

Sermon Title: Pray Like This (Part 2)

Speaker: Jim Harris

Scripture Text: Matt. 6:11-15 (Sermon on the Mount #22)

Date: 1-24-21

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As we come around the Word of God today, I invite you back to Matthew Chapter 6. We're in the middle of the three chapters that are known as the Sermon on the Mount. We're in that portion that is most frequently referred to as "The Lord's Prayer." It's actually a sample prayer that the Lord gave to the disciples, and so we've called it "Pray Like This."

Last time, as we began this, we observed that after the introduction—or, the target—to the prayer: "Our Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 6:9), and before the conclusion to the prayer, there are six petitions; and so far, we have worked our way through three of them. This is how far we got: "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven'—that's the target of the prayer; that's who we pray to. The First Petition is: "Hallowed be Your name." The Second Petition is: "Your kingdom come." And then, the Third Petition is: "Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:9-10; NASB-1995, and throughout, unless otherwise noted).

We just started into the prayer—we got that far through—and I pointed out to you that we learn some things about prayer in general from this sample:

First, we learn that prayer is submission to God. He is in control; we are in need. We seek His glory; we seek to have our glory suppressed, if you will (Ps. 115:1). How absurd would it be to pray to someone who isn't in control? That's like asking the plumber if he can fix your computer—he's not in charge of that! God is in charge of *everything* (Ps. 103:19; Dan. 4:35).

We also learned that prayer is an incredible privilege. Despite the transcendence of God and His majesty and His infinite nature (Ps. 147:5; Jer. 23:24), we can come and talk to Him *as a Father* (Rom. 8:15)! We—fallen, sin-cursed, limited, yet redeemed in Christ—we can actually speak to Almighty God, Creator of Heaven and Earth! What a privilege that is! (1 Jn. 3:1; cf. Jn. 1:12-13)

This prayer also reminds us that our citizenship is not of this world (Phil. 3:20); our allegiance is to a kingdom yet to come (Heb. 13:14; cf. Ps. 37:10); our allegiance is to the King who is opposed by "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4; cf. Lk. 4:6); so we live in two worlds at once, if you will (Jn. 17:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:9-11; 2 Cor. 6:14-18).

And so we also learn that prayer allows us to align our wills with God's will. We declare our dependency upon Him. We express that we *want* His "will" to "be done on earth"—where we tend to mess it up, quite frankly—"as it is in heaven." And so we say prayer is a means that God uses to give us what He wants.

I've shown you an outline of the whole prayer. Now, we're going to move to the Fourth Petition. The target, as always, is: "Our Father who is in heaven," and the Fourth Petition is in Verse 11—"Give us this day our daily bread."

Now, believe it or not, people find a way to quibble over exactly what that means. It could be rendered: "Give us today the bread"—and "bread" is a euphemism for food, or

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sustenance—"Give us today the food we need for this current day." So, every day you're to receive it from God. Well, press that too far, and if you have anything in the pantry, then you're presuming on God; He's supposed to give it to you every single day, so get up in the morning, go out and kill something, and bring it home and cook it. Or it might just be: "Give us the bread we need for our daily existence." I think that's obviously what it means. "Whatever is necessary for sustaining the physical life that You have entrusted to us, God, we are saying: we trust You to provide that for us."

It reflects trust in God for what we *need*; He does not promise us luxuries—we are so blessed with abundance beyond what we need; but understand that here, He's just saying "bread" as the most generic way to describe physical nourishment, like we say: "We're breaking bread together"—"We're having a meal together; we're eating together."

So this reflects the recognition of the silliness of worrying about what you need. God says, "Call on Me; I will give it to you." By the way—here's a preview of a little bit later in this chapter; you're going to see a threefold repetition of this same theme, but in Matthew 6:31-32, Jesus says: "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things." And remember, in the two verses right before this sample prayer: "Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him" (vs. 8). So, trust Him.

