

Jan 16, 2022 - PASTOR SAM HORN

PRAYING THAT PLEASES GOD
An Overview of the Pattern Prayer

Text: Matthew 6:9-13

"In this manner, therefore, pray: 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 forgive our debtors. ¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen¹. (NKJ)

Introduction:

If I had the boldness to be totally transparent with each of you this morning – I suppose that if I had to pick the area of my spiritual life that I wish could be most conformed to Christ, transformed by His Word, and energized by His Spirit – it would be my prayer life.

Understanding Prayer:

- It is a conversation between me and God
- It is a necessary conversation
- It is a conversation about His purposes and designs for my life
- It is a conversation that is designed to change me so that I look more like Jesus Christ after praying than I did before praying.

Here is the point – Prayer is not just about (or even primarily about) getting things from God that I need, want, or think I need.

- I need to pray – and I do pray
- I know I need to pray better – and I want to pray better
- I know the technicalities of how to pray
- I am frustrated about my anemic prayer life and its meager results
- I am tired of my prayer life being anemic, formulaic, and formal.
- I am where the disciples were when they heard Jesus pray to His Father in Luke 11 – I am desperate to connect with God that intimately and powerfully!

So – how do I do so? Jesus’ answer is in our text – a pattern prayer!
Jesus responded by teaching them a simple but profound prayer that would serve as a pattern for praying that pleases God and accomplishes His purposes for His glory and our good.

I. The Pattern Which Ought to Shape Our Praying (6:9)

In this manner, therefore, pray:

A. The Origin of this Pattern

- This question and the Lord’s answer did not rise out of a context of prayerlessness – in fact much praying was happening.
- Hypocrites were praying – in the wrong place, for the wrong reason, and with the wrong results.
- Pagans were praying – the wrong sort of prayers (empty repetition), with wrong expectations (that many words would impress Him), based on flawed premises about God.
- So – a great deal of praying was happening.
- The disciples themselves were praying.
- And then they heard Jesus! And they immediately knew that when He prayed – it was different then when they prayed.
They knew instinctively that God heard this man when He prayed.
- ***This is the origin and context of this prayer.***

B. The Purpose for this Pattern

- Jesus gave them instruction regarding prayer – pray this way.
- The instruction consisted of a pattern.
- This was not intended to become a mechanical prayer
- This was not intended to become a mindless prayer
- This was not the only way people prayed in the NT
- BUT – it is the defining pattern that ought to shape all of our prayers when we do pray.
- It functions as sort of a series of categories or headings for the different things we ought to regularly be conversing with God about in our prayers.
- What does the structure of the prayer suggest to you?

1. It is in fact a pattern – pray this way.
2. It deals with the object of our prayers – whom we direct our prayer toward.
3. It deals with the subject of our praying – what we pray for.
4. It consists of six petitions that are divided into two categories – things we ask God to do for His Glory and things we ask God to do for our good.
5. It ends with a statement of affirmation that empowers us to pray with confidence and persistence – We can ask in confidence because we know God to be like this!

II. **The Person to Whom We Ought to Pray (6:9)**

Our Father in heaven,

So – when the pagan people pray, they pray to their deities.
When Christian's pray – to whom does Jesus tell them to direct their prayers?

A. In Terms of His Identity – God

B. In Terms of His Exclusivity

- Not to pagan idols/deities
- Not to other humans – however holy they might be
- Not to members of Jesus' earthly family
- Not to angelic beings
- Not even primarily to Jesus or even the Holy Spirit
- We are to pray to the 1st Member of the Trinity – God the Father.

C. In Terms of His Intimacy

- He is “***our***” Father – same intimate relationship that Jesus shares with Him.
- He is our “***Father***” – different than the idea than the Universal Fatherhood of God – this is the idea that there is an intentional, intimate relationship sourced in God by which He imparted to us His very own divine nature – we share His righteousness and holiness!
- Father = Abba – ***Dearest Father!***

D. In Terms of His Authority – in Heaven! (authority and ability)
III. The Priorities Which Must Govern Our Praying (6:9-10)

Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.

- Praying that pleases God focuses on His Purposes and Concerns rather than our own.
- Rather than trying to get God to do our will or to fulfill our desires – the sort of praying that is shaped by this pattern prayer displays and articulates that our hearts and minds are centered on and consumed with His Purposes and Concerns.
- So what are the priorities that should consume our praying?

