

The Lord's Prayer

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[0 : 00] So, the Lord's Prayer, it's our last evening on the Sermon on the Mount tonight. The Lord's Prayer is one of the most well-known passages in the entire Bible, if not the most well-known, widely speaking, by people in church and outside of church.

When I was younger, I went to the Boys Brigade and we would have a weekly routine on our Monday nights when we would come together. And we would do various activities each week. We would usually play football and we would get beat every week because it would be the junior section against the senior section. And then after that, we would play quite often dodgeball and we'd get literally beaten.

That was always quite sore. And then as well as the sports we played and the other things that we did at the BB to develop ourselves and go from boys to men, we would say the Lord's Prayer. And that was a sort of spiritual aspect of what we did. And we would stand in our little groups at ease and we would say the Lord's Prayer. And after a few weeks, after a few meetings with the BBs, you'd be able to recite it, no problem, say it word for word, all together.

[1 : 24] And it sounded quite good and it was quite polished. However, although we were standing there in lines and in groups, saying that together, we didn't actually understand it or have much understanding of the actual greater relevance of it.

We would say it word for word, parrot it, perfectly, all together. But actually, it wouldn't really cross our minds the rest of the week when we were away from the BB and we weren't saying it.

And it's easy for all of us with this passage and with this prayer to do that anyway. So tonight, I really want us to come away having a better understanding of the deeper significance of the prayer to us in our Christian lives.

And just broadly as well, as the foundation of it is the gospel and how important it is in this kingdom life that the Lord Jesus has been speaking about in the last few weeks as well.

So I've taken my title, Lord, Teach Us to Pray, actually from the gospel of Luke and how Luke records the prayer.

[2 : 36] And because we want to be humbled tonight. We want to come to the feet of the Lord Jesus. And so as he's been sitting here on the Sermon on the Mount and teaching us and teaching those people then. And as he was teaching in the gospel of Luke about prayer and how to pray then as well.

And we want to ask him and request that he teaches to pray. Lord, teach us here in Bruntsfield here tonight to pray just as the disciples came to him and asked then as well.

Lord, teach us to pray. So with that, our first point tonight for verses 9 to 10 of the prayer is a prayer that looks up.

So the first couple of verses of the prayer, the first few lines that we read and we recite is looking up. It's looking up to the throne of having the throne of God.

And we're learning a lot about who God is in these verses. This prayer is revolutionary and it says huge things, but in really simple language for us.

[3 : 43] And even in these opening lines, we learn a lot and it's a huge deal of what is said here in these verses. So Jesus is sitting down and he begins the prayer by saying, Our Father.

And that is like amazing. That's mind blowing. Jesus is saying to these people, this mix of people around about him, Jews and Greeks. That are all praying.

And the previous verses, Jesus has told us about the prayer of the Jews at the time and people who followed like the Greek gods and other gods as well.

And he tells us where they pray, what they pray. And he says at the end of it, he literally says, don't pray like that. Pray now like this. And he says at the outset, Our Father.

So he's saying to these disciples, this mix of people, Our Father, he's including us with him. And the Son of God, Jesus, the Divine Son, is saying, Our, and he's including us with him as his brothers and sisters as he's sitting teaching on prayer.

[4 : 51] And that should be a huge deal for us as we're included with the Lord Jesus in this prayer. We're not told to address him differently, but we're told to address our Father, God, the Almighty, as our Father with the Lord Jesus, which is a massive privilege for us.

Because with this language of fathers, some of us here and other people reading this might have a bad experience with their earthly fathers. Our earthly fathers can be bad.

They can fail us. And generally across the board, whatever experience you've had, they disappoint us. And that's because they're only human. They're like us. They're made of flesh and blood.

And they're sinful. But with this prayer and with this coming to God and addressing him as our Father, God is perfect and he's good.

And he doesn't ever fail. He doesn't ever disappoint us. So we can have that. We have this huge privilege and we should really grasp a hold of it. We have this huge privilege. No matter who we are, whatever our background, when we are followers of Jesus, we get to come with him as brothers and sisters.

[6 : 05] And address God as our Father. And with this way we get to address God, our Father, that should just fill us with confidence, praise, and a renewed zeal and passion for all the things in this prayer, for all the petitions of the prayer.

And zeal for who we're praying to, zeal for God as well. And that's what Jesus takes up next in the next line of the verse. Hallowed be your name.

