

# **Control Me: Learning to Seek First the Rule of God Over My Life Each Day Matthew 6:9-13**

Today we are looking at the Lord's Prayer. As we open to Mat. 6:9-13, we are examining each of the seven petitions or phrases that make up this model prayer. These petitions are much like an overview of all the elements that make up the life of a healthy, growing believer.

This pattern Jesus gave us is a reminder for us, each time we pray, of all the elements needing attention in our Christian lives. This prayer can become the vital link between our **minds** (where we know truth), and our **lives** (where we live out that truth).

## **A PRAYERFUL, DAILY, SPIRITUAL CHECKLIST**

Jesus distilled down a checklist for each of us who follow Him. During the years of the space program sending astronauts to the moon, there were elaborate pre-launch checklists that had to be followed so the launch was successful.

Much like a pilot goes over his check list before take off every flight, just to make sure they have done everything needed for a safe flight, so we followers of Christ need to take a moment to be sure we are ready to fly through all of the storms of life.

Here are those seven areas Jesus left for us to check. They can be expressed as prayer requests, asking God to conform us to His plans for us. They flow like this:

### **FOCUS ME:**

This is when I pause to reaffirm my focus on God the Father, as my All-Powerful, Always-Loving, All-Knowing, and Always Present God of the Universe. Focus my heart, my mind, my emotions, and my responses to whatever comes today through this truth. The Almighty God of the Universe, sitting upon the Throne of Heaven is my Father.

### **CONTROL ME:**

This is when I consciously surrender to God, by inviting Him to take over my life again today. I offer to Him the priority spot in my life. He gets first place in my plans. I will seek Him before everything else. I will seek His Word to feed my soul. I will seek His Truth to guide my thoughts. I will seek His Peace to guard my anxious heart. I seek Him, and right here, before I fly out into my day, I ask Him to Control Me.

Of all the places that we can stumble, this second petition is the most strategic area. If we

do not get this point, we are like a car with the drive shaft disconnected, or the transmission shot. The motor is revving, the power source is fully functional, but we are going nowhere. The connection between the engine of our life and our daily journey through life is right here.

## **GUIDE ME:**

This is my setting for the day. Each time I face a choice, I pause and invite God to guide me, lead me, and show me what will please Him. This is staying in step with His Spirit. This is asking to be filled so I never peddle through life on flat tires. All that help from my Father comes each time I stop and ask for His filling to Guide me.

## **SUPPLY ME:**

This transforms all my personal prayer requests into requesting from my Father what is best. I want His choices not my own, His plans not mine. This means that I can boldly know that anything my Father wants me to do, he will provide for. My Father is never late, rarely early, and always on time. He wants me to increase my faith by asking, seeking, knocking, and waiting.

## **CLEANSE ME:**

This is when I do a quick inventory to see if there are any un-confessed and un-forsaken sins in my life. Also, I apply God's call for me to be kind and tenderhearted, forgiving everyone around me. If there is anyone I am holding a hurt, grudge, or un-forgiving spirit towards, I cry out for cleansing. There is constant torment for me from my Father (Mt. 18: ) for as long as I cling to my hurt, any bitterness, and all unforgiving ways. This cry to my Father to Cleanse me is the only way the grace-empowered engine of my life will continue to run.

## **PROTECT ME:**

This is my pause for checking my gear. My helmet is when I'm holding onto the truths of my salvation. My breastplate is maintaining the personal integrity of denying ungodliness any place in my life. My belt that holds everything together is the truth from God that I believe. This prepares me to be able to wield my shield of faith that quenches demonic darts of despair, hopelessness, and pangs of overpowering lusts. Each of those are quenched by believing truth from God. Then I make sure my feet are protected from the punctures that life can bring. Finally I check my sword, the arsenal of verses I have personally learned as lethal weapons when my prowling, roaring adversary pounces on my seeking to devour me with anxiety, fear, distraction, materialism, or lust. I ask for my Father to Protect me by taking, holding, and using everything he gave me in Christ to use through life.

## EMPTY ME:

This is my conscious time of checking for those ticks of pride that creep in un-noticed as I go through the woods and fields of life. They start biting into me saying that I am important, and I am vital. My way is to be fought for, my pleasures and conveniences are more important than serving God. I must stop and look for these dangerous ways and say Empty me my Father of any pride and self-seeking. It is Your glory, not mine, that I live for today.

If we step back we can see that the Lord's Prayer mirrors our spiritual lives:

## THIS PRAYER OVERVIEWS THE ESSENTIALS OF SALVATION

**At salvation, I was born again into God's family** (Jn. 1:12), so now I can now truly say: *Our Father who art in Heaven, I will hallow Thy Name.*

John 1:12 (NKJV) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

**When I surrender to God each day**, and learn to seek Him first as I go through life (Mt. 6:33), then I can truly say: *Thy Kingdom come in my life.*

**When I present myself back to God as His servant to do His will** (Jn. 6:38), I can now truly say: *Thy will be done on earth in my life as it is done in Heaven.*

**When I realize that I don't live, move, or have my being even a moment physically apart from His Omnipotence**, because I need His daily sustenance (Mt. 4:4; Jn. 15:5), I can now truly say also the same about my spiritual life: *Give me this day my daily bread.*

**When I remember my dying Savior hoarsely cry from the Cross** 'Father forgive them' (Lk. 23:34), I can now truly say: *Forgive me my trespasses as I forgive those who trespass against me.*

**When I understand that I have been set free** (Jn. 8:31-32), I can now truly say: *Lead me away from temptations, and deliver me from the evil one.*

**When I echo my Savior as He walked to the Cross** (Jn. 5:23,30; 12:28), I can now truly say that is what I live for, that is what I want, and what I seek for. God gets the glory, for of You, through You, and To You is EVERYTHING! So I can now truly say: *Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.*

John 5:23, 30 (NKJV) that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. <sup>30</sup> I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me. John 12:28 (NKJV) Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, *saying*, "I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again."

