

Scripture Reading:

Luke 11:1 “Now it came to pass, as [Jesus] was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." **2** So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. **3** Give us day by day our daily bread. **4** And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one." **5** And He said to them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; **6** for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; **7** and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? **8** I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. **9** "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **10** For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. **11** If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? **12** Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? **13** If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"”

"Kingdom Prayer"

Joseph Scriven wrote the hymn that we will respond to this sermon with in 1855 to comfort his mother, who was across the sea in Ireland.

Hymn writers often get it right:

What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,

All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer.

Perhaps we should just read & sing...

This morning Luke tells us that one of the disciples approached Jesus after He had finished praying and asked Him to teach them to pray.

Jesus is making His final journey to Jerusalem knowing His appointed time is coming to face the wrath of God because of OUR sins: It is likely that Jesus was spending a lot of time in prayer.

- **As we think about the lessons of the past two weeks and the importance of knowing the proper balance and priorities for service and quiet time, we should look to Jesus as an example prayer and be willing to say with this disciple: “Lord teach us to pray!”**

We have often covered the subject of prayer here at Church of the King as we have gone through the Book of James and the Book of Nehemiah. We looked at Nehemiah as the man of prayer and studied the Lord’s Prayer that we have before us this morning as part of James five.

- **What Luke here gives us is a shorter version of our Lord’s model prayer and then some basic instruction about what our attitude toward prayer should be**

First we must remember that, just like with our singing, God the Holy Spirit presents our prayers before God’s throne in heaven! The writer of Hebrews, reminds the Saints of God’s gracious salvation then he says, “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

How do we approach the throne of grace:

- **Certainly through the Word as we saw last week**
- **Certainly as we gather each week for Covenant Renewal Worship**
- **Certainly at the Lord’s Table as we do each week, and most certainly with our prayers.**

We see this clearly in Revelation 5:6 “... In the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, ... 7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

And again in Revelation 8:1 “When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ... 3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.”

- **These are the verses we must remember when we hear James tell the Saints that “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”**

As I said when we studied James, the \$64,000 question is, “Do we believe that our prayers are effective?”

- We don’t have a problem believing that God answers the prayers of the righteous...
- We struggle with believing that we ARE righteous:
In our time of need, forgetting that we ARE righteous IN Christ!
- So we should join with this unnamed disciple in asking Jesus to teach us to pray!

Jesus responded by saying, “pray this way” and then giving His Disciples and us a simple model prayer: The Heidelberg catechism devotes a number of questions and answers to the Lord’s Prayer:

- I want to review some of these to help us again understand the Lord’s Prayer AND also to remind us about the wisdom we have from our Reformation heritage which we should not neglect!

We are to pray to the God of Heaven and to approach Him as our Father!

The Heidelberg then discusses six petitions which Jesus instructs us to bring before God in prayer: There are six petitions divided with three focused on our duties with regard to God and three focused on our duties to our neighbors, just as we see with God’s Law!

Question 122 Which is the first petition?

Answer . "Hallowed be thy name"; that is, grant us, first, rightly to know thee, and to sanctify, glorify and praise thee, in all thy works, in which thy power, wisdom, goodness, justice, mercy and truth, are clearly displayed; and further also, that we may so order and direct our whole lives, our thoughts, words and actions, that thy name may never be blasphemed, but rather honored and praised on our account.

- We should remember that this is a petition: It is NOT our job to have His name be hallowed in heaven:

Our prayer is that God’s name would hallowed here on earth and in our lives!

Question 123 . Which is the second petition?

Answer . "Thy kingdom come"; that is, rule us so by thy word and Spirit, that we may submit ourselves more and more to thee; preserve and increase thy church; destroy the works of the devil, and all violence which would exalt itself against thee; and also, all wicked counsels devised against thy holy word; till the full perfection of thy kingdom take place, wherein thou shalt be all in all.

- Very helpful instruction from the catechism and it should make us ask, “Do we believe what we are praying?”

Question 124 Which is the third petition?

Answer . "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"; that is, grant that we and all men may renounce our own will, and without murmuring obey thy will, which is only good; that so every one may attend to, and perform the duties of his station and calling, as willingly and faithfully as the angels do in heaven.

➤ Brothers and sisters, this is down-home Christianity – As Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments!”

Question 125 Which is the fourth petition?

Answer . "Give us this day our daily bread"; that is, be pleased to provide us with all things necessary for the body, that we may thereby acknowledge thee to be the only fountain of all good, and that neither our care nor industry, nor even thy gifts, can profit us without thy blessing; and therefore that we may withdraw our trust from all creatures, and place it alone in thee.

➤ Our focus is day to day!

Question 126 What is the fifth petition?

Answer . "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"; that is, be pleased for the sake of Christ's blood, not to impute to us poor sinners, our transgressions, nor that depravity, which always cleaves to us; even as we feel this evidence of thy grace in us, that it is our firm resolution from the heart to forgive our neighbor.

➤ God is establishing His Kingdom with forgiven sinners – broken tools – We must keep short accounts!

Question 127 Which is the sixth petition?

