

The Father's Prayer: Luke 11:1-4

Intro: Thanks to everyone who gave me food. Your gift of food was greatly appreciated. God the Father gave the Israelites daily 'manna' and quail for in the wilderness until they entered the Promised Land. You all were my 'manna' and chicken and pork. Now I am in the Promised Land of TN and the manna has stopped. Sandie will now cook for me and Peter.

Intro: Show my wooden plaque of The Lord's Prayer from Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola. I went to Angola Prison Rodeo and bought it from an inmate named Benjamin Williams who may never be free again. He may die in prison. He is in prison, but 'prison' is not in him. He's a free man forgiven by Christ; a free man who knows he is loved by his heavenly Father; a free man who is now a member of God the Father's forever family.

What is the primary reason Jesus came to earth as the Son of God? Jesus' primary purpose to come to earth was to reveal God the Father.

Hear the words of Jesus: John 14:8-11: ⁸ Philip said to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

Jesus came to reveal the holiness of the Father, the love of the Father, and the goodness of the Father. Jesus did the works of the Father to reveal the heart of the Father. The greatest work that revealed the heart of the heavenly Father is the sacrifice of Christ for our sins. But also, every person Jesus forgave, healed of disease, and freed from demons was the work of his Father. All of Jesus' works were a revelation of his Father's goodness.

We need Jesus' revelation of the goodness of the Father because of SIN. The absolute goodness of the Father gets obscured by several realities: 1) my own sinful nature*; 2) the sinful natures of other people who judge and condemn; 3) a world under the curse of sin; 4) the lies of Satan. Satan hates the goodness of God and fights it with lies. Satan lied about the goodness of the Father to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We need Jesus' revelation of the Father to counteract Satan's lies. We need Jesus' revelation of the Father, so we can become a member of the Father's forever family and have eternal life in the Father's house – heaven. We need Jesus revelation of the Father's heart to be persistent in prayer.

*I instigated a useless argument and became angry. I was disappointed with myself. I struggled to forgive myself. I didn't love myself. If you don't love yourself, then you cannot give and receive love. (*Love yourself is not selfishness, but a true sense of self-worth rooted in a revelation of the Father's love for you.*) My own sinful nature and self-condemnation became a hindrance to receiving the Father's love for me. Did the

Father's love for me change because I sinned and condemned myself? No. Was the Father unwilling to forgive me even as I struggled for forgive myself? No.

Persistence in Prayer: Luke 11:5-10: ⁵And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, ⁶for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; ⁷and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything'? ⁸I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his *impudence* he will rise and give him whatever he needs. ⁹And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

Ask, seek, and knock emphasize the shameless persistence of the man in the parable. Ask, seek, knock are verbs in the GR present imperative tense. Present imperative is a command. It means, "Ask and keep on asking. Seek and don't stop seeking. Knock and keep on knocking."

Ask for the Holy Spirit: Luke 11:11-13: ¹¹What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a snake; ¹²or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Jesus reinforces our heavenly Father's goodness to answer prayer. God the Father is good and only gives good gifts to his faith children. Heavenly Father doesn't punish his faith children with cancer or any other disease. The Father doesn't give snakes and scorpions. He loves his sons and daughters. The best gift the Father gives his faith children is the HS. The one thing you can ask for and you will always receive is the HS.

Luke 11:1-4: The disciples watched Jesus praying a lot and they asked how to pray. Jesus gave them and us a model prayer.

And Jesus said to them, "When you pray, say:

"Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

³ Give us each day our daily bread,

⁴ and forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation."

So, you can pray it every day just the way it is, or you can personalize it and expand on it. **We can pray the Prayer just as it is.** The Prayer gives comfort. I was on duty all night at the hospital and called to the ICU. I met a black Catholic family from New Orleans. I called

Father John the priest, but he would not come to do “last rites” because the person was dead. So, the family asked me to pray. I said, “I’m a Baptist. I don’t do last rites, but let’s pray The Lord’s Prayer together.” We held hands and recited The Lord’s Prayer over the body of their deceased relative. Then I prayed for the Lord Jesus to receive the deceased man’s spirit into his eternal kingdom. I didn’t know whether the man was a true believer, but I did what chaplains are supposed to do for the comfort of the family. (Then I connected them with a local funeral home to take care of the body. A few weeks earlier I had visited a cardiac patient who was the owner of a local funeral home. He operated it as a ministry and he prepared bodies for families who couldn’t pay.)

We can personalize it and expand on it. I will give an example at the conclusion.

God’s concerns come first:

Father, hallowed be your name. The basic idea of holiness is separation. The separation is not physical, but moral. Moral goodness is separated from immoral badness. God’s moral excellence is separated from all immorality. In other words, the Father does not want his name associated with anything evil.

Don’t use his name in an irreverent way. The Father has a personal name. He revealed it to Moses (Exodus 3:13-15): YHWH, Yahweh = “I am who I am.” “I am what I am.” Or just “I AM” the verb *hayah* “to be.” The name was so sacred to Jews they wouldn’t say it. The Greek name for God used in the New Testament is θεος. It’s a generic name for gods or a Supreme Being.