From this very simple idea—"Give us this day our daily bread"—several good ideas are suggested here: There is the principle of *moderation*. We're not asking God for an abundance; we're asking God for what we "need" (Prov. 25:16; cf. Ecc. 10:17). There are famous words of a little-know Old Testament saint named Agur; he wrote a little bit in the Proverbs. In Proverbs Chapter 30, Verses 7 through 9—this is wonderful; remember, in the context of "Give us this day our daily bread," think like this: "Two things I asked of You; do not refuse me before I die: Keep deception and lies far from me"—in other words, keep me in the truth—"give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is my portion, that I not be full and deny You and say, 'Who is the Lord?' or that I not be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God." So, Lord, I'm trusting You to give me what I need (1 Tim. 6:8). I don't need what somebody else needs. I don't need extra. But I trust You to give me my "daily bread."

That is also an expression of total dependence. That's the attitude of the heart of any faithful person, who understands that all that we have is by God's grace and His goodness (1 Cor. 4:7). Giving thanks at a meal is one of the simplest everyday ways to express the right attitude toward God. You know, Lord, I would *starve* without you! We need to understand that.

Humility is also suggested here. That's the proper way to come to God. He knows that you make a living "by the sweat of your brow" (Gen. 3:19, HCSB); He knows that you paid for the groceries that have found their way to the table—and yet, you *still* accept what is on the table as a gift from God, because it's all *infinitely more* than we deserve, in our sinfulness!

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And, of course, there is the recognition of the willingness to "work" (1 Thess. 4:11; cf. Eph. 4:28); that is how God provides in *almost* every situation; that's His ordained way to take care of you. It's a presupposition behind this request. In Second Thessalonians Chapter 3, Verse 10, Paul says: "For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat" (cf. Prov. 16:26). Now, that's not a contradiction to "Give us this day our daily bread"—that's a recognition of *how* God typically supplies (cf. Ps. 104:28a); so: "Give us this day our daily bread."

What do we have so far in the sample prayer? "Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread"—and then, Petition #5 to our Father who is in heaven: "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. 6:12).

It's obvious that this request is asking God to deal with us according to the riches of His grace. This is *not* a prayer for justice—because *justice* would have you snuffed out and in "the lake of fire" immediately (Rev. 20:10, 12-14; cf. Ezek. 18:4). This is recognizing that we stand in God's grace; we need His mercy. Remember: Jesus preached this whole sermon with the Pharisees and the scribes present, and He *specifically* called them out; they're the ones whom He describes as "people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous" (Lk. 18:9); and Jesus says you need something that completely, *profoundly* surpasses that (Matt. 5:20; cf. Ps. 5:4; Hab. 1:13a; Rom. 3:23; Jas. 2:10).

You can't *be* righteous. As the Apostle Paul put it: "By the works of the Law no flesh will be justified" (Rom. 3:20)—no one was *ever* justified by obeying laws (Gal. 2:21; 3:21). "The righteous man shall live by faith" (Gal. 3:11). Who said that? Habakkuk (2:4). Where did he get that idea? Abraham—even before the Law (Rom. 4:3, 9-11). No flesh is justified by the things that you *do*. Even this Sermon [on the Mount], which was preached before Jesus went to the Cross—before we had the *full* revelation of everything to do with the Gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ—it is *all* recognizing that we need God's grace to *even be able to stand* before Him (Gal. 3:24; Phil. 3:9).

The word "debts" here is a euphemism for "sins." I don't think that you can get your mortgage bill in the mail, and write on the top of the paper: "I'm a Christian, so forgive me my debts," and that takes care of it. It's not in *that* sense. It's talking about a *moral* debt (see Col. 2:14; cf. Ps. 28:4; Prov. 13:13; 2 Thess. 1:9). In a few minutes, in Verse 14, Jesus is going to use the word "trespasses," which is one of the many synonyms in the New Testament for "sin"—and as a matter of fact, in the version of this prayer that is recorded in Luke 11:2-4, Verse 4 says: "Forgive us our *sins*, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is *indebted* to us."

Two questions tend to pop up at this point. One is: Why should we pray for forgiveness, since we are forgiven "in Christ" (Rom. 8:1) and we are set free from sin? (vs. 2) Well, the answer is pretty simple: There is the balance, or the simultaneous truth, of your *position* in Christ—forgiven "once for all" (Heb. 10:10, 14)—and your *practice*, whereby you still "stumble" (Jas. 3:2).

