

# An Invitation to Pray, Part I

## Matthew 6:9-15

---

*King of Kings! (Gospel of Matthew Series)*


Prepared by: Matthew S. Black

Sunday, July 21, 2013, 10:30am at Living Hope Church of Roselle, Illinois

*To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than  
to be alive without breathing.*

MARTIN LUTHER

1. WELCOME VISITORS
2. ANNOUNCE MISSIONS COMMITTEE- SEE MARCEL, JERRY OR BENSON C.
3. ANNOUNCE VBS

 Open your Bible to **Matthew 6:9-15**. We are continuing in a series entitled: “King of kings.” This morning we are talking about “The Secret Place (The Lord’s Prayer).” We continue in our study of the Sermon on the Mount.

### **An Eternal Perspective**

To be a Christian is to commune and to spend time with God. As believers, it is so easy to get caught up in the business of life and in the here and now. Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount to “seek first God’s kingdom and His righteousness” (Mat. 6:33). It is so easy to get distracted and entangled in the things of this world. If you’ve gotten side-tracked in your walk with God, I encourage you to get on track. Don’t give up. Heaven is just around the corner! Soon the trumpet will sound and all our sin and sorrow will be wiped away.

### **Florence Chadwick and the Fog**

That reminds me of the story of Florence Chadwick. In 1952, young Florence Chadwick stepped into the waters of the Pacific Ocean off Catalina Island, determined to **swim to the shore of mainland California**.

She’d already been the first woman to swim the **English Channel** both ways. The weather was foggy and chilly; she could hardly see the boats accompanying her. Still, she swam for **fifteen hours**. When she begged to be taken out of the water along the way, her mother, in a boat alongside, told her she was close and that she could make it. Finally, physically and emotionally exhausted, **she stopped swimming** and was pulled out. It wasn’t until she was on the boat that she discovered the shore was **less than half a mile away**. At a news conference the next day she said, “*All I could see was the fog. . . . I think if I could have seen the shore, I would have made it.*”<sup>1</sup>

Like Florence Chadwick, sometimes all we can see is the fog. But if we could realize how close we are to the shore – not California, but eternity in God’s presence, it would give us the

---

<sup>1</sup> C. J. Mahaney, “Loving the Church” (taped message, Covenant Life Church, Gaithersburg, Md., n.d.).

enthusiasm to continue in this short and difficult life. If we would just gaze through the fog and picture our eternal home in our mind's eye, it would bring great comfort and energize us.<sup>2</sup>

### Peering Through the Fog

Paul tells us: "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face" (1 Cor. 13:12). Life can be confusing, and it is easy to lose heart. Jesus says "Men ought always to pray and not to lose heart" or be discouraged (Luke 18:1). Sometimes we don't even know *how* to pray, so the Spirit has to interpret our prayers with groans that are not even understandable (Romans 8:26).

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us to go and pray to God in secret, and then He tells us how. The first three concern God's person and plan; the last three concern our petitions.<sup>3</sup>

**Psalm 139:4**, "Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether."

### Reading of Holy Scripture

**Matthew 6:9-15**, "Pray then like this: "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 also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

### Prayer is an Invitation

Prayer is an invitation by Jesus. He says, "Pray then..." What should we pray for? Jesus invites us to pray for at least six things.

In the next two weeks we are going to see five (5) invitations of prayer in the Lord's Prayer. Prayer is an invitation to experience...

- God's **Presence**, our Father in Heaven (9)
- God's **Program**, your kingdom come, your will be done (10)
- God's **Provision**, give us our daily bread (11)
- God's **Pardon**, forgive us our debts (12, 14-15)
- God's **Protection**, lead us not into temptation (13)

### I. An invitation to experience God's **Presence** (6:9).

**Matthew 6:9-15**, "Pray then like this: "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 also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

---

<sup>2</sup> Alcorn, Randy (2011-12-08). Heaven (Alcorn, Randy) (Kindle Locations 347-349). Tyndale House Publishers. Kindle Edition.

<sup>3</sup> Boice, J. M. (2001). *The Gospel of Matthew* (p. 98). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

## **Our Father, by Creation**

We begin the Lord's Prayer by addressing God as: "Our Father". It is true that all humanity is in a sense connected to the Fatherhood of God as our creator. Malachi wrote, "Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us?" (Mal. 2:10), and Paul said to the Greek philosophers on Mars Hill, "As even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His offspring'" (Acts 17:28).