That's quite old-fashioned language. We don't use that sort of language so much anymore. But hallowed just means holy. Like God is perfect and is worthy to be praised.

And we should be praising him all the time with our whole lives. And that's what Jesus has been talking about and encouraging us to in this whole prayer. He's encouraging us and teaching us about the life of one of God's children, of followers of him, and of people who are living in this kingdom.

And that should be our overarching purpose in life and in this prayer and in all of prayer as we pray. To worship God. To praise his name.

[7 : 22] And also part of hallowing something is to make it known so with this. It's not that we're building a kingdom for ourselves or God is taking us into his kingdom.

And we're just sitting sort of stale. And we're like, oh, that's us. We're sorted. We want to be out there and telling people, spreading the fame and renown of God as well.

Of God, our Heavenly Father. And the next three phases that follow, phrases I should say, feed into that and also come out of that.

And there's an important biblical precedent for holding God's name in this high regard that Jesus is encouraging us to. Names in biblical times.

Names in biblical times were much more important than they are now. We just think of names as something you get. But very much in biblical times and maybe sort of traditional Scottish culture with Mac, McDonald, McLeod, etc.

[8 : 29] Names for people back then really told a person who you are, even who your father is, what you do. And we have examples as well like that in our own culture.

McDonald, as I said, like Cooper and Smith. You can say that that person has been descended from a person who did a certain job. And it tells you something about that person.

And in the Bible, God is the same. God's name really is massively important and means something. And we see that throughout the Bible, especially in Exodus when God speaks with Moses.

His name is his promise of what he'll do. And a guarantee of his faithfulness to do certain things, as we see throughout the Bible.

And also his faithfulness and promise to listen to and answer our prayers, including the prayers. This prayer, when we say this prayer.

[9 : 30] And then the prayers that we can template off this prayer and prayers that come out of this prayer. And then when Jesus goes on to speak of God's kingdom, this is a request.

And identifying ourselves with God's kingdom and our desire to see God's kingdom reigning supreme, which it will. Some people can get caught up in this part of the prayer.

Your kingdom come, your will be done. And think this is like us giving God permission to perform or to reign. But really it's not. It's just us identifying ourselves with God and with what he's doing. And saying we want this to happen and see these things being done. But certainly God will reign. God is supreme anyway. And he doesn't need our permission or for us to request any of this. So with that, part of that is our purpose in life. People are always talking about and thinking about what is the purpose of life. The biggest philosophical question there is.

[10:36] As far as I can think. There might be others. Certainly come and tell me afterwards. But what is the purpose of life? And this prayer, this part of the verse tells us what the purpose of life is.

That is the reason for all our existences, both here in this hall in Brunfield and everywhere else all around the world. If you went through the streets though, if you went round Edinburgh asking people, what do you think the purpose of life is?

What do you think you're here for? What is the reason for our existence? They would give us loads of different answers. And they would answer in loads of different ways.

But the answer is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. And so we're all to be hallowing God's name. And when we do that and fulfill our purpose, we'll actually be truly satisfied.

People are always thinking the purpose of life and existence and things like this, they can't figure it out themselves naturally. And so that has led into our culture of accumulation and life is just about getting things and getting more and more and more.

[11:47] But actually it's not about that at all. And by doing this, God isn't robbing us or cheating us of life's experiences, but he's given us himself.

And that is so much better than all these other things that people can spend their lives trying to achieve or accomplish. Yeah. So verses 9 and 10 have cast our eyes to God and to the God-centered nature of the prayer.

And it has told us a lot about God, more than I have said or can say tonight. But certainly we've looked up at God's throne and then we see a prayer that looks in.

And this verses 11 to 13 looks at us and our needs. And this prayer is revolutionary.

I've sort of touched on it already slightly. But it says a series of massive, huge things in simple language that make a huge impact on things, our own lives and the lives of others.

[12:53] When we live it out and when we pray this, we have a zeal for God's name to be honored and for the kingdom to spread and grow.

Both in numbers and in strength. And it's revolutionary because it addresses our needs and what we desire. But it goes against what our natural inclination with these things is.

And it does a 180. In verses 11 to 13, Jesus teaches us how to address our Father in heaven for our needs. And the first one is very basic in a sense.

