

The Father's Prayer (Part 2): Luke 11:1-4

Intro: Show my wooden plaque of The Lord's Prayer from Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola. I purchased it from an inmate named Benjamin Williams.

Jesus' primary purpose to come to earth was to reveal God the Father. Jesus came to reveal the holiness, love, and goodness of the Father. 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. The greatest work that reveals the heart of the heavenly Father is the sacrifice of the Son for our sins.

We desperately need Jesus' revelation of the Father because it 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.

Jesus taught shameless persistence in prayer. "Ask and keep on asking. Seek and don't stop seeking. Knock and keep on knocking." Jesus reinforces our heavenly Father's goodness to answer prayer. God the Father only gives good gifts to his faith children. 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. Ask to be filled and walk in daily fellowship with the HS!

Luke 11:1-4: *Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." 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."

We can pray the Prayer just as it is. We can personalize it and expand on it.

Father, hallowed be your name. The Father wants his name separated from sinful things. 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." *Jehovah* is a Latin version. The Greek name for God used in the New Testament is θεοσ. (Greek gods also had personal names, for example, Zeus.) God is a generic term for supernatural being or a Supreme Being. (My personal name is William but you can refer to me as a person or "That guy.")

So, be careful saying “OMG!” Don’t flippantly use it as an expression of surprise. Use the Christian version, “Oh my gosh!”

The Father does not want his name associated with anything evil or sinful we do. 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.

Your kingdom come. The Father’s kingdom is coming, but it is also here now. The Father wants his kingdom to be a present reality; to work among us now. The kingdom is the rule of the Father over all creation. The church is not the kingdom. It is commissioned to live and advance the kingdom. We do the work of the kingdom in the power of the HS by preaching the gospel, healing the sick, and casting out demons. The Father wants this to be our heart’s desire and a passionate request.

Then our concerns:

Give us each day our daily bread.

This is prayer for our daily needs – physical or financial.

Most of us don’t have any problem with daily bread. We just go to Costco and get what we want. I expand on this petition and apply it to financial and physical wellbeing.

We ask the Father for financial wellbeing: If we don’t have a job or money then we cannot buy daily bread and pay our bills. The reason the Father gives financial abundance is for us to love one another by giving; to bless others who are less fortunate. It isn’t so we can spend more on ourselves and our lifestyles. Financial abundance ought to be used to advance the Father’s kingdom on earth which is Christ’s commission to go and make disciples of all nations.

We ask the Father for physical wellbeing - daily health. I believe we have provision for physical healing in the atonement of Christ. *(I began ministry ordained in The Christian & Missionary Alliance, a small evangelical Protestant denomination. The C&MA has 4 emphases: Christ is Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King. A. B. Simpson, the founder of the C&MA was healed of a serious heart condition. The C&MA teaches healing in the atonement of Christ.)* Isaiah 53:5 (NASB): “The chastening for our wellbeing fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed.” This refers to spiritual and physical wellbeing. (Isaiah 53:5 is quoted in 1 Peter 2:24.) Psalm 103:3: “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget (neglect or deny) all his benefits, who forgives all your sins, who heals all your diseases.” We believe the Father forgives all our sins. Why don’t we believe the Father also heals all our diseases? (This is not referring to the spiritual disease of sin!) We can claim our benefits in Christ. The Father doesn’t give snakes and scorpions to terrify and bite his children. The Father takes great delight in our wellbeing because he loves us! So, claim the benefits that the Son procured for you by his suffering and death.

An atheist lived next door to a poor widow. She lived on Social Security and Medicare. She sat on her back porch and prayed every day for daily bread. The atheist listened to her and often mocked her. “Why do you pray to a god who doesn’t exist? There’s no god to hear and answer prayer!” One day she was short on cash and needed some groceries. The atheist heard her prayer for daily bread and decided to play a trick on her. So, he drove to the store and bought some groceries. He left them at her front door, rang the doorbell, and hid in the bushes. The old widow answered and when she saw the bag of groceries she praised the Lord. “Thank you, Lord, for supplying my daily bread!” The atheist jumped out of the bushes and said, “Stop praising God. He didn’t do it. I bought them. Your god doesn’t answer prayer!” The old widow jumped and shouted louder, “Praise the Lord! Father God, you not only supplied by daily bread, you made the devil pay for it!”

Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

This seems conditional, but it isn’t. If it were conditional, then the reason for our forgiveness would be based on human action or merit. Forgiveness springs from the grace of the Father. The request moves from the lesser to the greater; it assumes we are forgiving others – the lesser – so we can appeal to our gracious Father for our forgiveness – the greater. (*NIBC Luke, Craig Evans, p.212*) It would be impossible to ask for forgiveness from the Father if we are holding on to an unforgiving attitude and feelings toward another person. It would be like asking a person to pay you back the money he borrowed from you while you refuse to pay back another person you borrowed money from. You want someone to pay the debt he owes you, but you won’t pay back the debt you own someone else. Does that make sense? We give and receive forgiveness.

“For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.” Forgiveness is releasing a debt. This is not a financial debt; it’s a love debt. Jesus taught, “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” (*In Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan, the priest and Levite who did not help the man mugged by robbers incurred a love debt because they did not love their neighbor.*) Someone owed you love, but he/she hurt you instead. He/she hurt you with bitter words or unfair criticism. Now you must forgive his/her love debt. You must forgive his/her failure to love you. Forgiveness is releasing someone from a debt, a love debt. Do I need to forgive the liars who scammed me? Yes. Jesus asked the Father to forgive the people who murdered him. (But I still pray for justice – for the scammers to be caught, prosecuted, and sentenced to jail.)

Why is it important to be forgiving people? Because if we are not forgiving then we hold hurt inside. We become angry, resentful, and bitter. If we are angry, resentful, and bitter, then we cannot receive the Father’s love for us and we cannot love others with His love. The Father wants us to receive and give His love. The attitude and emotion of unforgiveness blocks the receiving and giving of the Father’s love.

The Father knows that unforgiveness only hurts the person who doesn't forgive. Unforgiveness doesn't hurt the person who offended you, the person you are bitter and resentful toward; it only hurts you. Unforgiveness is like drinking poison and expecting it to kill the other person; or drinking emotional poison and expecting to have healthy relationships.

Do not lead us into temptation (but deliver us from evil).

Why pray this? Temptation is enticement to do evil. The Father does not tempt anyone to do evil: **James 1:12-15**: ¹² *Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.* ¹³ *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.* ¹⁴ *But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.* ¹⁵ *Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

Greek word = $\pi\epsilon\iota\rho\alpha\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ = period or process of testing, trial, temptation.

It's like 2 sides of the same coin (heads or tails / tests or temptations). When you are in a circumstance that tests your faith two realities are at work.

First reality, Satan is present to tempt you to doubt the Father's goodness. Satan wants to destroy your faith. Satan wants you to doubt the promises of your Father. Satan wants you to forget or deny the benefits his Son paid for on the cross for you to have.

Second reality, the Father's purpose is to refine and strengthen your faith. The Father will test our faith because he desires to purify and mature our faith. **James 1:2-4**: ² *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,* ³ *for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.* ⁴ *And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.* The Father knows how to mature our faith without destroying it.

I think Jesus had his own experience in mind: Luke 4:1-2: *And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness* ² *for forty days, being tempted by the devil.* The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Jesus doesn't want this to happen to us. We would probably fall to the temptation unless we are full of the HS and know and obey the word of God. Resist Satan as Jesus did when he was tempted. Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit and only spoke the word of God. Jesus said, "It is written..." and quoted scripture from Deuteronomy.

This petition means don't lead us into harmful situations where we are tempted by the devil. Or don't test us beyond what we are able to bear according to the promise in 1 Corinthians 10:13: *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*

Matthew's version of the Lord's Prayer ends with this petition: *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.* Joke: A mother was teaching her three-year-old The Lord's Prayer. For several evenings at bedtime, the child repeated it after the mother. Then one night the child was ready to solo. The mother listened with pride to the carefully enunciated words, right up to the end: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us some e-mail, Amen."

Conclusion: *Example of how to expand on these requests.*

"Heavenly Father, thank you for supplying my daily needs. Help me to trust you for today and not worry about tomorrow. You graciously supplied daily manna in the wilderness for the Hebrews. I trust you to supply my daily financial and physical needs. *(Name a specific need.)* Father, as I forgive everyone who has a love debt against me, forgive my failures to love as you have loved me. Release me from my love debts as I have released others. *(Name specific love debt sins against you or you have against others; for example, an angry argument with your spouse or child.)* Father, I know you may test my faith to make it stronger, but don't allow me to be tested beyond my ability to deal with it. When I'm tempted help me to find the way of escape you have prepared. Father fill me with you Holy Spirit to resist all temptations and endure all tests so that you will be glorified in my life."