

**THE LORDS' PRAYER**  
***WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PRAY "OUR FATHER"?*** (2)  
**MATTHEW 6:9-13**

**Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV)**

**6<sup>9</sup> After this manner therefore pray ye: 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.**  
**11 Give us this day our daily bread.**  
**12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**  
**13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

**Matthew 6:9-13 (TLB)**

**6<sup>9</sup> "Pray along these lines: 'Our Father in heaven, we honor your holy name.**  
**10 We ask that your kingdom will come now. May your will be done here on earth, just as it is in heaven.**  
**11 Give us our food again today, as usual,**  
**12 and forgive us our sins, just as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us.**  
**13 Don't bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One. Amen.'**

Better than 2000 years ago, Jesus gave to all that would follow Him a pattern for prayer. While we call this the Lord's prayer, in truth, this is more a disciples prayer. It is a pattern for all that come after Jesus in a relationship through His shed blood. When you review this prayer... "Our Father"...presents the father/child relationship; "Thy kingdom come"...presents the sovereign God/and the subject man, "Thy will be done" presents the Master/servant; "Give us this day our daily bread"...presents the benefactor/beneficiary; "forgive us our debts"...presents the Savior/sinner relationship; "do not lead us into temptation presents the Guide/pilgrim relationship.

This prayer is the teaching of Jesus on prayer...meaning that this is the pattern, the guide, into how prayer is done right. There is nothing any more exciting than a prayer life that is real and alive. Jesus knew that before we came into this world that we were going to be combated by Satan in the area of prayer. There is no area that Satan launches any greater attack than against the life of a believer when it comes to prayer. Therefore when Jesus gathered his disciples together with him, there was one many things that Jesus wanted to teach them, but one of the primary things was how to pray. How is it then that we are to pray? We are first to prayer "Our Father, who art in heaven".

- **WHEN WE PRAY "OUR FATHER", WE ARE PRAYING TO ONE WHO HAS PERSONALLY OBLIGATED HIMSELF TO US.**
- **WHEN WE PRAY "OUR FATHER", WE ARE PRAYING TO ONE WHOM WE HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH.**

**1. WHEN WE PRAY "OUR FATHER", WE ARE PRAYING TO ONE WHO ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS ACCORDING TO HIS HOLY STANDARD.** Often times we wonder why so many prayers that we offer to God tend to go unanswered. But the truth of Scripture declares that God hears and answers our prayers in accordance with His holy standard. God is a God who is totally unselfish, generous, giving, kind and compassionate. Therefore, He will never answer "yes" to any prayer that stems from a selfish spirit, stingy spirit or unkind spirit. Regardless of how many times we pray a prayer, God will never answer "yes" to a prayer that violates His holy standard and nature. God is not out to give us everything we pray for. He is out to make us individuals that reflect His character and His holiness. While God loves to hear our prayers, He knows the motivation behind each and every prayer that we pray. He knows whether our motivations are selfish or unselfish. When a saint of God refuses to reflect the nature and character of God, then there will be few if any answers to prayers. One of the reasons that we become so discouraged in prayer is that we forget that God only answers those prayers that are in keeping with His holy standard.

**2. WHEN WE PRAY "OUR FATHER", WE ARE PRAYING TO SOMEONE WHO IS HEARING EVERYTHING WE SAY.** At the other end of our prayers is the listening ear of Almighty God. Therefore God desires us to be specific and to the point in our prayers. He is not impressed by how loud, how long or prayers are if they lack specific requests. God delights in hearing us praise Him, exalt His name, and He also delights in us being specific and to the point. Just as we like the person to whom we are talking with to be specific and to the point, so does God desire the same thing of us.

It grieves the heart of God when we have nothing new to say to Him. One of the greatest joys that is shared

between friends is to say what is on your heart without having to pre-think through what is to be said. God loves us to share with Him what is on our heart without pre-thinking what we are going to say. **The true benchmark of friendship is genuine openness.** When our conversation with God is exactly the same each and every day, then a true genuine friendship has not been developed. While God is listening to everything we say, He is never listening to us in order to jump on to us. He yearns for a deep love relationship with us. He has given us life in order that we can come to know Him, love Him and serve Him. When we come to understand that God is listening in love at the other end of our prayers, then we will speak plainly, precisely, personally, and openly. God is not interested in the format of our prayers. He is interested in a deep abiding relationship.