It just says, give us this day our daily bread. So this is counterintuitive right away in many senses to me anyway. And it's counterintuitive to our sinful hearts.

In our sin, we fall into thinking that we're in charge. That we're in control of things. That we're independent. That we can do all these things. That we're great.

[13:58] We can fend for ourselves. We don't need God. We don't need provision. And we don't need any of the things that come with it. All we need to do is rely on ourselves.

Set the alarm clock. Get up on time. Get on the bus. Get to work. And then get our wage slip at the end of the month. To keep us going. And our culture feeds us that message as well.

And we're to strive for personal excellence. And for achievement. And to get all these things. But with what we've heard about God already. He's in heaven.

He's our Father. And all these other things that this prayer says about God. There's a sort of contrast. We've seen how great God is. And then we come to our own particular part of the prayer. Give us this day our daily bread. So it's only praying about today. And it asks for the most basic of foodstuffs. Bread. So really it's saying we can't even get this for ourselves.

[14:59] We can't even provide this basic thing for ourselves. It's like a toddler. Who insists on feeding themselves. Getting themselves into a high chair. Or dressing themselves.

Brushing their own hair. Getting themselves ready in the morning. Like they insist on doing it. But they aren't able to. We're the same. We are contrasted with God here. And we are like a toddler and their parent.

Insisting to do things. We can't do these things ourselves. We can't provide for ourselves. And so this should encourage us that we can come to God. And ask for our particular physical needs.

The needs of our body. And he's there to provide. And will provide for us in that regard. And with that. Would we misjudge our own capabilities?

We misjudge our own capabilities massively. When we do this. When we have this attitude that we can provide for ourselves. And it's a sinful mindset. And Jesus is trying to dispel it from us.

[16:04] By teaching on God's provision. And these people sitting thinking and hearing these things. Would have thought back to the exodus. Where God's people roamed in the wilderness. He provided bread for them every day. Although they rebelled and they thought. This is terrible. We're in the desert. It's miserable. Etc. As we read those accounts. Actually. They were being taught a really important lesson. That God is good. He cares for them. To their bodies. Their souls. Every part of them. And is there. And wants to provide for them. And all we need to do. Is trust in that. And pray for that. But as I say. We very easily fall into thinking. That we're in charge. And we're in control. And then. After this in verse 12. We see. The other aspect of things. Jesus has addressed.

[17:04] The needs of our body. How we need bread. And we need God to provide that for us. And provide for us. Every day. Daily. For our physical needs. So as well. He tells us. That God also needs to address. And provide for our spiritual needs. Our most. Pressing spiritual need. Forgive us this day. Our debts. As we forgive our debtors. Each one of us here. Sitting tonight. Is a debtor. In a sense. Jesus is telling us here. Just as we've needed bread. And we've needed God to provide. For our bodies. Our earthly bodies. So he needs to also provide for our souls. We can't do that ourselves either. We need him for that. And we need to pray for that. Each one of us. Has been created by God. We're his creatures. And because of that. We owe him our obedience. And we owe him every part of us. Each one of us.

[18:03] Though. Time and time again. Disobeys God. And we do this in any. Number of ways. That are incalculable. And so through this disobedience. And what God has said. About obeying him. And how we owe him our obedience. We have no hope. Of repaying this debt. By ourselves. And through our own. Capabilities and strength. We need him. To provide us with that forgiveness. For our sin. And our disobedience. To be. Thrown away. And to be forgotten. So that we can enter into that right relationship with God. Once again. And that is the whole. Foundation of the prayer. The gospel is. The foundation of the prayer. That is the whole foundation. That this prayer. Is built on. And you can only truly say this prayer. And say that part of the prayer.

[19:04] Particularly. Forgive us our debts. As we forgive our debtors. If we are. Followers of the Lord Jesus. And if we have been forgiven by God. Truly. And properly. For our sins. And if he has provided for our souls. And that. Is a problem. With. For instance. Me and my. Boys Brigade. Group. Saying it every week. And anywhere else. Any other experiences. People have. Of where you've said it. As a group. In an organization. Or group. That is not. Christian. And not evangelical. And it's with people. Who are not born again. They haven't had that experience. Of being forgiven. For their debts. Because. They don't understand. The rest of the prayer. But that part. They especially don't understand. And they have no experience. Of it. And they have no. Grasp. Of the importance. Of what they're saying. Especially in that part.

