An Invitation to Pray, Part 2 Matthew 6:9-15

King of Kings! (Gospel of Matthew Series)
Prepared by: Matthew S. Black
Sunday, July 28, 2013, 10:30am at Living Hope Church of Roselle, Illinois

Give me one hundred [Christians] who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not at all whether they be [pastors] or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on earth. God does nothing but in answer to prayer."

JOHN WESLEY

- 1. WELCOME VISITORS
- 2. ANNOUNCE GRAND OPENING OF PANTRY BRING CLOTHES, FOOD, THIS WEEK
- 3. ANNOUNCE MISSIONS COMMITTEE- SEE MARCEL, JERRY OR BENSON C.
- 4. ANNOUNCE FATHER-SON CAMPOUT 2ND WEEK OF SEPT

pen your Bible to **Matthew 6:9-15.** We are continuing in a series entitled: "King of kings." This morning we are looking into the second part of a message entitled "An Invitation to Pray (The Lord's Prayer)." We continue in our study of the Sermon on the Mount.

This morning we are looking at experiencing God in prayer. God could work just fine without our prayers, but He chooses to fulfill His plans through our praying! Prayer is an invitation by Jesus. He says, "Pray then..."

Reading of Holy Scripture

Matthew 6:9-15, "Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread, 12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Prayer is an Invitation

Prayer is an invitation by Jesus. He says, "Pray then..." What should we pray for? Jesus invites us to pray for at least six things.

This morning we see five (5) invitations of prayer in the Lord's Prayer. Prayer is an invitation to experience...

¹ As quoted in Warren Wiersbe's Exposition Commentary: Isaiah-Micah (David Cook Publications, 2002), 434.

- God's **Presence**, our Father in Heaven (9)
- God's **Program**, your kingdom come, your will be done (10)
- God's **Provision**, give us our daily bread (11)
- God's **Pardon**, forgive us our debts (12, 14-15)
- God's **Protection**, lead us not into temptation (13)

I. An invitation to experience God's **Presence** (6:9).

Matthew 6:9-15, "Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name."

Our Father

We must consider that this prayer assumes that we are in community with one another. He says we are to address God as "**Our** Father." He is the Father of all the faithful. One of the things we need to realize is that we are not alone.

Abraham's Promise

You are the seed of Abraham. Remember Abraham's Promise from God? You'll be as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sands of the sea! Paul says in Gal. 3 that if you have the faith of Abraham you are his seed and heirs according to the promise. All nations would be blessed through Abraham. Abraham would be the father not only of the Jews, but of *many nations*! So when we say "our Father" we are in community with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We are in community with believers of Old and New Testaments.

In Community with All True Believers

We are in community with all true born again Christians whether they hold to our theological system or not. Both Arminians and Calvinists will be in heaven. Baptists and Presbyterians will be in heaven. The only thing that matters is not your church name, but whether you know Christ! Heaven will not be segmented by denominations. "Unless a man is born again he will never enter into the Kingdom of heaven."

Our Father in Heaven

Jesus' invitation extends to a place that is not of this world. He is our Father *in Heaven*. This is the place God dwells. When we think of Heaven though, we must not think of clouds and floating around. That is the stuff of Hollywood. Heaven is the place where God dwells. In the future heaven will come to earth. We will not live in the sky eternally, but we will live in the new heaven and new earth. It's together because in the ages to come, heaven actually comes down to earth. Heaven is the "Paradise of God". What we will experience one day with Him will not be floating on clouds. It will be a new heaven and a new earth where "the dwelling place of God is with man. [the Lord] will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God" (Revelation 21:3).

Practicing God's Presence

Martin Luther said, "If I fail to spend two hours in prayer each morning, the devil gets the victory through the day. I have so much business I cannot get on without spending three hours daily in prayer."²

A close friend of *John Wesley*, writes, "[Wesley] thought prayer to be more his business than anything else, and I have seen him come out of his closet with a serenity of face next to shining". Wesley was known to spend two to three hours in prayer a day.

The Scottish preacher *Robert Murray McCheyne* who said, "I ought to spend the best hours in communion with God. It is my noblest and most fruitful employment, and it is not to be thrust into a corner. The morning hours, from six to eight, are the most uninterrupted and should be thus employed".⁴

No one is ever too busy to pray! You simply have to say YES to God and NO to everything in this world. Listen, you may not have three hours, but just you must begin somewhere. You will never sense the nearness of God until you get away from friends and family and work, and just get alone with God. That is why the Lord Jesus talks about praying in a closet. He says, "and when you have **shut your door**, pray to your Father in secret" (**Matthew 6:6**). You've got to **shut the door** on every other priority and get completely alone with God. Seek God's Kingdom as your *first priority*.