Yet Scripture makes it unmistakably clear that God's fatherhood of unbelievers is only in the sense of being their Creator. Spiritually, unbelievers have another father. In His severest condemnation of the Jewish leaders who opposed and rejected Him, Jesus said, "You are of your father the devil" (John 8:44). It is only to those who receive Him that Jesus gives "the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12; cf. Rom. 8:14; Gal. 3:26; Heb. 2:11–14; 2 Pet. 1:4; etc.).

## **Our Father, by Adoption**

God is our Father in Heaven. "Healthy, God-pleasing prayer begins with the blessed realization that God is our 'Abba-Father'—our Dearest Father."<sup>4</sup> He is our Father by creation. He created us. He gives us every breath. But of course, we rebelled against His kindness and became rebels. So how is God our Father? He is our Father by adoption. We are adopted by Him through His only begotten, Jesus Christ. Because believers belong to the Son, they can come to God as His beloved children.<sup>5</sup>

## **God Sings, We Draw Near His Throne of Grace**

Now Jesus says, pray with confidence to your Father in heaven! He is our Father! He loves us. **Zeph. 3:17** says that "The LORD rejoices over you with loud singing!" The writer of Hebrews instructs us to: "draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (**Heb. 4:16**). Are you in need this morning? God invites you to enter His presence!

Jesus' invitation reminds me of the Psalmist's invitation in **Psalm 100:1–3**, "Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! 2 Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! 3 Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."

## **Our Father in Heaven**

Jesus' invitation extends to a place that is not of this world. He is our Father *in Heaven*. This is the place God dwells. When we think of Heaven though, we must not think of clouds and floating around. That is the stuff of Hollywood. Heaven is the place where God dwells. In the future heaven will come to earth. We will not live in the sky eternally, but we will live in the new heaven and new earth. It's together because in the ages to come, heaven actually comes down to earth. Heaven is the "Paradise of God". What we will experience one day with Him will not be floating on clouds. It will be a new heaven and a new earth where "the dwelling place of God is with man. [the Lord] will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God" (**Revelation 21:3**).

---

<sup>4</sup> Hughes, R. K. (2001). *The sermon on the mount: the message of the kingdom*. Preaching the Word (p. 167). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

<sup>5</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (p. 375). Chicago: Moody Press.

## Practicing God's Presence

In this prayer, Jesus invites us to pray to our Father in Heaven: "Hallowed be Your Name." Heaven designates God as holy and set apart from sinners. His name or who He is, ought to be revered and honored. His name represents His Person. He is holy and He ought to be the very center of our lives, at the forefront, not on the sidelines.

To hallow something is to set it apart as special and precious.

- People don't play baseball with *the hope diamond*. It's something that is to be treasured.
- We don't buy the *Mona Lisa* painting and put it under the car to catch the oil. We would never do that. It's special. It's to be admired.

## Venerating God's Name

**Hallowed** is an archaic English word used to translate a form of *hagiazō*, which means to make holy. Words from the same root are translated "holy, saint, sanctify, sanctification," etc. God's people are commanded to *be* holy (1 Pet. 1:16), but God is acknowledged as *being* holy. That is the meaning of praying **hallowed be Thy name**: to attribute to God the holiness that already is, and always has been, supremely and uniquely His. To hallow God's name is to revere, honor, glorify, and obey Him as singularly perfect.<sup>6</sup> As John Calvin observed, that God's name should be hallowed was nothing other than to say that God should have His own honor, of which He was so worthy, that men should never think or speak of Him without the greatest veneration.<sup>7</sup>

God's name is to be treasured and admired. The motive of all our prayers ought to be God's glory. *We are asking God to answer us in a way that most glorifies Him and allows the most amount of people to know His beauty and His glory.* We are not praying that God would make His name holy, because it already is.

## God's Name Hallowed in Our Lives

"Hallowed be your name" is praying that God would be our highest treasure. That He would get glory from our lives. Our ultimate desire in all things is that God gets glory! That more and more people worship God as a result of our prayers and our life. Hallowed be the name of our Father. May His name be set apart as a treasure. May He be admired in all that we do and say.

