



“Your Prayers Are Too Complicated”

Matthew 6:9-13

BACKGROUND

Many people can recite the Lord’s Prayer by heart, although you may wonder why both Matthew (in this week’s text) and Luke (in Luke 11:2-4) omit some of the words with which you are familiar.

The reason is that the prayer we normally recite contains words that were not in the original text. Scribes, who copied God’s Word by hand, would sometimes add their own “marginal notes” in or beside the text. As time went on, some of these additions found their way into the body of the text. The King James Bible (which gave us our familiar version of the Lord’s Prayer) contained all these additional words. Now, thanks to the work of archeologists and other scholars, we possess much older copies of the original text, which do not contain the scribal additions. Modern translations of the Bible are based on these older, more reliable manuscripts. That explains why Matthew and Luke appear to “leave out” parts of the Lord’s Prayer.



KNOWING GOD

a) Read **Matthew 6:9-13**. The prayer that we call the Lord's Prayer could more appropriately be called the Disciples' Prayer, since Jesus was teaching his disciples how to pray. Write your observations about this prayer. What are its divisions? Its petitions? Its overall tone?

b) Rewrite "hallowed be your name" (vs. 9) in your own words:

c) Rewrite "your kingdom come" (vs. 10) in your own words:



GROWING TOGETHER

a) Why does Jesus connect our experience of God's forgiveness with our willingness to forgive others (vs. 12)?

b) What would it look like for UPC to experience more fully and consistently a corporate life of prayer? What would need to change for this to begin to take shape?



SERVING OTHERS

a) Notice the Godward direction of the Lord's Prayer. What does the structure of this "model prayer" have to say to our me-centered culture? How do the public prayers normally prayed at UPC compare or contrast with the Lord's Prayer?

b) When you dream about God's Kingdom coming in greater fullness to East Orlando, what do you see? How might God be calling you into better partnership with him?

c) You probably know someone (maybe you!) who needs deliverance from a pattern of sin. Spend some time praying that God will deliver him or her from the evil one.