God's Name Hallowed in Our Lives

"Hallowed be your name" according to Chrysostom is to give Him glory. It is praying that people will see our Father in heaven through us, and glorify Him! That He would get glory from our lives. Our ultimate desire in all things is that God gets glory! That more and more people worship God as a result of our prayers and our life. Hallowed be the name of our Father. May His name be set apart as a treasure. May He be **admired** in all that we do and say.

II. An invitation to experience God's **Program** (6:10).

Matthew 6:10, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Self-Autonomy is Dangerous

Whether it be in an individual or in a nation, self autonomy is dangerous! The truth is very few individuals or nations care about God's kingdom.

Already, Not Yet

How do we define God's Kingdom? We could say it is already here, but not yet in its full form. God's Kingdom is defined for us in **Romans 14:17**, "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." So we see that God's people experience God's kingdom, yet it is not yet here in its full expression.

² E.M. Bounds. *Power through Prayer*, 45.

³ Ibid, 44.

⁴ Ibid, 46.

We are to see first God's Kingdom and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33). So if God's kingdom is God's rule in me through the Holy Spirit, then prayer is a major way I can seek the kingdom. I need to pray that God will have His way in my life and in the world.

The King is inseparable from His kingdom. To pray **Thy kingdom come** is to pray for the **program** of the God to be fulfilled, for Christ to come and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. His program and His plan should be the preoccupation of our lives and of our prayers.⁵

God Has Been King

This is not to say that God has not already been ruling and reigning as King. "The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1). God is already King, and his kingdom spans the entire universe. "Your kingdom come" is a call for a new and unique manifestation of his kingdom in the future.

God Will Be King

There is coming a day at the second coming when Christ our King will return, judge the world, and set up his eternal kingdom.⁷ This is a time when the whole earth will be redeemed. Sin and sorrow will be wiped away.

God's Kingdom Coming is not a gradual Christianization of the world. In fact the Bible says as the Day of Christ approaches, people and events will become worse and worse. What will happen is that God will save His people even as the world grows worse and worse.

Your Will be Done

The next petition is in **Matthew 6:10b**, "your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." It is a request not only to pray for Christ's kingdom to come, but to live it out!

How can we live out the prayer of "Your Kingdom come"? We can pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

How is God's Will Done in Heaven?

God's will is done perfectly in heaven. You'll never hear an angel saying, "You know, I don't think I'll do your will right now. Let me put it off till later". We should be as obedient to God as the angels in heaven. How can we do that.

Walking in the Spirit

1. Live out the Kingdom by walking in the Spirit. Walk with God as Adam did in the Garden of Eden. We read in Galatians 5:16–17, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do." There is a war going on in your soul. You must constantly be experiencing God's presence and program or you will be over taken. After warning us about sinful anger, Paul says in Ephesians 4:27, "Give no opportunity for the devil". We as Christians can either be pawns for the kingdom of Satan or instruments of the Kingdom of God. Pray to Christ, "Thy Kingdom come!" and experience God's kingdom by walking in the Spirit.

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⁵ MacArthur, 379.

⁶ Hughes, 168.

⁷ Ibid.

Evangelize

2. Publish and announce the "Gospel of the Kingdom". People need to stop serving the "kingdom of this world" and start serving in the Kingdom of God. Jesus' substitutionary atonement makes God's kingdom possible for rebel sinners. Christ gives His life for His enemies! Now God's enemies become the ambassadors and soldiers for His kingdom.

III. An invitation to experience God's **Provision** (6:11).

Matthew 6:11, "Give us this day our daily bread."

What is Our Daily Bread?

It should be obvious that prayer for "daily bread" is not for mere bread alone, still less the bread of the Lord's Supper, which is what Jerome suggested. It is prayer for real food and for whatever else we need to sustain ourselves physically.⁸

What should we pray for? "Great things, small things, spiritual things and material things, inward things and outward things—there is nothing that is not included in this prayer." 9

This Day: Daily Manna

God has not promised to give you what you need tomorrow or next week or next year. He has promised to give you your daily manna. In the Old Testament, the people were delivered from slavery in Egypt. They were worried about God providing for them. But God showed He is able to provide.

The children of Israel woke up one morning and their was this white substance coming down from heaven and resting on the ground. They said, "What is it?" That what Manna means: "what is it?" God often provides for us in way we could not imagine so that He can get all the glory!

Worry About Nothing, Pray About Everything

God is the provider and sustainer of all things. I love the NLT's translation of **Philippians 4:6-7**, "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done." And verse 7 follows (ESV), "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Do Not Be Anxious About God's Provisions

Jesus tells us to never be anxious about God's provisions later in this passage in **Matthew** 6:25–33, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the Gentiles

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⁸ Boice, 99.