The Father does not want his name associated with anything evil or sinful we do. After King David’s great sin of adultery and murder, Nathan the prophet confronted him. One of the truths Nathan said to David was, *“The LORD has also taken away your sin; you shall not die. However, because of this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme...”* (NASB: 2 Samuel 12:14). David loved the LORD and represented him as king. David’s sin associated the LORD’s name (YHWH) with evil and gave the Father’s enemies an opportunity to blaspheme; that is, curse the LORD’s name. The Lord’s enemies mocked, “Israel’s god allows his king to do evil. We curse Israel’s god and his wicked king.” But the LORD protected the holiness of his name by allowing David to suffer the consequences of his sin. That’s the Father’s discipline. Read about it in 2 Samuel.

Apostle Paul said of his fellow Jews (Romans 2:23-24): *You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? For it is written, ‘The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.’* Paul’s OT reference comes from Isaiah and Ezekiel. The LORD sent the Jews into exile in Babylon to protect the holiness of his name. The LORD spoke through the prophet Ezekiel that his chosen people profaned his holy name among the nations (Ezekiel 36:21): *“I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went.”*

As a parent, I would be concerned with the integrity of my name if my children did evil. Of course, I would still love them, pray for them, and be deeply concerned for their welfare. Even though we may fail to keep the Father's name holy he is faithful and just to forgive our sins if we confess and repent (1 John 1:9). Our heavenly Father loves us and works for our welfare.

Optional example of keeping God's name holy: Watch the movie *Chariots of Fire*. It's the 1924 Olympics. Eric Liddell refuses to run 100-meters race on Sunday to honor God's name. The Prince of Wales and other British politicians pressure Liddell to run, but he remains true to his conviction to honor God's command to keep the Sabbath holy. Liddell runs the 400-meters instead; a race he is not favored to win. As he prepares to run an American sprinter hands him a note quoting 1 Samuel 2:30 "He that honors Me I will honor." Liddell defeats the American favorites and wins the gold medal. Liddell was born in China to Scottish missionary parents. After the Olympics he returned to China and died in a Japanese concentration camp.

So, if you claim to be a Christian and people know you are, then your behavior must reflect the Father's character – his holiness and his love. Living a holy life, a sanctified life, is keeping his name holy. "God is love." So, living a loving life keeps his name holy. Living according to the two great commandments, love God and neighbor, keeps the Father's name holy. When we keep the Father's name holy others will be attracted to him through us.

Be careful saying "OMG!" God isn't the Father's revealed name. It is, however, a title for the Father, so be careful using the expression. Don't flippantly use it as an expression of surprise. Use it as the beginning of a prayer: "OMG, have mercy on people. Grant them repentance and saving faith."

Your kingdom come. We think of this as future when Jesus returns. When Jesus returns the kingdom will reign forever. This prayer is a present request. We want the kingdom to be a present reality; to work among us now.

I preached Luke 11 three weeks ago that Jesus came to reveal the holiness and goodness of the Father. Jesus demonstrated the coming of the Father's kingdom by preaching the gospel, casting out demons, and healing the sick as evidence of the kingdom's presence and power. Jesus sent out all his disciples with the authority of the kingdom, Luke 9:1-2: *And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.* Jesus said to the 72, 10:9: *"Heal the sick and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'"* They used the authority of the Father's kingdom to demonstrate the Father's goodness. The Father's goodness redeems broken people. Jesus is still doing this through faithful servants today.

The kingdom is the rule of the Father. The church is not the kingdom. It is commissioned to live and advance the kingdom. We live the kingdom; it's a kingdom of faith, hope, and love. The opposite kingdom, Satan's kingdom, is a kingdom of unbelief, despair, impatience and anger. We do the work of the kingdom in the power of the HS by preaching the gospel, healing the sick, and casting out demons.

This is Father's lordship over all. The more I see the failure of the governments of this world (*and the candidates running for President in 2020*), the more I long for Father's kingdom to come! His kingdom will come. We pray this to keep our focus on it and our desire for it to come. How much passion we pray this may depend on how comfortable we are in this world. For those of us who have food and clothing, houses, cars, bank accounts, and retirement plans, this may not be a passionate prayer request. For Christians who are poor and persecuted in Asia and Africa this is a passionate request. The Father wants this to be our heart's desire and a passionate request.

We can personalize it and expand on it. Let the Holy Spirit personalize it and expand on it as you pray, "Father empower me through your Holy Spirit to live in such a way that I always honor your name. I never want to bring shame to your name or give unbelievers an opportunity to curse your name. Let others see the beauty and power of your name as I live for you today. Father, I want your kingdom to come, not just in the future, but today, right here and now. I also want to do the works that demonstrate the presence and power of your kingdom – preach the gospel, heal the sick, and cast out demons. Holy Spirit fill me with the fruit of your character – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control – and empower me to walk in the works that the Father has prepared for me to do."