

The Prayer of the Humble: Empty Me God, So That You get All the Glory in My Life Matthew 6:9-13

As we open in our Bibles to Matthew 6, think of the context for these verses. Jesus looked out at a group of men, His disciples, that were so much like all of us. They needed humility.

They were wired to be proud, and needed a regular, daily reminder of needing to be emptied of that pride. So Jesus crafted a Divine Recipe for the best life possible.

THE DIVINE RECIPE FOR THE BEST LIFE POSSIBLE

It was a prayer model that was to become a pattern for them.

Seven petitions, seven requests to God that were each a reminder of a desperate need we each possess.

That Divine Recipe known as the Lord's Prayer contains each element we need to remember, and attend to on a daily basis to keep our lives tuned up and headed the way God planned for us.

So as we turn to Matthew 6:9-13 in our Bibles we have before us the offer God made to unleash the truths of the Lord's Prayer into changing my life today.¹

Jesus here summarized the seven key areas each of us who follow Him should pay close attention to each day.

Matthew 6:9-13 (NKJV) In this manner, therefore, 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 this day our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts², As we forgive our debtors. ¹³And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

THE SEVEN VITAL SIGNS OF SPIRITUAL HEALTH

But as you look at Christ's words, think about what we have in our possession. We have the actual call from Christ, for each of us to monitor regularly, what we can call the vital signs of our spiritual health.

Plus, Jesus tied monitoring these seven vital areas to the ceaseless habit of prayer. Note what all of our Bibles say:

"After this manner pray" (KJV); "In this manner therefore pray" (NKJV); "Pray then like this" (ESV); "Pray, then, in this way" (NIV); and "This, then, is how you should pray" (NIV).

All versions capture the clear, simple, direct command of Jesus Christ: "Pray Like This". Jesus was saying that each time we pray, we are each to remind ourselves of these

¹ 151108AM SWS-01

² In short, from the KJV onward the translation of Matthew 6.12 has gone with "debts." But the 1526 Tyndale Bible had it as "trespasses." This translation was used in the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* and is preserved in the BCP to the present day.

elements in our life. We could also call the Lord's Prayer:

CHRIST'S CHECKLIST FOR DAILY SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Simply stated, the Lord's Prayer is a pattern for us, a check list for our daily spiritual health. Living a healthy, useful life each day is built around these key elements:

1. Prayer for Daily **Worship** of Almighty God: Our Father
2. Prayer for Daily **Consecration** of My Body: Thy kingdom come
3. Prayer for Daily **Submission** to God's Will: Thy will be done
4. Prayer for Daily **Reliance** on God's Provision: give us this day
5. Prayer for Daily **Cleansing** of My Relationships: forgive us as we forgive
6. Prayer for Daily **Protection** of My Mind: deliver us from evil
7. Prayer for Daily **Humility** by Seeking God's Glory: Thine is the glory

Today we begin to look at that last petition.

We have spent past months looking at the other six.

Now to the vital need we each have to pursue Daily **Humility** by Seeking God's Glory. Remember the closing doxology of the prayer in v. 13?

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Jesus asked us to make sure everything in our life is tied to God's glory.

GOD'S GLORY IS THE THEME OF THE BIBLE

Life is not to be about us, but Him.

Life is not to be measured by our metric, but His.

Here are some clarifying verses in God's Word the Bible:

Psalm 115:1 (NKJV) Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, **But to Your name give glory, Because of Your mercy, Because of Your truth.**

Romans 11:36 (NKJV) For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, **to whom be glory forever.** Amen.

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NKJV) Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God.**

1 Corinthians 15:28 (NKJV) Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, **that God may be all in all.**

Philippians 2:11 (NKJV) and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, **to the glory of God the Father.**

Revelation 14:7 (NKJV) saying with a loud voice, "**Fear God and give glory to Him,** for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

Revelation 19:1 (NKJV) After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "**Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the**

Lord our God!

Now, back to that closing doxology of the Lord's prayer in Mat. 6:13:

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Jesus asked us to make sure everything in our life is tied to God's glory.

GOD'S GLORY IS OUR GOAL

The Lord declared³ we are sinners from birth and because of that we all want our own way (Isaiah 53:6).

Wanting our own way is a simple definition of pride.

All of us this morning shares one thing in common and that is the sin of pride.

Though most of us may never murder another human—we are proud.

Though we may never get involved in witchcraft or sodomy—we will have a lifelong involvement with pride.

No matter what else we do in your life, if humility is not our constant choice, then God will resist everything else we do. Remember the blanket statement in James 4:6 (NKJV):

But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: **“God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”**

Since life is not to be about us, but Him; and since life is not to be measured by our metric, but His, here is the BIG question:

Are you humble?

God is in a moment-by-moment, personal warfare against pride in the life of every believer.

Pride is the sin God hates most, sees first, and wants us to likewise hate.

If we are not consciously humbling ourselves daily, hourly, and moment-by-moment, then we are losing the battle with pride.

That brings us to Christ's messenger named...

JOHN THE BAPTIST

When God wanted to introduce His Son, who did He send?

John the Baptist—a messenger who displays the supreme character God seeks in His servants called humility.

When God described the messenger He would use as the herald announcing the coming of the Lamb of God who would die for sin, how is he described?

