



The Life of Jesus (24)

The Lord's Prayer (2)

Matthew 6:9-13

#1 False Prayers

Before Jesus taught how to pray, he first explained what can't be considered true prayers. Jesus talked about two examples of prayer.

1) The Hypocrites' Prayer

Their purpose in praying is not to communicate with God, but to show off their righteousness. So, they liked to pray in public places to be seen by others.



If we pray because we mainly care what others think about us, we pray in vain and that prayer has nothing to do with our relationship with God.

Jesus: “When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen” (Mt 6:6)

It doesn't mean that we should always pray only in places where there are no other people. What Jesus wants to teach us is the true purpose of prayer. Only God should be the object of our prayers.

#2 False Prayers

2) The Pagans' Prayer

The feature of their prayers is that they **keep on babbling**, repeating the same words, and believing that God will hear their prayers if they use more words.

When we pray to God, we should always remember the fact that **we're praying to the living God** who knows us and our needs better than we do and cares for us.

We also find another feature of the pagans' prayer after the Lord's prayer.

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life... do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ **For the pagans run after all these things**, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them” (Mt 6:25, 31-32)

These shouldn't be our first interests in prayer. We shouldn't prioritize our interests before God. Rather than asking for our own personal interests and needs, **we need to hear what God is telling us first.**

#3 Our Father in Heaven

After talking about the hypocrites' and pagans' prayers, Jesus taught people how to truly pray to God in accordance with his will.

“This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name” (Mt 6:9)

The phrase, 'our Father in heaven' is so familiar that we often use it just as an idiomatic phrase without knowing what it really means.



Our father in heaven' is the key of every prayer. That's because it defines what kind of relationship we have with God.

#4 Our Father in Heaven

The next question we ask is why God in heaven hears our prayers.

The word 'Father' tells us the reason. Because he is our Father, and we are his children, we can go to him and pray . Even though we're vulnerable to sin, stumble because of our weaknesses, and make many mistakes, we can still go to him, rely on him, and even pray for our sins and weaknesses. That's because we know that **he is our Father and he loves us the same no matter who we are and what we've done.**

We must stand strong on the truth that all our sins were already forgiven through Jesus Christ, the Son of God and that **nothing in the world can separate us from God's love.**

Even when we feel like we don't deserve to go to him, we should remember the truth and boldly go to our Father, relying on his unconditional and everlasting love.

#5 Our Father in Heaven

God chose Israel because he loved them and remembered the covenant he had made with their ancestors.

“The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples...not because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors...” (Dt 7:6-8)

The reasons were not in Israel, but in God. Israel became God's people not because they were worthy or deserved to become his people, but because God loved them and remembered them.

The same principle is applied to our relationship with God. We became God's children not because we were righteous enough to be called his children.

When we didn't deserve to be loved at all, God showed his wonderful, perfect love through Jesus Christ. To make us his children, God sent his only Son to the world and had him die on the cross. By doing so, God opened the new, living way for us to be his children.

#6 Our Father in Heaven

“To all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision… but born of God.” (Jn 1:12-13)

This is the most wonderful privilege we have as Christians —to have the right to be God’s children. We become children of God when we believe in Jesus. Becoming God’s children is solely dependent on God’s love and Jesus’ sacrifice, not on who we are or what we have done.

There is something important we should remember when we call him ‘Father.’ In order to make us his sons and daughters, God chose to become like one of us to bear our sins and die for them.

We can see the greatness of God’s love on the cross. The cross tells us how much he loves us. Through the cross, we became his children who can boldly call him ‘Father.’ This love must be the basis of our prayer.

Memory Verses

“This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name” (Mt 6:9) (1)

“The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples ...not because you were more numerous than other peoples. But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors...” (Dt 7:6-8) (2)

“To all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” (Jn 1:12) (1)

Questions

1) Why did Jesus command his followers not to conform to the hypocrites' and pagans' prayer? Why do you think it is important to remember that you are praying to the living God?

2) Why do you think the phrase 'Our Father in heaven' is the key to entering prayer? Why is it important to remember that he is our Father and we are his children in our prayers?