Answer . "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"; that is, since we are so weak in ourselves, that we cannot stand a moment; and besides this, since our mortal enemies, the devil, the world, and our own flesh, cease not to assault us, do thou therefore preserve and strengthen us by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we may not be overcome in this spiritual warfare, but constantly and strenuously may resist our foes, till at last we obtain a complete victory.

➤ Remembering our frailty – Why we should always be praying for the armor of Ephesians Chapter Six

Question 128 How dost thou conclude thy prayer?

Answer: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever"; that is, all these we ask of thee, because thou, being our King and almighty, art willing and able to give us all good; and all this we pray for, that thereby not we, but thy holy name, may be glorified forever.

This should take us right back to the picture of God's throne room where our prayers are taken as we join with the Elders and Angels in proclaiming God's glory

- **And it is always good to remember the importance of the AMEN at the end:**

Question 129 What doth the word "Amen" signify?

Answer . "Amen" signifies, it shall truly and certainly be: for my prayer is more assuredly heard of God, than I feel in my heart that I desire these things of him.

- **When we studied James we went through the various uses of Amen as it is used over seventy times in the Bible: Something we should review**
- **The whole congregation is involved in the worship of God, and the amen is one place where this involvement is most visible**

Deut. 27:15 "And all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord"

I Chronicles 16:36 "And all the assembly said, Amen and praised the Lord"

Neh. 5:13 "Then all the people answered, Amen, Amen"

There are many ways that we can properly use AMEN during our covenant renewal worship:

- **When the leader calls for an AMEN after a Scripture reading or absolution!
We should respond with a hearty AMEN!**
- **When we sing glory to God with a psalm or hymn we should conclude with a hearty AMEN!**
- **When we receive God's blessing in the benediction**
 - **Pastor Wilson suggested that we remember the challenging example from the early church: "Jerome commented that in the early church, when visitors used to come, they were commonly frightened at the amen – it had the sound of thunder, said by the people who understood it"**
- **May it be so again in our day!**

So this unnamed disciple asked Jesus to teach them to pray and they were given the model prayer that we call the Lord's Prayer: A prayer we use each week to pray together as a congregation! However, this is not the only prayer we are to pray: It is a model, an example, a guide.

- **If you are not sure how to pray, it is the place to start!**

We should also use the other accounts of prayers in the Bible as our examples as well: We will reflect on the great high priestly prayer of Jesus in John 17 at the Lord's Table

We must learn to pray the Psalms back to God

AND we must learn the lessons that Jesus goes on to give His disciples

➤ Jesus gives His followers practical instructions that we **MUST** apply in our lives today!

Jesus tells them the story of the persistent friend who has need of help from his neighbor: The lesson is simple – The man had a real need and he was persistent!

Jesus then makes His application:

- Ask: and it will be given to you
- Seek: and you will find
- Knock: and it will be opened

He then repeats how this works so we do **NOT** miss the point or the simplicity:

- Everyone who asks, receives
- He who seeks, finds
- To him who knocks, it will be opened

Jesus then helps us understand how our Heavenly Father desires to give us good things by reminding us of what we know about our earthly fathers: Jesus uses three examples of a hungry child asking for something to eat:

- Asking for a small loaf of bread
 - Asking for a fish
 - Asking for an egg
- [a sandwich, a hot dog, some scrambled eggs]

Jesus asks what earthly father would be so cruel as to not only to deny the request but then give them something useless for their hunger that even looked like what they requested?

A rock instead of bread

- A snake instead of a fish
- A scorpion instead of an egg

Who could do such a thing?

The point is that even fallen man knows how to fulfill basic requests!

We do not want to learn the wrong lesson here: We have a proper request being made by a needy child: Bread, fish or an egg to satisfy their hunger.

- **The children were not asking for a new sport's car**
- **They were not asking Dad to get Mom off their back about keeping their room so clean**
- **They were not asking Dad to give them something that belonged to their brother or sister**

These were righteous requests fulfilled by a loving father

This example is given to remind us that:

- **Everyone who asks, receives**
- **He who seeks, finds**
- **To him who knocks, it will be opened**

So how do we know what we are to properly ask for?

That brings us back to the six petitions in the Lord's Prayer!

This is why we MUST know them and pray them!

Jesus summarizes all of this when he concludes "How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" This does NOT mean that the charismatics are right about having to ask God for the Holy Spirit...

It means that as we pray those petitions in the Lord's prayer:

- **That God's name be hallowed**
- **That His Kingdom come**
- **That God's will be done on earth**
- **That we have our daily needs met**
- **That we know the forgiveness of sins**
- **That we are protected from evil**

As we make these requests we KNOW they are properly taken before God's throne by the Spirit as we saw in Hebrews and Revelation! But NOW Jesus tells us that the same Holy Spirit has been given to carry out the answer to these prayers!

We will see this more fully on Pentecost Sunday, but we must remember it each week as God commissions us to go out & do the work of the Kingdom each & every week... Doing the good works we were created in Christ Jesus to walk in!

We should leave with the words of Jesus ringing in our ears:

- **Everyone who asks, receives**
- **He who seeks finds**
- **To him who knocks it will be opened**

Let us go forth confidently to serve our risen and reigning Savior this week remembering and singing... What a Friend We Have in Jesus!

Communion Meditation:

John 17:1 "Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

24 Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. 26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.'"