

# Pray Like Jesus: "The Lord's Prayer"

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## FOR FURTHER STUDY

The Lord's Prayer is found in only two places in Scripture:

- Matthew 6:5-14
- Luke 11:1-4

The first mention of the prayer that is found in Matthew was given during the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is found in Matthew 5-7. The "multitudes" heard Him give this prayer. The second time the prayer is found in Scripture was two or three months later, but this time it was given privately at the request of one of His disciples who had asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. This happened after they had watched and heard Him pray during the last several months.

There are only 65 words and 254 letters in the prayer.

## A MOST AMAZING THING

One of the most amazing things about this prayer is the preface Jesus gave to it. According to Matthew 6:5, Jesus first told them how they should NOT pray. Notice what He said:

1. If you want to know how to pray, don't ask religious people. They love to perform. They love to stand in front of audiences. In Matthew 6:6-8, Jesus says, "don't be like them".
2. Religious people emphasize religious terminology.
3. Religious people find acceptance in praying long prayers.
4. Religious people love to repeat certain words and phrases.
5. Religious people believe they are telling God something that He doesn't know.

We must remember that prayer has nothing to do with informing God. Prayer does not make God do something that He doesn't want to do. He knows what we have need of before we even ask.

We must also remember there is a huge difference between religious praying and Christian praying. The main reason we don't pray with other religions or pray like other religions is because we have a different God. False religions have false gods. The Apostle Paul said that false gods are demonic. This prayer begins by clarifying who our God really is - "Our Father".

"Our Father" - This simple phrase reminds us that God is not just interested in me, but in everyone. "Our Father!" - The name "Father" is actually "abba" which means "daddy". This means that God is a personal, kind, loving daddy. He is not just a force. He has a name. He is not far away, but close. He is not angry, He is loving. He is not unconcerned; He is involved in every aspect of our lives on a daily basis.

## **BIG PROBLEM WITH THE ILLUSTRATION**

God is telling us that if we truly want to understand our relationship with God, then we should find a great dad raising his children, who desires a relationship with them and imitate him. This is a great illustration because it moves prayer out of the realm of religion into the realm of family.

- Children love to be with their dad.
- Dads don't mind being inconvenienced.

God is not like a boss carrying a clipboard writing down all of your faults waiting to fire you. First and foremost, God is a dad to us.

### **Question?**

If you were to tell your children that God is a dad just like you, what would their impression of God be? Would God be someone who listens, talks, loves, and wants to be with you or someone who never listens, talks, or shows any concern and who never desires to be with us? One of the very worst things we can do as a father is to dishonor God by not representing God to our children as a kind, loving, caring, gracious heavenly Father. If we truly understand this father-child-like relationship, prayer will become one of our greatest priorities. On the other hand, many people do not have fond memories of their fathers. If your father was always angry, abusive, or abandoned your family when you were a child; rather than comparing God to your father, simply compare your father to God to better understand what your father should have been like. Ask God to forgive him and to help you maintain a proper view of God.

## **SIX PRAYERS WITHIN ONE PRAYER**

By studying "The Lord's Prayer" closely, you will immediately notice that it really contains six different short prayers within a longer prayer. They are as follows:

**PRAYER ONE:** Our Father (daddy) is King and is worthy of adoration. "Our Father, who art in heaven". His sovereign authority reaches to all nations, all kingdoms, all races, and all cultures. There is nothing and no one who is not under His authority. He is in charge!

**PRAYER TWO:** Our Father (daddy) is worthy of our worship. "Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth, as it is in heaven". To hallow God's name is to respect Him and to treat Him as holy. Notice the three "thy's".

- "Thy name"
- "Thy kingdom"
- "Thy will"

Jesus makes certain that we understand there are only two kingdoms - light and darkness, truth and error, sin and holiness. Our Dad's kingdom will crush all other kingdoms, all other names, and all other wills. Prayer is about His name, His kingdom, and His will on earth. When was the last time you prayed, "Thy will be done" and you actually meant it? Even in the face of cancer, loss of a job, death, tough times, and more. Remember! His will for our lives is perfect even when we don't understand it, He is working out all things for our good (Roman 8:28). Jesus prayed exactly like this. If he had not prayed "thy will be done", He would not have gone to the cross.

**PRAYER THREE:** Our Father (daddy) will provide for us. "Give us this day our daily bread". Many Christians believe that all prayers are spiritual in nature. That simply is not true. God delights to meet our practical, everyday physical needs. If you have enough for your daily needs, remember that the prayer says "OUR" daily bread", not "MY" daily bread. If you have enough, pray for those who don't have enough or give to those who don't have enough.

**PRAYER FOUR:** Our Father (daddy) loves to pardon sin. "Forgive us our debts". There are two kinds of sin. There are the sins of "omission" (not doing what we are supposed to do), and the sins of "co-mission" (doing what you are not suppose to do). Here, Jesus compares sin to debt. All of us understand the example of debt. All of us have physical debt. All of us are aware of it. If we were to forget our debt, we get something in the mail each month reminding us of our debt. Why is it that we think about our physical debt but we give little or no thought to spiritual debt? God says that sin is like debt. What if God sent you a monthly notice of your spiritual debt? Coming to Christ means that our spiritual "debt" has been paid in full by Jesus Christ Himself and we don't have to pay Him back.

**PRAYER FIVE:** Our Father (daddy) encourages us to forgive others. "As we forgive our debtors" - this literally means, "To let it go". When we forgive someone who has sinned against us, it doesn't mean that we are denying, accepting, excusing, diminishing, or overlooking their sin. It simply means that we are willingly choosing to forgive them and only want God's very best for them. We are giving up our desire to get even with them. Remember! Forgiveness does not mean that everyone will be reconciled. Forgiveness only takes one person; reconciliation takes two people.

Why should we forgive people?

1. Because God commands us to forgive them.
2. Because God has forgiven us.
3. Because forgiveness keeps us from becoming bitter.

**PRAYER SIX:** Our Father (daddy) protects us. "And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil". The world is filled with temptation, sin, and evil. It is our responsibility to pray "before" temptation comes and to pray "as" you are facing temptation. Our Father (daddy) never tempts us to sin (James 1:13, 14). We should pray, "Lord, help me not to give into temptation".

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever; Amen!"