⁹ Helmut Thielicke, Our Heavenly Father (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980), 77-78.

seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

He promises in **Philippians 4:19**, "my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

Prayer is about Trusting God, God NEVER Drops His Children

Prayer is so much about trusting God. One of the things I love to do is throw my children up in the air a little, and then when I catch them they **giggle**. Have you ever done that?

I used to do that to my son William, because as he got a little bit bigger, he trusted me less. He saw that I was prone to possibly drop him.

Now that is true. I may be prone to drop my children – though I don't think I ever have. But God has never dropped one of his children. You can trust Him! He will always catch you in your hour of need. Ask Him for your daily needs.

God says to us in **Jeremiah 33:3**, "Call to me and I will answer you, and will show you great and mighty things that you have not known." God loves to surprise His children with hidden or surprising answers to our prayers. So we ought to pray about everything.

Knots in Our Shoelaces

My children will come to me from time to time with doozers of knots in their shoes. I can't often help them. How many of you have gotten so desperate in that situation that you try to pull the knot free with your teeth!? Sometimes we get those knots in our lives and we have no solutions! But it's not that way with God. "With God all things are possible"!

IV. An invitation to experience God's **Pardon** (6:12, 14-15).

Matthew 6:9-15, "and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors... 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

It is not only provision for daily living that we need, of course. We are not only creatures, we are sinful creatures. Hence, we also need forgiveness for our many sins, which God provides on the basis of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ. It is why Jesus came. This petition of the Lord's Prayer says, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (v. 12).¹⁰

Debts

The word for **debt** (*opheilēma*) is used only a few times in the New Testament, but its verb form is found often. Of the some thirty times it is used in its verb form, twenty-five times it refers to **moral or spiritual debts**. Sin is a moral and spiritual debt to God that must be paid.¹¹

Sin is that which separates man from God, and is therefore man's greatest enemy and greatest problem. Sin dominates the mind and heart of man. It has contaminated every human being and is the degenerative power that makes man susceptible to disease, illness, and every conceivable form of evil and unhappiness, temporal and eternal. The ultimate effects of sin are death and damnation, and the present effects are misery, dissatisfaction, and guilt. Sin is the common denominator of every crime, every theft, lie, murder, immorality, sickness, pain, and sorrow of

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¹⁰ Boice, 100.

¹¹ MacArthur, 391.

mankind. It is also the moral and spiritual disease for which man has no cure. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then you also can do good who are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. 13:23). The natural man does not *want* his sin cured, because he loves darkness rather than light (John 3:19). 12

The only cure for sin is regeneration through faith in Christ's cross. In our conversion, God gives us a new heart and a new standing with God. Our debts are taken away.

The Price Christ Paid

Romans 3:26 says that Christ propitiated God's wrath for us. He satisfied God's justice on our behalf. Go to Calvary and see the Son of God lifted up for you! See the thorns in His head and the nails in His hands and feet! Go there at mid-day in the hot sun, and hear Him cry, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do!" And at that time watch as the sun ceases to shine. The darkness covers the earth. Christ cries out: "My God, my God why have you forsaken me?" God forsook Christ so that you would not be forsaken.

Forgiveness: A Mark of Kingdom Citizenship

What does this mean? It cannot mean that by forgiving others, God will forgive us, because that would be meriting God's favor. We do not earn God's grace and forgiveness. What Jesus is saying is simply this – your ability to forgive is a mark of your kingdom citizenship.

If you do not forgive others, it shows that you have not experienced God's forgiveness.

This is not something to be taken lightly, for we cannot help but notice that this is the only one of the six petitions in this prayer that is picked up again and amplified by Jesus (in vv. 14–15). "For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." This should impress us with the importance—even more, the necessity—of forgiving others. This point is also made strongly in Christ's parable of the unforgiving steward (in Matt. 18:21–35).¹³

Putting Away Grudges & Bitterness

We all have bitterness at times. Bitterness is like drinking a cup of poison and expecting the other person to die. What is the mark of Christianity? One mark is the ability to forgive. How do we do this? **Ephesians 4:27, 29–32**, "and give no opportunity to the devil...29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

Christians Don't Practice Sin

A Christian does not practice sin as a pattern in his or her life. The Apostle John is clear about that in **1 John 3:6-9**, "No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. 8 Whoever makes a practice of sinning is

¹² MacArthur, 392.

¹³ Ibid.

of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. 9 No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God."

Yet the same author also says earlier in his letter, **1 Jn. 1: 7-9**, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

A simple way to understand this teaching is: Christians are not sinless, but they will be sinning less. In fact as you look at Isaiah 6:5-6, you find a man so close to the presence of God, and instead of feeling holier, he feels more filthy. He says, "I'm a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts".

