

The Lord's Prayer – Matthew 6 – Purpose

You know, there is just something special about listening to a child pray. I heard about the daddy that was listening to his child say his prayer "Dear Harold," At this, dad interrupted and said, "Wait a minute, "How come you called God, Harold?" The little boy looked up and said, "That's what they call Him in church. You know the prayer we say, "Our Father, who art in Heaven, Harold be Thy name."

A four-year-old prayed: "And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets." (Instead of trespasses)

A mother was teaching her 3-year-old the Lord's prayer. For several evenings at bedtime she repeated it after her mother. One night she said she was ready to solo. The mother listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer. "Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us some e-mail, Amen."

The amazing thing about the Lord's Prayer is that, like the Bible itself, a child can learn it and benefit from it but even adults can misunderstand it and no part of the Lord's Prayer is misunderstood as often as the 10th verse.

"...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Have you ever read any Shakespeare? I found this in "Romeo and Juliet". I'm sure you have read it. "O serpent heart hid with a flowering face!

Did ever a dragon keep so fair a cave?

Beautiful tyrant, feind angelical, dove feather raven, wolvish-ravening lamb! Despised substance of devinest show, just opposite to what thou justly seemest."

Isn't that beautiful? That just makes me all warm inside. How about you? But what does it mean? I don't have a clue. I don't know if it is insulting or loving. But it's pretty. I just don't get it. And some of us are the same way with the second part of the Lord's Prayer found in the **10th verse of Matthew chapter 6**. We pray it and we know it's good stuff. We just don't really get it.

Let's turn there and read the whole thing to keep it in context because that is important, I believe, especially for this verse. As you remember, the disciples of Jesus have seen and heard Him pray and they have seen the power in those prayers and they said, "Hey, we want that. Show us how to do that. What's the secret?" And Jesus gave them a guide on how to pray. This is not a prayer that is to be memorized and prayed to God so we can check a box and say, "Well, now God has to do His part because I prayed the words I am supposed to." No. There is much more than that to prayer but this is the skeleton upon which we flesh out our own prayers with our own words.

Let's read it again in **Matthew 6:9-13**.

"This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11Give us today our daily bread. 12And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

Last week we talked about the first part of this passage that says, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name..." We are approaching the throne room of the King of kings, the Creator of the universe, the great I Am. He is holy; separate and different than us and has all the power and we address Him as such and give Him all the praise He is due.

There is power just in praising God for Who He is and that is how we should start. And then the second part is, *“What you want is what I want. I want to do what you want me to do and I want your will to be done in my life and in this world.”*

If you were physically going into the throne room of the Almighty God, would you start out by saying, *“Hey God, I need this and that and I need you to do this for me and oh yea, please bless the missionaries to the pygmies in New Zealand.”?*

When Isaiah saw God in **Isaiah chapter 6**, the temple was smoking and shaking and there were angels everywhere calling out, *“Holy, holy, holy!”* And what did Isaiah say? *“Sup God, hey I need...”?* No! He said, *“Aw shoot. I’m dead.”* (That’s my version but it’s pretty close.) He saw God in all His majesty and glory and it scared him to death. That is the kind of reverence we ought to have when we go to God in prayer. And the first thing we should say is, *“Whatever you want, God. That’s what I want.”*

So, what does God want? What does it look like for God to get what He wants? Jesus gave us a look into the mind of God when He told us to pray, *“your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”* And David gave us a look into Heaven to see what it looks like for God’s will to be done. Turn to **Psalm 103** for just a second. That Shakespeare was a pretty good writer - and he makes a nice fishing pole - but David is my favorite writer. Look what he says in Psalm 103.

He starts, of course, by saying, *“Praise the Lord”* and again he says, *“Praise the Lord!”* We know that’s a good way to start a prayer but he goes on in **verses 19-22** to give us a look at what it means when we pray, *“your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”* **Psalm 103:19-22** says, *“The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all. 20Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. 21Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will. 22Praise the LORD, all his works everywhere in his dominion. Praise the LORD, my soul.”*

The angels in Heaven are doing God’s will and obeying His word. Do you see that? The Lord has established His throne in Heaven, the angels are doing His will and our prayer is that the same thing would happen here and soon.

When we pray as Jesus told us to and say and really mean, *“your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”* we are saying that we want God’s will to be done like it is done in God’s Kingdom in Heaven.

Well, is God’s will ever done here like it is in Heaven? Well, sometimes. But all you have to do is read the news or just look out your window and you will see that God’s pure and perfect will is not being done here on earth right now. And it won’t be done purely and perfectly until His second coming. So, part of what we are praying for when we pray for His Kingdom and His will is that He will come back soon.

I love thinking about being in Heaven. We are told to keep our minds on things above (Colossians 3:2) and that includes thinking about what Heaven is going to be like. I was having lunch with my Dad a while back and it wasn’t a good day for him. He had Alzheimer’s Disease and he was having trouble remembering much of anything and it was very frustrating to him, as you can imagine. He was so discouraged but I told him that one day very soon we are going to be in Heaven one way or the other. Either Jesus comes to get us or we are going to die and it is going to all be good then.

His eyes brightened and sitting right there in the restaurant, he practically yelled, *“That’s right! We are going to see Jesus!”* I asked him what he wanted to do when he got there. I thought he would say he wanted to see Mom or see other relatives or be free of his disease but he simply said, *“I just want to see Jesus! I just want to see Jesus!”*

And when we see Jesus, His pure and perfect will is going to be done and we will serve Him like the angels and worship Him and all will be right in Heaven. It’s not that way here and now but we pray that it happens soon.

Until it does happen like that, we know God's will because His Word tells us. Psalm 103 says, *"Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word."* We have His Word right here in our hands and we know His will because He has told us and when we pray like Jesus said to, we are praying that God's will be done in our lives. So, what is God's will? What are some things that we know God wants? We may not know some details. But we do know some things are absolutely God's will. What are some that you can think of?

God *"desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth"* (1 Timothy 2:4) Matthew 28 says, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations."* 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances."*

We have the 10 Commandments that tell us God's will. The whole canon of scripture is telling us God's will. When we pray for His Kingdom to come and His will be done, we are praying, *"Lord, I pray that you will come quickly but until you do, help me to do your will just like the angels in Heaven are doing it right now."*

Max Lucado wrote these challenging words, "When you say, 'Your kingdom Come' you are inviting the Messiah Himself to walk into your world – you can't have the kingdom without the King. We are saying 'Come my King!' Take Your throne in our lives. Be present in my heart. Be present in my marriage, in my family, my fears, my doubts."

"your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"

Let's pray that right now if you really mean it. Let's bow our heads and close our eyes and allow God to reveal to you what His will is for your life. If you are here today then I don't doubt that you want God's will for your life. We know what He wants for all of us. Ask Him right now what He wants from you specifically. *"your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"*

If you don't have a relationship with God through His Son Jesus, then today is the day. We know without a doubt that is His will. He doesn't want you to continue living as a slave to sin with all the baggage of regret and shame that brings. He wants to make you a new creation. He wants to make you more and more like Himself with the peace and joy that comes with that. Plus the assurance of Heaven when we die.

Jesus said *"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No man comes to the Father but through Me."* (John 14:6) He died on the cross to pay the price the Father said was due for your sins so you don't have to pay for it with eternity in Hell. All you have to do is believe in Him and allow Him to change your life. Confess your sins to Him and you will be forgiven then confess that He is Lord of your life. Do it right now. We are not guaranteed another breath.