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While we await the finality of our redemption—when we are delivered "from the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24; cf. 8:23; Gal. 5:17)—we still sin; we still do it *daily*; and so, we stand in need of daily forgiveness as much as we need "daily bread."

Remember when Jesus was going around washing the feet of the disciples, in John Chapter 13? He comes to Peter, and Peter says, "Never shall You wash my feet!" (vs. 8); and Jesus explains that you need the dust washed off, even if you have bathed (vs. 10), and, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (vs. 8). And of course, in typical Peter-fashion, he says, "Okay—give me a bath! Just dump it on me!" Well, there's the balance: You are forgiven, but you still stumble (1 Jn. 1:8-9; 2:1).

There is an aberrant teaching in some Christian circles these days that *seriously* confuses this issue. Back when my schedule used to be pretty regular, there was a guy who came on the Christian radio station, and I would hear him almost every day; he would come on and he would say some really good things about your identity with Christ, and all of that; and then, he would say that if you *ever* confess your sins, you are *denying* the finished work of Christ! He said you confess your sins *when you come to Christ*, and then you're placed in Christ; and if you ever again say, "I'm a sinner," you're denying who Christ is and what He actually accomplished for you.

Now, like all false teaching, there's a kernel of truth; there's one little bit at the bottom of the pyramid that is built on top of this: It's the emphasis that there is no basis for forgiveness, *other than* the finished work of Christ. *All forgiveness* comes to us through what Christ did—that is correct. But what those who teach the different view *fail to teach* is that even though Christ died "once for all" for your sins (Heb. 7:27; 9:12)—which, by the way, were *all future* when He died for you—there are *temporal* aspects of forgiveness (Jn. 5:14; Rom. 8:13; 1 Cor. 11:30; Jas. 5:15); there are *relational* aspects of forgiveness (Ps. 66:18; Prov. 3:32b; Gal. 6:8); there's that principle that even though you have "bathed," if you've walked on dusty roads in sandals, you need to wash your feet when you come into the house. It is not denying the *eternal* aspects of forgiveness to say we need that daily cleansing.

When I confess that I have sinned, and I thank God for the forgiveness that is mine in Christ, I'm not saying, "Well, I lost my salvation when I committed that sin"—not saying that *at all* (cf. Rom. 8:33-34; cf. Jn. 5:24). I'm being honest with God about my sin; I'm telling Him that I *agree* with Him—that's what "confess" means: "to say the same thing" (see Ps. 32:5; 51:4; cf. Lk. 7:29). I'm agreeing with Him that I *hate* my sin (Rom. 7:15), but I love my Savior (Rom. 7:24-25), so I'm bringing my sin to the Savior; and I thank Him that He died to take care of what I needed (1 Jn. 3:5).

I'm sure you've heard of the three "tenses" of salvation:

The *past* tense is that in the past, we have been delivered from the *penalty* of sin; Jesus took upon Himself the "wrath of God" for us (Rom. 5:9); so "once for all" (1 Pet. 3:18), by the "blood" of Christ, we are forgiven (Eph. 1:7).

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In the *present* tense: Because we stand in Christ, we have been delivered from the *power* of sin (Rom. 6:14). We're no longer enslaved to sin (Rom. 6:17-18), but we're still quite capable of it (Jas. 3:2); while we still have "the flesh" (Matt. 26:41), while we're still in "the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24), we are even *prone* to sin (Rom. 7:19; 1 Pet. 2:11). And so, when we stumble, we confess.

In the *future*, there will be the final, total deliverance from sin—not only from the *penalty* of sin, and not only from the *power* of sin, but we'll actually be delivered from its *presence* (Heb. 12:23; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:27).

But in the meantime, *now* we have our feet in two worlds at once. We pray: "Your kingdom come! Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven!" We are *part* of that kingdom (Acts 26:18; 1 Thess. 2:12); we've been "rescued...from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son" (Col. 1:13)—but we're *living* on enemy territory (1 Jn. 5:19). "The god of this world" is Satan (2 Cor. 4:4)—he *hates* Jesus (Is. 14:14); he *hates* everything Jesus did (1 Jn. 3:8b); he hates everybody who *belongs* to Jesus (1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:9-10). And we have to live with these feet in two worlds at once, so to confess your sin is simply to be honest with God about your frailty and your propensity to it; and every day as you confess, you bask in the grace and the forgiveness in which you stand!

