayer requests and assess them what would we find? Who's kingdom would we think you are most concerned with?** Who's will would we think you are most interested in seeing accomplished? Yours or God's?

Don't misunderstand me, I am not saying that you shouldn't pray for the things that you need, I am not saying that you shouldn't ask God to provide for you. You should! We will get there in a minute, Jesus outlines that too. What I am saying is that we ought to give a great deal of attention in both words and motivation to the will of God and His kingdom, making our prayers about Him because life is about Him.

Transition

Let's move on to the last section in Jesus' model prayer. So far we have seen Jesus address God as our nearby Father who is on His all-powerful throne in Heaven and the heart of Jesus's prayer is God's glory, as He asked God to magnify His name, bring His reign, and accomplish His will.

Jesus now continues on with 3 more requests. These are requests for needs that we have. **I would submit to you that these 3 requests serve the first 3. Jesus is teaching His disciples to ask God for their needs as a way to honor and glorify God.** God's glory is still the heartbeat of this prayer. I'll show you the connections as we walk through these final three requests for our needs...

...BY SEEKING OUR NEEDS. (vs. 11-13)

1. PROVIDE FOR US

As Jesus pivots into His next grouping of requests the first request we see is for God to give us our daily bread. **This is a request for provision.** Bread is representative of sustenance or nourishment or what is needed to live. As we look at this request we need to understand the intent behind it, Jesus is asking God to provide for Him.

Enough to Live

One of the first things we need to note about this request is that Jesus asks God for our daily bread. **His request here is to have enough to live, enough to have the energy and strength He needs to go and live the life that He has been called to live. Jesus doesn't pray for a storehouse of bread. He doesn't pray for his own bakery. He prays for enough.**

Shooting Down Prosperity Teaching

This prayer from Jesus flies in the face of so many prosperity gospel preachers out there that are encouraging people to ask for wealth and riches. You may have saw it in the news last year, but there was one prosperity preacher that was praying and raising funds to by a luxury personal jet. I am going to guess that his prayer wasn't inspired by Jesus' model prayer here who is simply asking for enough each day to live.

Depending on God's Provision, Not Our Own

Getting back on track, what we learn from Jesus here is that it is **good and it is right for us to seek God out to provide for us. Anything short of this winds up revealing a heart of self-sufficiency rather than real faith in God. So it would be wrong not to ask God to provide.**

Give Us Enough to Live for You

Now, I very much believe this request for provision is one that ties into the first 3 requests for God's glory. God is glorified in how He provides for His children. The daily bread, the provision we are seeking from God, the enough to live, not the piles of cash, that provision is given to us...

- so that we can go and proclaim the excellencies of Jesus
- so that we can give the world a glimpse of what it means to live under the gracious rule of God
- so that we can go and do the will of God

To Live Is Christ

This is what Paul meant when he said...

Philippians 1:21-26

[21] For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. [22] If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. [23] I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. [24] But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. [25] Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, [26] so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

Let me unpack the connection between Jesus' request for bread and Paul's words. Jesus asks for bread as that is life-sustaining. Paul tells us what life is all about here. If our lives are sustained, Paul says, "To live is Christ", meaning that if I live, its for Him. He goes on to say that if his life is sustained he will continue to build people up in the Gospel so they may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus.

Summary – Provide to Empower Me to Honor You

So the request to have provision is a request to be equipped and strengthened by God in a physical sense to go and live for God's glory.

Application – Are Your Requests Motivated by God's Glory

As you think about your prayer life stop and ask yourself this... **do all of your requests for God's provision in your life come back to God's glory or are they simply things you want?** All that we do, whether it be sharing the Gospel or eating bread, all of it should be about the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

[31] So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Give us this day our daily bread, so that we may live for you, for to live is Christ!

Transition

The next request we hear from Jesus focuses on spiritual help we need...

2. PARDON US

The next request from Jesus is for forgiveness or pardon. Specifically, Jesus asks that we be forgiven our debts. The word debt in the Bible is commonly used to mean sin, as our sin puts us in debt to God and others. So Jesus isn't asking for financial debts to be waived here, but spiritual debts, He is asking for forgiveness.

What is Sin?

What do we mean by sin? **It is anything that displeases God. It is anything you say, think, or do, that is out of step with the Word of God.** It is also **anything that you don't do** that you should have done.

Jesus Isn't Asking For Himself

Quick note... Jesus isn't asking for this Himself as He was perfect and never sinned, but He is giving us a prayer to model and all the rest of us need this request as we are sinners who struggle and fail.

Sin Hampers Fellowship

Some could hear this and wonder why we need to continue to ask God for forgiveness if Jesus purchased our forgiveness on the cross. It is true that Jesus' work on the cross was a once-for-all sacrifice that fully purchased our salvation. **However, we still struggle with sin and sin hampers our fellowship with God.**

Isaiah 59:1-2

[1] Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save,
or his ear dull, that it cannot hear;

[2] but your iniquities have made a separation
between you and your God,
and your sins have hidden his face from you
so that he does not hear.

As believers, great and incredible joy is found in walking with God. Sin ruins that, it tarnishes something beautiful and steals joy. Thankfully...

1 John 1:9-10

[9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [10] If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

As we go to God in prayer we need to confess our sin. Don't fool yourself, you have sin to confess. Thankfully, we also have a God who loves to forgive and His mercy will never be outdone by your sin.

Connection to God's Glory

I don't think I need to connect too many dots here, but again, this request ties into the larger theme of Jesus' prayer, which is the glory of God. Our sin dishonors God and drags His name through the mud. It is the opposite of bringing God glory. **We failed to live under His rule, we rebelled. We rejected His will for our own. So we need His forgiveness. And God is glorified in this process** even when we fail as **His great mercy is put on display** over and over again as we depend on Him for spiritual life and hope.