A Christian can sometimes feel like the most unholy person on earth. That's part of what God does in our heart when we get honest about sin.

V. An invitation to experience God's **Protection** (6:13).

Matthew 6:13, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

What it Doesn't Mean

What does "<u>Lead us not into temptation</u>" mean? Certainly it cannot mean (as some have wrongly thought) that God is the prime mover behind all temptations. **James 1:13** makes this clear: "<u>When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.'</u> ... nor does he tempt anyone." On the other hand, others have imagined that if Christians truly pray this prayer, they can be delivered from *all* temptation. But the Bible is clear that temptation is an inavoidable part of human existence. ¹⁴

Spiritual War

We are in a spiritual war! We are constantly being tempted. Every day you have a choice. Galatians 5:16–17, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do."

God's Word is Your Light to Expose Temptation Traps

There is constant temptation. The only way you are able to see the trap of temptation.

- Psalm 119:11, "Your Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against you."
- Psalm 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Driving Without Headlights at Night

You cannot possibly not get caught into the traps of temptation unless you are in God's Word. Not reading and applying God's Word each day is like driving on the darkest road without headlights. It's like driving on a dark road where NO ONE has head lights!

¹⁴ Hughes, 194.

Endure Hardness

Living the Christian life is going to be a life of constant assault and temptation. **2 Timothy 2:3** says "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (KJV). You are going to be tempted. Thus the meaning of "Lead us not into temptation" is simply, "**Do not allow us to come under the sway of temptation that will overpower us and cause us to sin.**" God is the only one that can keep you from sin.

Fiery Darts

Ephesians 6:10–17, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Remember your enemy is not your spouse, your boss, your family, your neighbors. We wrestle against spiritual forces of darkness. And Satan pulls no punches.

Satan is Brutal

1 Peter 5:8 tells us, "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

Satan wants to buffet you, and beat you up! Remember the words of Paul – 2 Corinthians 12:7–10, "To keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Even Satan is absolutely under the control of God and cannot do anything to the saints without the permission of God!

A Way of Escape

We pray for God to deliver us from temptation, but God commands us to flee from it(1 Cor. 6:18; 1 Cor. 10:14). We are to flee idolatry! There is always a way of escape! 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."

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How Long Has it Been?

I don't like to be away from my family for any length of time. The longest was three weeks when I went to Spain. I was so glad I could talk to them almost every day. But each day I longed to hold my wife and my children. My body ached for them.

So it is with our walk with the Lord. We walk by faith, not by site. We see in a mirror very darkly at times. It's hard to see through all the pain and confusion. But we can pick up the phone. We can pray without ceasing. We can go to that secret place and commune with our God. How long has it been since you had a significant time and experiencing of the grace of God in prayer?

Conclusion

What a joy to be invited into God's presence. As Christians we are His temples. Your heart is His Holy of Holies.

Prayer is not needed from God's perspective. He already knows what we need before we ask. Prayer is needed for us that we might draw near to God. Prayer is God's invitation! You must make time for prayer. Without it, you can do nothing.

Adoniram Judson Illustration

With prayer, you can do what men like Adoniram Judson, missionary to Burma did. He went to a pagan land. When Judson began his mission in Burma, he set a goal of translating the Bible and founding a church of 100 members before his death. When he died, he left the Burmese Bible, 100 churches, and over 8,000 believers. 15 What was his secret? Judson was not a great man. He was a very weak man with a very powerful God. Judson was a weak man and he knew it. For this reason, he demanded of himself that he seek the Lord for two to three hours a day. In his own writings, tells how he would find time for this. He says, "Arrange your affairs, if possible, so that you can leisurely devote two or three hours every day" to prayer. Judson was known to divide this prayer time into seven sections throughout the day. You say, how did he do it? Well, I'll let him tell vou. He writes the following: "Endeavor seven times a day to withdraw from business and company, and lift up thy soul to God in private retirement. Begin the day by rising after midnight and devoting some time amid the silence and darkness of the night to this sacred work. Let the hour of opening dawn find thee at the same work. Let the hours of nine, twelve, three, six, and nine at night witness the same. Be resolute in His cause. Make all practical sacrifices to maintain it. Consider that thy time is short and that business and company must not be allowed to rob thee of thy God."16

How we need to respond to Jesus' invitation to pray and experience God!

¹⁵ Rosalie Hall Hunt (Spring 2006). "Unforgettable" in the magazine:. Christian History & Biography 90: 39–41.

¹⁶ E.M. Bounds. Power through Prayer, 48.