

Knowing Our Father in Heaven (Matt 6:9)

Review: We must reorder our priorities and realign our hearts before God (v, 9-10, 25-33)

Exposition: What the address teaches us about life (First Things First)

1. “Father”—We must live with confidence in His fatherly goodness to us (v. 8, 32)

Application: We must come to God, not just in our prayers, but in our lives

2. “In heaven”—We must live conscious of his heavenly majesty, limitless power, and gracious condescension

Heidelberg Catechism: **Q. 27.** *What do you understand by the providence of God?* **A.** God’s providence is His almighty and ever present power,⁽¹⁾ whereby, as with His hand, He still upholds heaven and earth and all creatures,⁽²⁾ and so governs them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty,⁽³⁾ indeed, all things, come to us not by chance⁽⁴⁾ but by His fatherly hand.⁽⁵⁾ (1) Jer 23:23, 24; Acts 17:24-28. (2) Heb 1:3. (3) Jer 5:24; Acts 14:15-17; In 9:3; Prov 22:2. (4) Prov 16:33. (5) Mt 10:29.

Q. 28. *What does it benefit us to know that God has created all things and still upholds them by His providence?* **A.** We can be patient in adversity,⁽¹⁾ thankful in prosperity,⁽²⁾ and with a view to the future we can have a firm confidence in our faithful God and Father that no creature shall separate us from His love;⁽³⁾ for all creatures are so completely in His hand that without His will they cannot so much as move.⁽⁴⁾ (1) Job 1:21, 22; Ps 39:10; Jas 1:3. (2) Deut 8:10; 1 Thess 5:18. (3) Ps 55:22; Rom 5:3-5; 8:38, 39. (4) Job 1:12; 2:6; Prov 21:1; Acts 17:24-28.

3. “Our”—We must live our lives with and for others

“Lord teach me what I need, and teach me how to pray;

And do not let me seek thy grace, not meaning what I say” (John Burton).

Application

1. How can you reprioritize your life to know God better?

“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3). Knowing God is not something to add to life. It’s to be life itself. How can you reprioritize your life to know God better?

2. How can you reprioritize your life to pray and live with and for others?

Jesus doesn’t want us always praying, “my Father in heaven,” “give me my daily bread.” He’s put us in a family for a purpose. And the result is that we must both pray and live with and for others. This is a major reorientation of life.

Q. 189. *What doth the preface of the Lord’s prayer teach us?* **A.** The preface of the Lord’s prayer (contained in these words, Our Father which art in heaven),^(a) teacheth us, when we pray, to draw near to God with confidence of his fatherly goodness, and our interest therein;^(b) with reverence, and all other child-like dispositions,^(c) heavenly affections,^(d) and due apprehensions of his sovereign power, majesty, and gracious condescension;^(e) as also, to pray with and for others.^(f) (a) Matt. 6:9 (b) Luke 11:13; Rom. 8:15 (c) Isa. 64:9 (d) Ps. 123:1; Lam. 3:41 (e) Isa. 63:15,16; Neh. 1:4-6 (f) Acts 12:5