*“Matthew 6:9-10 convincingly shows that one should not pray primarily in order to receive goods and services from God but to render service to God. **Prayer is not first and foremost an exercise to vindicate the disciple’s causes, meet the disciple’s needs, fulfill the disciple’s desire, or solve the disciple’s problems. Rather, one’s priority must be the promotion of God’s reputation, the advancement of God’s rule, and the performance of God’s will.** These three petitions are essentially one expression of burning desire to see the Father honored on earth as He is already honored in heaven.”*
(Turner)

- A. Pray for the Exaltation of His Person – “Hallowed be Your name”**
- Hallowed – means to set apart; to rightly esteem.
 - Name – God’s Person (Who He is) and Character (What He is like)
 - Ezekiel 36:16-23 -- story of a nation that knew God intimately and had been given the glorious responsibility of bringing that knowledge to the rest of the nations – but because of their willful disobedience and their careless disregard of God and His Word, they had dishonored God’s name – the nations had come to very wrong perceptions of God.
 - God acted decisively to “sanctify His name”
- B. Pray for the Establishment of His Authority – Thy kingdom come**
- Psalm 2 – God’s plan for the world (Eph 1:9-10)

- Matthew 4:23 – this prayer comes in the middle of a sermon that was set in the context of Jesus’ going everywhere preaching the gospel (good news) of the Kingdom – His Messianic Kingdom!
- Pray for that Kingdom to Come!
- While you wait for its coming – seek God’s righteous purposes in this kingdom!

C. *Pray for the Execution of His Purposes & Plans – Your will be done*

- His eternal decisions about life -- Decrees
- His revealed direction for life – Word
- His ethical desire for His people – That we live soberly, righteously, and godly lives in this present age (Titus 2:11)

And all three are bound up in the recognition that these are all being done perfectly in Heaven and by an all-consuming desire to see them done on earth as they are already being done in heaven!

IV. The Petitions that Prompt Us to Pray (6:11-13)

Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² *And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.*
¹³ *And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one*

A. *Daily Provision – Bread for each Day (11)*

- People in Jesus day lived day by day – in many cases they went out and worked or labored to get food for the immediate needs of that day or the next.
- This is the image – daily means that we recognize that we are constantly needing God to give us what we need day by day!
- Not saying that we should not plan or store up – Jesus is saying that we will never be in a place where we have no need to talk to God or to depend on His provision for an extended period of time because we have our bases “covered.”

B. *Daily Pardon – Forgiveness for our Faults (12)*

- Debt – our relationship to the Father is grounded in grace but it is lived out in responsibility.

- Often we fail to live up to our responsibilities – and we must treasure the relationship enough to not ignore those failures – and that means coming to make things right with God daily!

C. Daily Protection – From Testing and Temptation (13)

1. Lead us not into temptation (testing)
 - Not saying that God in some way tempts men to sin.
 - However, God at time allows His children to be tested – by trials and pressures and by Satan himself.
 - Jesus was “led of the Spirit” into the wilderness to be tested for 40 days – and that testing involved 3 intense temptations by Satan in an effort to get Jesus to sin!
 - Later, when faced with the excruciating trial and affliction of the cross, Jesus appealed to the Father to not be “led” into that trial if the Father would so will.
 - It is not wrong to pray and ask God to keep us out of temptation or to keep trials and pressures away from us – that prayer is not in conflict with what the rest of Scripture tells us regarding our response to those trials – joyful endurance.
2. Deliver us from evil / evil one (Satan)

But what will fuel such praying? What will enable us to pray fervently when our hearts grow cold? What will help us to pray persistently when Heaven is silent? What will help us persevere in prayer?

V. The Perspective Which Enables Such Praying

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

- This familiar doxology is not in Luke’s account and there is some question as to whether it was in Matthew’s account or whether it was added later.
- What isn’t questioned is the important theological truth expressed by its content that is affirmed throughout the inspired Biblical record and attested to in the earliest written manuals of the early church – didache!

- The theological truths it expresses are not only biblical – they are the fuel of fervent praying that pleases God!

A. *We Pray Submissively in light of Your Authority*

B. *We Pray Confidently and Expectantly in light of Your Ability*

C. *We Pray Joyfully and Adoringly in light of Your Attributes*

Conclusion:

Pray in this way! So – how do our prayers shape up when measured against this pattern?

What needs to change in our hearts and in our thinking?

I would suggest that this prayer teaches us:

1. That prayer is not primarily a way to bend God to our will and to convince Him to do our will. Instead – prayer is a conversation with God that convinces us to do His will!
2. Prayer shaped by this pattern forces us to confront our misplaced priorities in life. Whose kingdom are we advancing? Whose will do we want to see ultimately accomplished? God’s or our own?
3. Why do we want daily provision? What do we intend to do with the provision/resources God gives us? Do we intend to use them in order to advance our own family? Do we intend to use them primarily for the preservation, provision, or pleasure of our own family – or do we intend to use them for the goals of His family? This prayer sets us up for what Jesus is going to say later in the chapter – *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all of these things will be added to you!”*
4. Do we really understand and appreciate God’s forgiveness? Do we truly seek forgiveness in order that we might forgive others with the same sort of forgiveness we have been so fortunate to receive?
5. Have we really understood and rightly estimated the spiritual warfare in which we are currently engaged? Do we understand who our enemy is and

the vast power and resources that are His? If we did, we would pray more fervently for God's protection and deliverance from evil!