## God's Name Hallowed in the World

"Hallowed be your name" is also a prayer for God's name to be highly esteemed in the church and in all the world. There is coming a day when all will esteem God's name. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess the goodness of God and His great esteem. But that hasn't happened yet.

## II. An invitation to experience God's **Program** (6:10).

**Matthew 6:10**, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

### Self-Autonomy is Dangerous

Whether it be in an individual or in a nation, self autonomy is dangerous! The truth is very few individuals or nations care about God's kingdom.

---

<sup>6</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (p. 378). Chicago: Moody Press.

<sup>7</sup> A Harmony of the Gospels Matthew, Mark, and Luke [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], p. 318

## **Already, Not Yet**

How do we define God's Kingdom? We could say it is already here, but not yet in its full form. God's Kingdom is defined for us in **Romans 14:17**, "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." So we see that God's people experience God's kingdom, yet it is not yet here in its full expression.

We are to see first God's Kingdom and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33). So if God's kingdom is God's rule in me through the Holy Spirit, then prayer is a major way I can seek the kingdom. I need to pray that God will have His way in my life and in the world.

The King is inseparable from His kingdom. To pray **Thy kingdom come** is to pray for the **program** of the God to be fulfilled, for Christ to come and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. His program and His plan should be the preoccupation of our lives and of our prayers.<sup>8</sup>

## **God Has Been King**

This is not to say that God has not already been ruling and reigning as King. "The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1). God is already King, and his kingdom spans the entire universe. "Your kingdom come" is a call for a new and unique manifestation of his kingdom in the future.<sup>9</sup>

## **God Will Be King**

There is coming a day at the second coming when Christ our King will return, judge the world, and set up his eternal kingdom.<sup>10</sup> This is a time when the whole earth will be redeemed. Sin and sorrow will be wiped away.

God's Kingdom Coming is not a gradual Christianization of the world. In fact the Bible says as the Day of Christ approaches, people and events will become worse and worse. What will happen is that God will save His people even as the world grows worse and worse.

## **Your Will be Done**

The next petition is in **Matthew 6:10b**, "your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." It is a request not only to pray for Christ's kingdom to come, but to live it out!

How can we live out the prayer of "Your Kingdom come"? We can pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## **How is God's Will Done in Heaven?**

God's will is done perfectly in heaven. You'll never hear an angel saying, "You know, I don't think I'll do your will right now. Let me put it off till later". We should be as obedient to God as the angels in heaven. How can we do that.

## **Walking in the Spirit**

1. Live out the Kingdom by walking in the Spirit. Walk with God as Adam did in the Garden of Eden. We read in **Galatians 5:16–17**, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things

---

<sup>8</sup> MacArthur, 379.

<sup>9</sup> Hughes, 168.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

you want to do.” There is a war going on in your soul. You must constantly be experiencing God’s presence and program or you will be over taken. After warning us about sinful anger, Paul says in **Ephesians 4:27**, “Give no opportunity for the devil”. We as Christians can either be pawns for the kingdom of Satan or instruments of the Kingdom of God. Pray to Christ, “Thy Kingdom come!” and experience God’s kingdom by walking in the Spirit.

### **Evangelize**

2. Publish and announce the “Gospel of the Kingdom”. People need to stop serving the “kingdom of this world” and start serving in the Kingdom of God. Jesus’ substitutionary atonement makes God’s kingdom possible for rebel sinners. Christ gives His life for His enemies! Now God’s enemies become the ambassadors and soldiers for His kingdom.

### **Conclusion**

What a joy to be invited into God’s presence. As Christians we are His temples. Your heart is His Holy of Holies.

### **How Long Has it Been?**

I don’t like to be away from my family for any length of time. The longest was three weeks when I went to Spain. I was so glad I could talk to them almost every day. But each day I longed to hold my wife and my children. My body ached for them.

So it is with our walk with the Lord. We walk by faith, not by site. We see in a mirror very darkly at times. It’s hard to see through all the pain and confusion. But we can pick up the phone. We can pray without ceasing. We can go to that secret place and commune with our God. How long has it been since you had a significant time and experiencing of the grace of God in prayer?

Prayer is not needed from God’s perspective. He already knows what we need before we ask. Prayer is needed for us that we might draw near to God. Prayer is God’s invitation!