Transition

The final request from Jesus in His model prayer is for God to...

3. PROTECT US

Specifically, Jesus asks that God would lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. **This is a request for God to protect us spiritually.** Temptation lurks, evil seeks us as prey. **We ought to seek God's protective hand to guard us from evil, to strengthen us to reject the false, knock off, imitation joy that sin offers us, and in turn choose the true, pure joy found in Christ and Christ alone.**

We Need Help – We Are Weak – We Have an Enemy

Jesus has just led us to seek forgiveness of our sins, clearly we are vulnerable. We need help. We don't want to continue on in our sin, but we are weak. We need God to lead and guide us from danger because the threat is real. Listen to what Peter writes of the threat that we face...

1 Peter 5:8-9

[8] Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. [9] Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

Our adversary, the devil, prowls, looking for someone to destroy spiritually. Will that be you? It could be if you are not following God closely. **We are told by Peter to be sober-minded, watchful, firm in our faith, and to put up a fight when temptation comes. To do this we need God's intervention.**

- We need His Spirit convicting us of sin.
- We need His Word guiding us to truth and righteousness.
- We need brothers and sisters to watch our backs.
- We need God to intervene in life and put up roadblocks at times.

We need God working through all of these different avenues if we are going to continue following God amidst the attacks of our enemy.

Connection to God's Glory

Again, this request ties in so closely to the first three that focused specifically on glorifying God. Here Jesus is teaching us to ask God to **sanctify us, to help us live lives of holiness, to live under the gracious rule of God, and obey His will so that in the end His name will be hallowed and magnified.**

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Let me close with a couple of additional observations about this prayer.

1. 2/3 of Personal Requests are Spiritual

First, take notice that two of the three requests that Jesus teaches us to make of God for our needs are spiritually focused. He teaches us to ask for physical provision, but also forgiveness and spiritual strengthening. **What does this tell us about what Jesus thinks we need? Are our greater needs physical needs or spiritual needs? Clearly spiritual, right?**

Does Your Prayer Life Reflect this Priority?

So with that being the case, **does your prayer life reflect this? Are your prayers more focused on your physical needs or your spiritual needs?** This is something worth considering in more detail as I think most of us probably have more requests for our physical needs. Again, I am not trying to get you to pull back on asking God to provide for the physical needs that you have, but I do want to challenge you to pray more for your spiritual well being as this is clearly where Jesus thought we needed the most focus and help.

2. Jesus' Theme – Glory of God

Secondly, the theme of Jesus' prayer was the glory of God. **The glory of God ought to be the theme of our lives. The glory of God ought to be the goal of all that we do. And of course it should be at the center of our prayers.** As I studied this prayer this week I was struck by how beautifully God-centered it was.

In the past I had thought of the Lord's Prayer as being a prayer made up of the most common and essential components of prayer. This is true, but more than that it is all **held together with the common thread of seeking the glory of God.**

I point this out simply because I find it beautiful and it challenges me to ensure my prayers are God-centered and not Thomas-centered.

Closing

The Lord's Prayer is an incredible gift to us. It teaches us so much about prayer as well as our Savior who offered it up. It is such a simple prayer, but it carries with it incredible implications and direction for us. I want to encourage you to spend time this week praying through this prayer and expanding on it in your own words so that. Let's close with doing just that...

Let's Pray

Our Father...

- You are merciful, that is the only explanation for me being able to call You Father.
- You are near to me, you are engaged in my life from the big moments to the small moments.
- Who am I that you would be mindful of me? Who am I that you would be for me?
 - I am one for whom your Son tasted death and now I am your son
- Thank you for being our Father.

In Heaven...

- Your Fatherhood is all the more astounding as I consider the fact that you sit on your throne in Heaven ruling all of the cosmos.
- There is not one stray atom in the universe that you do not govern.
- There is no problem too big for you. There is no question too hard for you.

- This is why I come to you with my requests Father b/c you are able, b/c you can deliver on them in ways that no one else can.

Hallowed Be Your Name...

- The heart of our prayer towards you God is that you would Hallow Your Name, that you would set it apart in the hearts and lives of your church.
- We want to see you treasured above all else in this world.
- We want you to be esteemed and embraced by all.

Your Kingdom Come...

- Bring your kingdom God, extend your rule to the hearts of more men and women here in Round Rock and Austin, Texas, America, and the World.
- God, start with my heart, with the hearts of those who are a part of Southern Hills. I pray that you would continue to work on our hearts so that it would be softened to gladly embrace your rule in all areas. We want you to have full sway in our lives
- God bring your future kingdom, where all rights will be wronged, all tears wiped away, and the fullness of joy ushered in.

Your Will Be Done...

- God, accomplish your will.
- We know there is no one that can stay your hand or thwart your will.
- We pray that you do your will simply b/c we love to see it.
- Start this in us by helping conform us to the image of your Son.

Give us our Daily Bread...

- God, give us our daily bread, we don't ask for more, we don't ask for riches or wealth abundance, we ask for enough to have the strength and energy to be who you have called us to be as your children.
- Provide for us so that we can live for you. We want the motto of our lives to be, "To Live Is Christ!"

Forgive us our Debts...

- God, forgive us, we are so easily deceived by sin and our wicked hearts. Our sin confounds us and as we stop and think about it, we hate it.
- Forgive us, pardon us, wipe our slates clean so that we might have a renewed fellowship with you.

Lead us not into Temptation..

- God, we don't want to continue on in our sin.
- Strengthen us to walk and live for you.
- We want our lives to tell the story of your glory!

Visual Verses

The Lord's Prayer | Matthew 6:9-13



Praying Like Jesus