

iii. Asking for forgiveness is the 5th request, not the 1st.

C. Do not lead us into trials but deliver us from the evil. (13)

“Because atomic behavior is so unlike ordinary experience, it is very difficult to get used to, and it appears peculiar and mysterious to every-one ... We choose to examine a phenomenon [an observable fact] which is impossible, absolutely impossible, to explain in any classical way.... In reality it contains the only mystery. We cannot make the mystery go away by `explaining' how it works. We will just tell you how it works.”¹

“Our Father, the one in the Heavens,
Your name must be revered as holy;
Your kingdom must come;
Your will must happen,
as in heaven, even on earth.
Give to us today our necessary food.
And forgive us our debts,
just as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not lead us into trials,
but deliver us from the evil one. Amen!

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Do you ever have trouble praying? What has your experience been in praying “The Lord’s Prayer”?
- How does this prayer teach us what we need?
- What does it mean in biblical context to pray that God’s name be hallowed?
- How does this prayer work to change us into God’s kingdom justice and lovingkindness to the world?
- Which requests push on the issue of mystery that we, of necessity, run into when as finite creatures we begin to know the Infinite?
- How does this prayer teach us to pray for the community’s needs?

DISCIPLE 1.0 How Disciples Pray

Jerry Cisar — April 14, 2019

Text: Matthew 6:7-15

Introduction: We do not know how to pray as we ought.

The purpose of prayer is not to inform God of our needs. He already knows them.

So what is the purpose of praying as Jesus’ taught? It is so that we *might know* what we need.

I. How the Nations Pray (6:7-8)

- A. How did the other nations think about prayer?
- B. Our God is not like these gods.
 - i. He knows our needs before we ask.
 - ii. He is not disinterested in our lives.
 - iii. We don’t have to wear Him down.

Prayer is not about getting the gods (or God) to side with our agenda, it is, as we will see, about getting us onto and keeping us on God’s agenda!

II. How Disciples Pray? To God as Father (6:9a)

- A. They pray to God as Father.
 - i. How did Israel understand their relationship to God as Father?
 - a) Exodus 4:22-23
 - b) Hos. 11:1-5
 - c) Israel at the time of Jesus was waiting for the Father to come again and rescue His son (Israel) again.

¹ Richard Feynman quoted in Polkinghorne, Quantum Physics and Theology.

- ii. When Jesus teaches us to pray, “Our Father,” he is telling us that we are the restored Israel.

B. Prayer is a family event (church family).

III. Prayer Concerning the Community’s Mission (6:9b-10)

Karl Barth: “Prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of this fallen world.”

The Lord’s prayer sets out to change things... the way things are. It intends to do so, first and foremost, by changing us into agents of God’s kingdom justice and lovingkindness into the world.

A. Your Name *Must* be Hallowed

- i. “Your name *must* be hallowed.”
 - a) 3rd person imperative
 - b) The first 3 requests are *lament-like*, so a tone of insistence is fitting.
- ii. The reason Israel went into captivity was because God’s name was profaned *because* of them instead of hallowed.
 - a) God’s name was profaned because they went into captivity (Ezek. 36:22-37).
 - b) Speaking of restored Israel: “The people of Israel will never again defile (profane) my holy name” (Ezek. 43:7).

God’s name is hallowed when we, the community of disciples, let our light shine before others so that they may see our good deeds and glorify our Father in heaven (5:16)!

B. Your Kingdom *Must* Come

- i. What does it mean for God’s kingdom to come?
 - a) Psalm 89:14; 97:2; 45:6
 - b) Isaiah 9:6-7; 11:4; 42:1

- c) To pray for God’s kingdom to come is to pray for His justice to meet the needs of the poor, the weak, the lame, the blind...

- ii. This prayer acknowledges that God’s kingdom cannot come through human effort *even if* God’s kingdom requires all human effort to be used for His purposes.

C. Your Will *Must* be Done

- i. If one takes the rest of the Sermon on the Mt. seriously, the biggest obstacle to God’s will being done on earth as it is in heaven may be our unwillingness to do what Jesus says.
- ii. This prayer is *also* about God’s will being done through others, through leaders, through doctors, in so many ways.

IV. Prayer Concerning the Community’s Needs (6:11-15)

A. Give us today our necessary food (11)

- i. Note the plural pronouns: *us* and *our*.
- ii. Proverbs 30:8 “... give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me” (ESV).
- iii. This request means that if I receive more than my necessary food, I need to discover who in the community does not have their necessary food and distribute.

B. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (12)

- i. Forgiveness, debts and the Sabbath-year.
- ii. However, Jesus ties our forgiveness of debts owed to us to the forgiveness of our debts to God and unpaid debts to others—which are sin! (See 6:14-15)