One of the classic passages on this is First John, Chapter 1. If we deny our sin, we are liars, "and the truth is not in us" (vs. 8); but look at First John 1:9—"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (cf. Prov. 28:13). That is one of the many definitions of a Christian. A person who denies they have a sin problem—they don't belong to Him.

This verse stands in between verses before and after it that say the opposite. It's in the present tense: "If we are regularly confessing our sins..." What's the difference between a Christian and a Non-Christian? Well, *everything*—but when it comes to sin, the Non-Christian dismisses it or diminishes it (Ps. 36:1-4; Prov. 14:9); the Christian says, "No—I understand I am a sinner, and I'm constantly confessing my sins."

And there's a really cool grammatical thing here: "If we confess"—that's present tense: If we are in the habit of continually, repeatedly, daily confessing our sins, "He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins"—and something you can't put in the English without adding half a sentence to it: the "forgive" is an aorist tense, meaning "at a point in time." No matter *when* I confess, no matter what the sin is, the forgiveness *always* goes back to the one and only basis for forgiveness: the finished work of Christ. And so, I get cleansed daily, though I stand "complete...in Him" (Col. 2:10).

So, prayer for forgiveness is our recognition that there is no other method by which our debt to God can ever be wiped out, unless He wipes it out (Col. 2:14). It's a plea for grace, and it's answered by the One who is "full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14); and He is our only hope (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5).

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The other question that comes up at this point: "Forgive us our debts, *as we also have forgiven our debtors.*" The other question is: It *sounds like* Jesus is saying we can't be forgiven *unless* we forgive. How can that be? I would suggest to you that it's only in our man-made, hair-splitting wrangling over theology that that's a problem; because in the Bible, being forgiven and forgiving others are *not* two separate issues. The forgiveness of God is such an all-encompassing, radical, transforming, life-changing thing that it is not considered apart from the way that it causes a person who is forgiven to forgive others in turn (Acts 7:60).

Now, remember: Jesus preached this whole sermon *before* He went to the Cross. This is one of His ways of showing what that "surpassing righteousness" is like. The scribes and the Pharisees *loved* to pass judgment (Lk. 18:9); they *loved* to condemn (Jn. 7:49). And Jesus said, "If you really are forgiven, you wouldn't act like that. You *can't* be like that, if you are forgiven." He was calling people to a quality of life that could be possible *only* by turning to God and, ultimately, looking forward to what He was going to do on the Cross.

And after the Cross, after the Resurrection, as the Gospel spreads through the world: In Ephesians Chapter 4, Verse 32, Paul wrote this: "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you"—*exactly* what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount! "Forgive us our debts *as we also have forgiven our debtors.*"

Or, Paul said it again in a parallel passage: Colossians Chapter 3, Verses 12 and 13—"So, as those who have been chosen of God"—it goes all the way back to eternity-past, when God chose you to be in Christ (Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13)—"holy and beloved"—because of what He has done for you (Heb. 10:14; cf. 1 Cor. 3:17; 1 Pet. 2:9)—"put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you."

You've heard me say it umpteen times, and I'm not done yet—I'll say it again: *Forgiven* people become *forgiving* people. And Jesus has more to say on that in just a few minutes, so stay with Him.

What do we know so far? Here's the sample prayer: "Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." What is the Sixth and final Petition here? The beginning of Verse 13—"And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Listen, He knows the world in which you live (Matt. 10:16). He knows who is "the god of this age" (2 Cor. 4:4, NKJV). He knows that the world is programmed to hate you (Jn. 15:19). So what this means is: "Lord, do not permit us—as weak as we are, by nature; as much as we are prone to sin—do not allow us to enter into situations in which the natural flow of events would expose us to temptation, but in every case—with temptation *all around us*—deliver us from the evil in the world!"