## JESUS SAID THAT SALVATION EQUALS: GOD AS KING OF MY LIFE

Matthew 4:17,23 (NKJV) From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**" <sup>23</sup> And Jesus went about all Galilee,

teaching in their synagogues, **preaching the gospel of the kingdom**, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

Matthew 5:3, 10, 19-20 (NKJV) “Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the **kingdom of heaven**. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the **kingdom of heaven**. 19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be **called least in the kingdom of heaven**; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be **called great in the kingdom of heaven**. 20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means **enter the kingdom of heaven**.

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) But **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness**, and all these things shall be added to you.

Matthew 10:37-39 (NKJV) He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 **And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me**. 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

Luke 9:23-25 (NKJV) Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, **let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me**.<sup>24</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.<sup>25</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? (see also Matthew 16:24-27; Mark 8:34)

Luke 14:26-27, 33 (NKJV) “If anyone **comes to Me** and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot **be My disciple**. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot **be My disciple**. 33 **So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple**.

John 12:25-26 (NKJV) **He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life**.<sup>26</sup> If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him *My* Father will honor.

## WE NEED TO SEEK GOD’S CONTROL DAILY

When Jesus designed that the very first element or petition of our prayer (after we log in and connect with God), was to be surrendering to His control: the message is deafeningly loud.

Can you hear Him? Jesus said, invite God the Father to control you each day.

As soon as you know that the prayer has gone through, and you are online, make your first choice to be asking God, “Control me today”.

Since this is such a huge priority that God wants it first in line, what does it mean to invite God’s control?

How can I do that in such a way that I know I am doing what He wants me to do?

## THE PETITION “CONTROL ME” MEANS

### **Control My Treasures.**

Matthew 6:19-21 (NKJV) “**Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth,** where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

### **Control My Body.**

Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, **that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God,** *which is* your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

### **Control my Motives.**

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (NKJV) Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? <sup>20</sup> **For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.**

### **Control my Thoughts.**

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 (NKJV) For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, **bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,**

### **Control my Life.**

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV) **I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me;** and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

### **Control my Emotions.**

Galatians 5:22-26 (NKJV) **But the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such

there is no law. <sup>24</sup> **And those *who are Christ's* have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** <sup>25</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

### **Control my Time.**

Ephesians 5:16 (NKJV) **redeeming the time**, because the days are evil.

### **Control my Mind.**

Philippians 4:8 (NKJV) Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—**meditate on these things.**

### **Control my Tongue.**

Colossians 4:6 (NKJV) **Let your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt**, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

### **Control my Love.**

1 John 2:15-17 (NKJV) **Do not love the world or the things in the world.** If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

So Christ's desire is that we seek first the control over everything in life, by God our Father. So, what happens if we fail to go through this checklist and surrender the control of our lives to our Father?

## **BEWARE OF DRIFTING AWAY FROM SEEKING GOD FIRST**

At the end of an incredible life, John the Apostle wrote some arresting words. He had met and followed Jesus as a very young man. After those climactic days of the Crucifixion, resurrection and birth of the church, John had outlived them all. As the final Apostle he closes his message with this warning:

In First John, the last words of John to believers are a warning against idols. The Spirit of God moved John to write a stern warning at the end of the Apostolic Age to the vibrant New Testament Church that they needed to be very careful to guard against idols.

### **Beware of idols.**

1 John 5:21 (NKJV) Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

That seems so strange to us to hear a warning about setting up any Buda, Baal, or Ashtoreth statues. That's what we think, right? We don't have any graven images around in our lives anymore. What are some of the modern day idols? Look at some old idols that the Lord condemns, and in them we can see the new idols all around us.

### **Beware of the idol of money:**

Job 31:24-28 (NKJV) "If I have made gold my hope, Or said to fine gold, '*You are my confidence*'; <sup>25</sup> If I have rejoiced because my wealth *was* great, And because my hand had gained much; <sup>26</sup> If I have observed the sun when it shines, Or the moon moving *in* brightness, <sup>27</sup> So that my heart has been secretly enticed, And my mouth has kissed my hand; <sup>28</sup> This also *would be* an iniquity *deserving of* judgment, For I would have denied God *who is* above.

### **Beware of the idol of Career or Technology:**

Habakkuk 1:15-16 (NKJV) They take up all of them with a hook, They catch them in their net, And gather them in their dragnet. Therefore they rejoice and are glad. <sup>16</sup> Therefore they sacrifice to their net, And burn incense to their dragnet; Because by them their share *is* sumptuous And their food plentiful.

### **Beware of the idol of Appetites or Desires:**

Philippians 3:19 (NKJV) whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

### **Beware of the idol of Distractions:**

Revelation 2:4 (NKJV) Nevertheless I have *this* against you, **that you have left your first love.**

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