[19:59] And don't recognize. Their need for forgiveness. Without God. Providing that for them. But then. When we. Are saying this prayer. And we are followers. Of the Lord Jesus. We can say this. This whole prayer. But we can say. This part of it. This particular petition. And really take. Assurance from the fact. That when we ask. For forgiveness. Through. The death of the Lord Jesus. And his resurrection. And have faith. In the Lord Jesus. That our sins. Are forgiven. Our debts. Are forgiven. And our heavenly father. Remembers them no more. And he's done away with them. And then. This truth. Leads to the second part. Of that verse. Where it says. And help us. To forgive others. This is. The practical. Outworking. Outworking. Of our. Forgiveness. It leads us. To forgive others. We're not naturally.

[20 : 55] Forgiving people. Any of us. In different ways. But we get wronged. Or hurt. Some of us. Like to try and. Wrong and hurt. The person. That's done that to us.

Which is wrong. And then also. On the other side of things. At times. We like to hold on. To. The hurt. That people cause us.

And that's. In our own. Sort of sinful conditions. Sinful hearts. And minds. With either response. We're not. Sinful. However. With that.

When we have experienced. That forgiveness. And we really grasp onto that. And that reality. Then we can move on. And forgive. As we have been forgiven. And then.

Verse 13. Verse 13. Oh sorry. Could you move on to the next part? Sorry. Thank you. And then through that.

[21 : 53] We've seen. More of God. And who he is. And then. We've seen the part of the prayer. Which speaks about us. And addresses us. And our needs. And then. The third point.

The last part of the section. Is verses 14. To 15. And that is where Jesus is saying. You will be forgiven. By God. As you have forgiven others.

And that is really where. The rubber. Hits the road. With this prayer. With all of it. This is the practical outworking of it. In our lives.

Because. With this. Part of it. And we can fall into thinking. That. Oh this then means that we have to.

Forgive others. And our. Identity in Christ. Or our salvation. Is based on. What we do. And how forgiven we are. And things like this.

[22 : 48] When actually. It's not that at all. This is just. The practical fruit of this prayer. As we pray this. As we live this out. Then.

We will forgive others. But it's not. The Lord Jesus saying. In any sense. That. This is based on. Our own obedience. And our own goodness. And how forgiven.

And nice we are. Which we can fall into. As well. If we misread the prayer. If we misunderstand. What the Lord Jesus. Is saying to us here. And so.

I'm going to draw to a close. In a couple of minutes. And after this. There won't be any. Discussion questions. There are going to be. A sort of extended time. Of prayer. Because we're.

Talking and thinking. About prayer. So it seems to make sense. To me anyway. That we should spend some time. Really. Praying for ourselves. For the church. And for anything else.

[23 : 46] So. With that. The Lord Jesus. With this sermon. And with this prayer. Is rounding out. The rest of the sermon. And teaching us.

A lot. About who God is. What he's like. He's our father. Where he is. He's in heaven. And we can take. So much confidence. And assurance from that. That the Lord.

Is our father. He loves us. And we're his children. And we have the benefits. Of he being his children. And then we've seen. In verses. Eleven to thirteen.

Prayer that looks in. Who we are. In front of God. And how. We can take assurance. That he loves us. And he cares for us. And he wants to supply us. With our daily needs.

And he also. Supplies us with. Our most. Important spiritual need. Of forgiveness. From our sins. And then. We see. How. With that.

[24 : 43] That. All of this. Leads to a 180. In our. Minds. In our hearts. In our lives. In our behaviour. And we turn from our sin. And we live.

As true followers. Of the Lord Jesus. And we. And the prayer. Really becomes real. In our lives. And makes a real impact. On the rest. Of the sermon.

And how the Lord Jesus. Is spoken. About building up the kingdom. So. As well. I would like us. Just now. Just to go. To the last slide.

Peter. Sorry. If we could. Say the prayer together. And then. Once we've done that. If we. Say that together. And then. We can pray.

In our tables. Individually. Or in. Pairs. For the rest. Of the time. So. Let's pray. Our father.

[25 : 38] In heaven. Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done. On earth. As it is in heaven. Give us today. Our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts. As we. Also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us. Not into temptation. But deliver us. From the evil one. So you can go and grab.

A cup of tea. Or coffee now. And then come back to your tables. And we shall pray. Together. Amen.