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This part of the prayer is praying for a safeguard against presuming on God, a false sense of security and self-sufficiency that you, on your own, can be righteous (Ps. 119:35-37). No, no, no—that's the Pharisees' way! You, on your own, confess: "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!" (Lk. 18:13) That's the one who is "justified" (vs. 14).

We know that we will never have arrived spiritually (Phil. 3:12-14), and that we'll never be free from the danger of sin until we are with the Lord (Heb. 12:13), so rightly we pray: "Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Martin Luther, commenting on this, said: "We cannot help being exposed to the assaults, but we pray that we may not fall and perish under them." That's how Jesus taught us to pray; and by the way—here's how He prayed for us, among other things, in John Chapter 17, Verse 15—"I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one" (cf. 1 Jn. 5:18). In other words, we need to walk by His grace—by the power of His Spirit—and resist evil (Gal. 5:16; cf. Matt. 26:41). That's not that complicated.

Alright—"Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Next comes the Conclusion: Chapter 6, the second half of Verse 13—"For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

You'll notice that the first letter of that sentence, and the last letter of that sentence, are brackets; they're not letters of the alphabet. That's because this phrase does not occur in the best New Testament manuscripts. There is a *long* tradition of it being included in English translations because of the wonderful influence of the King James Bible, but the King James translation is based upon a Greek manuscript with a number of confluents, and this is one of them.

Now, is it *true*—"Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever"? *Absolutely, it is!* There is nothing theologically wrong with that; it's just that it wasn't in the best manuscripts, so that's why many modern translations either don't include this phrase (e.g., ESV, CSB, NIV), or they put it in brackets (e.g., NASB, HCSB, AMP).

There's nothing wrong with it; it expresses the theological basis for *all* of the petitions. "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven... For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory *forever*." This is *temporary*! We yearn for the *forever*! (2 Cor. 5:2) How foolish would it be for us to pray to anyone other than the King—the One who is in charge, the One who can actually change something!

Well, there's the *whole prayer*: "Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

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But, you know what? There's a *postscript* to this prayer—a P.S., if you will. We know that Jesus connected it to the prayer, because—what's the first word of it? It's the word "for." Jesus is going to pluck out one of those petitions and elaborate on it. We know it as Verses 14 and 15—"For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." I once heard a wise man put it this way: "*Forgiven* people are *forgiving* people."

You know, there is hardly anything you can do more destructive to your own wellbeing—spiritually, emotionally, and yes, even physically—than harboring bitterness, carrying a grudge against someone, perpetuating a feud (Prov. 19:11). So this model prayer has a reminder attached to it to reinforce the teaching about forgiveness, about which we prayed according to Verse 12. This is Jesus commenting on the Fifth Petition; and if He is going to take the trouble to comment on it, that just adds all the more importance to it.

Notice, He states it positively, then negatively. You forgive, and your Father will forgive you. You don't forgive, and your Father will not forgive you (see Matt. 18:21-35). If you hold grudges, and if you don't forgive—if you're not known to be a person whose general life-pattern is practicing grace toward others, and extending forgiveness toward others—might that be a *sign* that you don't belong to the King? Might that be a sign that you're not saved? Well, *it could be* (cf. 1 Jn. 2:3-5). I can't definitively say that. But at a *minimum*, I can say this: If you *say* that you're a Christian, if you profess Christ, we accept you as part of the fellowship, based upon that profession of faith—but if you profess Christ *and* you are holding a grudge against someone, or if you are carrying around bitterness about some time that you were wronged, *this should convict you!* This should make your heart *ache!* This should make you cry out to God: "Lord, be merciful to me, the sinner!" That's what this is here for. Jesus said, "Look, I want you to understand: You know that 'surpassing righteousness'? It begins with *forgiveness*, and forgiveness is a transforming thing.

So, let this example of how to pray stimulate you. It's meant to guide you for when you talk to Almighty God. And as you commune with Him, these kinds of thoughts should play over and over in your mind. Look at it one more time: "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.' For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."