**3. WHEN WE PRAY “OUR FATHER”, WE ARE PRAYING TO ONE WHO WANTS TO SPEAK TO US.** When Jesus gave this model prayer to His disciples, He didn’t tell them to pray, “Our God which art in heaven”, but, “Our Father which art in heaven”, because Jesus wanted them to know that the God of the Bible wanted to speak to them personally and specifically. It is the nature of any good dad to develop a communication relationship with his children. God wants nothing less in our lives. We ought not to think it odd that the God of the Bible wants to speak to us, regularly. We do not have to live up to a certain standard for our heavenly Father to speak to us. God delights in speaking to us.

Can you imagine God creating us, giving us life, saving us by His wonderful grace and then refusing to speak to us? The sad reality is that many believers believe just that. Many saints of God think it quite unusual to say that God wants to speak to them. Yet, all throughout the Bible God’s desire is to have a communication relationship with mankind. When God came to Moses, God told Moses to, “Take off his shoes, because he was standing on holy ground. In that one statement is found the proof that the God of the universe wants to speak if we will but listen. When Paul was on the Damascus road, Jesus stopped him and spoke to him saying, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me.” God spoke to Saul even before his salvation experience. The reason that so many saints of God never come to enjoy the Christian life, and make so many bad decisions is found in the fact that they have never learned to listen to the voice of God as He speaks.

God loves us and respects our will to the point that He will not make us hear. When we miss out on hearing the God of the Bible, we miss out on the adventures that He has in store for our lives and we miss out on enjoying life at its complete best. When we learn to listen to the voice of God, we will live a life that is continually blessed by good decisions. Why? Because God will never lead any of his children in the process of making one bad decision in life!

**4. WHEN WE PRAY “OUR FATHER” IT IS JESUS DESIRE THAT WE DEVELOP INTIMACY WITH THE FATHER.** Just as Jesus lives in intimate fellowship with the Father, it is His desire that we live in the same intimacy and closeness with the Father, who has an infinite care over our lives.

*First*, “father” is closer than an uncle, or a friend. As a matter of fact, God presents Himself as One who is a Father to the fatherless. (Ps.68:5) The psalmist uses dramatic language to picture the love and grandeur of God.

*Second*, a father is forgiving and tender hearted, if he is a true father. So it is with our Father in heaven. Just as a father has compassion on his children, so does our Heavenly Father have pity on us, and compassion on us, as we fear Him. (See Ps. 103:13) He is a gracious Father, and that graciousness is shown to us and will be shown to us for all eternity.

*Third*, another characteristic of a father is that he guides his children and gives them wisdom, direction and counsel in all the avenues of life. So it is with our Heavenly Father. All throughout Scripture, evidence is clear of God’s guiding, governing hand. God called himself a “Father” to Israel. (Jer.31:9) The point is this, we can never be unguided, and unguarded by our Heavenly Father, that violates His nature and His character.

*Fourth*, having God as “Father” dispels fears. Only Christian believers have a God that is a “God of love”. Many religions claim a god of some type, but only Christianity has a God that dispels fear, because of His love for us.

*Fifth*, having God as “Father” encourages hope in life. In the midst of a world that is continually growing hostile, and seemingly falling apart, our God is the Father that is committed to us even in the midst of turbulent times. Just as God cared for His children during the turbulent times during Egyptian bondage, so does our Father take care of us...that is His assumed responsibility based on our relationship through Jesus Christ.

*Sixth*, having God as “our Father” defeats selfishness. Notice that we are to pray “our” not “my”. What does this mean...namely that God is the Father of all His children. There are no favorites nor least favorites.

*Seventh*, having God as “our Father in heaven” is a reminder that all the resources in heaven are available to us when we trust God as our supplier. Whatever there is not on earth...there is in heaven, God has no problem bringing them to earth.

*Eighth*, having God as “our Father” demands obedience. Since Jesus did nothing but the will of God in obedience, He validated the only type of life that is pleasing, honoring, to God. Obedience to God is the supreme marks of our right relationship to Him.