Note in Mark 1:3 he is called a “voice”, no name, no rank, no flowery introduction—and how profoundly these words about John the Baptist remind us how important humility is to God.

The supreme lesson of John the Baptist's life is humility. And there can be no more vital message that we all need to hear than that God HATES pride. God used John because he was willing to obey the Lord and by the power of the Holy Spirit in his life cultivate humility.

Listen to the testimony of John the Baptist as we turn back to John 3:26-30, and we

will hear his secret.

HE MUST INCREASE

Please stand with me, and follow along as I read John 3:26-30.

And they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!” ²⁷John answered and said, “**A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.** ²⁸You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, ‘I am not the Christ,’ but, ‘I have been sent before Him.’ ²⁹He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. ³⁰**He must increase, but I *must* decrease.**”

Pray

THE KEY TO GOD’S ATTENTION IS HUMILITY

The key to God’s attention is humility.

The pathway to being constantly showered with grace is humility.

The heart attitude that leads to humility is summed up by John’s testimony, “Christ must increase and I must decrease”.

Can you say this morning that those words are your heart’s desire? “I want Christ to increase and for me to decrease”. That is the essence of humility.

HUMILITY PROMPTS SPIRITUAL BLESSING

Humility produces spiritual blessing. Just as every sin starts in pride, every virtue begins in humility. Humility allows us to see ourselves as we are, because it shows us before God as He is.

Just as pride is behind every conflict we have with other people and every problem of fellowship we have with the Lord, so humility is behind every harmonious human relationship, every spiritual success, and every moment of joyous fellowship with the Lord.

The greatest plague on earth is pride.

More people miss heaven for pride than any other sin.

All conflicts and troubles have flowed downward from pride.

The source of every gossip, every hurt feeling, every church division, every departed sheep is pride.

At the heart of every fight is pride.

God is at war against any and all pride He sees in our lives. Both Peter and James warn us of this ongoing “pride-resisting” that God promised.

Open with me to James 4.

James 4:6, 10 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “**God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.**” ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

1 Peter 5:5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and **be clothed with humility, for “God resists**

the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

GOD CONSTANTLY RESISTS THE PROUD

In James 4:6 and I Peter 5:5 the Greek tenses and words are powerfully the same. God is constantly Himself resisting the proud, but is constantly giving grace to the humble.

The best way to be frustrated, discontent, and empty is pride.

God resists the proud—always remember that!

Our greatest enemy is pride and our greatest friend is humility.

The greatest conduit for God’s grace is humility.

So what we need to do is identify pride in our lives, humble ourselves in God’s sight—and let Him pour out His grace upon all we do!

Why is God so opposed to pride?

Because the original sin was pride, and the first sin as Lucifer challenged God.

Pride is the ultimate sin, and every sin after that has been in some way an extension of pride.

Pride is the supreme temptation from Satan, because pride is at the heart of his own evil nature. Our only protection against pride, and our only source of humility, is a proper view of God. We must understand that our pride is the sin of competing with God, and humility is the virtue of submitting to His supreme glory.⁴

HOW TO IDENTIFY MY PRIDE

The Gospel is all about the reality that I am a failure because of sin and only Christ's becoming my Substitute and taking my sin, and guilt, and shame gives me any hope.

The Cross is a constant reminder on my own I am unable to do right, unable to stop sinning, and helpless to do anything about my weaknesses, fears, and problems.

The best source of insight into pride is an examination of yourself, asking honestly—which of these areas apply to me.

Pride **doesn't want to wait**, and **doesn't want to try** for fear of failure.

Pride makes me break the rules, bend the rules, and impose my own rules on others—while resisting all of your rules.

Pride makes me *resentful* when corrected; *hurt* when disappointed; *impatient* when hindered; *greedy* when given choices (remember Lot); *critical* when speaking of rivals; *jealous* when seeing others advancing in any way; *untruthful* when confronted; and *distant* when slighted.

Pride makes me

unreliable (because you can't tell me what to do and when);

unloving (because I won't sacrifice for you);

unteachable (because you can't correct me), and

competitive (because I will always try to outdo you)!

Humility is a Choice

Back to James 4:6 and 10.

James 4:6, 10 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”¹⁰ **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and**

⁴ Adapted from MacArthur, New Testament Commentary, Ephesians 4:2.

He will lift you up.

What can happen if we humbled ourselves in the sight of God? There are several immediate results of a humbled life:

Humbled believers spend far less money (because so much spending is prompted by pride), then we are able to fund greater and greater kingdom work.

Humbled believers trim their schedules of what doesn't please God, but just is selfish activity (prompted by our pride to keep up with everyone else), then we have more time for ministry because we'd do God's work first and our pleasures second.

Humbled believers find God's Word attracts them more than their hobbies and pursuits because they've stopped living for self.

Humility means I don't have to be asked nicely, reminded, and recognized before I'll serve Christ's church—rather I know that I am Christ's bondservant and I go around looking for ways to serve Him.

Humility takes the *attraction* away from sports, the *captivation* away from finances, and the *fascination* away from media, as God's grace makes the world offensive to me—and God becomes more important than my entertainment.

As we come to Communion God gives us a prescription for staying humble: glory in the Cross. Gal 6:14

Galatians 6:14 (NKJV)

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

When I Survey