Yeah, we took two sermons on it, but we didn't go into *all* the minutiae of *all* of those things; we could take each of those elements of that prayer, and each of those petitions could easily become a sermon in and of its own. But rather than deal with deal with all the minutiae of all the details of all the implications of all the sub-points, I wanted to major on who God is, as is reflected in this sample prayer.

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Understand: Prayer is you—as a needy, adopted child of God—having the *privilege* to speak to Almighty God, Creator of Heaven and Earth! He has said *a lot* to you; He's put it all in a Book (Prov. 22:20; 2 Tim. 3:15). This is how He speaks to you; and then, He says, "You know what? Come. I'm happy to listen to you. I know what you need before you ask—but come and talk to Me" (see 1 Pet. 5:7). Praying is communing with this most awesome Creator of the Universe.

And understand: Prayer is not primarily designed for you to get what you want from God. A lot of people think of prayer as kind of the spiritual .38 Special—"I'm going to point this weapon at God and hold Him hostage until He gives me what I want!" That's not prayer.

I've already decided that I'm going to take another week; and maybe it'll be in the white spaces between Verse 15 and Verse 16 in Chapter 6 of Matthew, but I want to talk about that issue of praying *diligently, fervently, consistently*, in a *heartfelt* way, from a standpoint of *faith*, and calling on God. Do you always get what you think you want? No. Well, how do we deal with that? What is it about maybe our misunderstanding of prayer that leads us to think that way? There is a lot of great theology about prayer in the Bible, but there is a much greater mountain of *mythology* about prayer that often gets said and taught—so I'm going to massage that a little bit.

But think about knowing Him better and better as you pray. He is "our Father in heaven"—we don't *cower* before Him! (Rom. 8:15) Because He is the Father who loves us so much, He sent His Son so that the Son would die that we might live, and we could be His children (1 Jn. 3:1; 4:10; cf. Rom. 8:32).

His holiness is *consuming*. Prayer will achieve its rightful lofty position in your life when you all-the-more recognize and respect and pursue the holiness of God.

When you pray, it should always be yearning for the Kingdom to come to Earth. According to Paul, the "blessed hope" is the return of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13), the coming of His Kingdom to Earth (Rev. 11:15).

Whenever you call out to God, it should always be with the yearning to say: "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"—*even Jesus* prayed that! "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will" (Matt. 26:39).

Every time you put a morsel to your lips, it should be a reminder to come with a thankful heart, to acknowledge that God hears you when you say, "Give us this day our daily bread," and He *knows* your every need before you ask. (Matt. 15:36; Jn. 6:11; Acts 27:35; Rom. 14:6; 1 Tim. 4:3-4)

And every time you pray, you should remember that you have *no basis* to come and speak to God, apart from the fact that you stand in His grace (Rom. 5:1-2), clothed in the righteousness of His Son (Is. 61:10; 2 Cor. 5:21)—and so, it's *always* correct to say, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Sermon Title: Pray Like This (Part 2)

Speaker: Jim Harris

Scripture Text: Matt. 6:11-15 (Sermon on the Mount #22)

Date: 1-24-21

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And if you start to gag when you say that second part because there's somebody you haven't forgiven, well, there's work to do. Stand in His grace, bask in His goodness, revel in His kindness, and let it change your heart toward other people (2 Cor. 3:18; cf. Rom. 10:1; Ps. 35:12-14).

And likewise, when you pray, you should be expressing your commitment—not to be presumptuous; not to say, "Ah, thanks for Jesus; glad I got Him—I have everything else handled now!" No, it's, "Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

Do you know the last words of the Bible dovetail *perfectly* with these words from the Sermon on the Mount? Revelation 22:20-21—"He who testifies to these things"—Jesus—"says, 'Yes, I am coming quickly.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen."

Here's a closing thought. I will also make it my closing prayer. It comes from the pen of the Apostle Paul, written from his prison cell in Rome. This is how I would pray for all of us; for all of you, in whatever your circumstances are, whatever your need is, whatever your pain is, whatever your loss is, whatever your joy is, I would pray this way for you: "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen" (Eph. 3:20-21). You know, I could think of a whole lot of things; and He says, "I'm going to give you superabundantly beyond whatever you can ask, whatever you can think of."