

Making the Model Prayer Practical **Matthew 6:9-13**

Introduction:

1. Prayer to God is a true privilege, and it is also a very powerful thing. But, prayer is not a magic wand or a rabbit's foot to get what **we** want.
2. Prayer, at its most basic level, is simply talking to God. Jesus Christ was constantly praying to His heavenly Father. There was constant communication.
3. The disciples saw this, and they said, "*Lord, teach us to pray...*"
Luke 11:1
4. Jesus responded by saying, "*After this manner therefore pray ye...*" Some call this the "Lord's Prayer"; some call it the model prayer.
5. There is no indication that our Savior ever intended for this to be a prayer of repetition, just saying these same words over and over again. Look at what He said right before in verse 7.
 - We never find Jesus leading His disciples in a recitation of this prayer. We find no mention of it in the New Testament church, the book of Acts, or any of Paul's epistles.
 - Clearly, it was never intended to be a prayer to be repeated verbatim, but it was simply a model prayer or an example.
6. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them **how** to pray, not to give them a prayer. So that's what Jesus did. He gave them a model. In fact, it is a wonderful model.
 - Most believers want to pray, and in their spirit, they know they need to pray. However, they don't usually know what to pray for or about.
7. This prayer provides for us a model. It is the skeleton, but then you have to put the meat on it by making it personal to your life, in your situation, and in the time period in which you live. How is this done?

First, always begin with praise.

1. Notice how Jesus begins this model prayer (vs. 9). What is He doing? He is praising God the Father.
2. When He says, "*Our Father which art in heaven,*" He is declaring God's position – God is high and exalted.
 - When we come to God we must recognize His position and our position, which will cause us to humble ourselves.

3. Next, Jesus prays, “*Hallowed be thy name...*” “*Hallowed*” means “holy.” He is affirming the character of God the Father. He is holy, pure, sinless, and perfect.
4. How much time do you spend praising and thanking God each day? God is so pleased when we recognize Him for who He is and we praise Him accordingly. 1 Timothy 1:17; Ephesians 3:20-21
5. The apostle Paul taught the Gentile churches that they should be praising God mightily for His incredible mercy and grace (Romans 15:9-11). But how?
 - Glorify (to render esteem and honor) God for His mercy.
 - Sing unto His name (ever sing to Him when you pray?).
 - Rejoice and praise the Lord (are you thankful?).
 - Laud Him – this means literally “to applaud, commend, praise.”
6. It reminds me of the lyrics of a famous hymn that says...
 - “Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”
7. We must spend time praising God. Here is a praise list:
 - Praise Him for who He is. What is the Lord to you?
 - Thank Him for what He has done.
 - Thank Him for your blessings.
8. It pleases God so much when we praise Him. Begin your prayers this way.

Second, pray for God’s work on earth.

1. This prayer, “*Thy kingdom come,*” had direct doctrinal application to the twelve. They were preaching the good news of the coming kingdom, declaring that the Messiah had come. They were longing for it to come.
 - Of course, we know that hidden in God was a mystery, and that mystery was the setting aside of that kingdom program (temporarily) and a time of unprecedented grace for all nations and all peoples.
2. But there is practical application that we need to consider. There should be in the heart of every true believer a desire to see God’s work, God’s will and God’s plan, fulfilled on this earth. This is the heart of what Jesus is teaching them.

3. The essence of this prayer reminds us that it is not about us. The first two parts of this prayer reminds us that we are not the center of the universe. It is truly about God, His plan, and His work, and what **He** is doing on planet earth.
4. Our daily prayer should be, “God, how can I further **Your** work? How can I help you accomplish **Your** plans?”
5. This is why prayer for your local church should be on your daily prayer list. It should be on your heart and mind. Why? Because today, this is God’s primary channel for accomplishing His plan and purpose on this earth. God accomplishes His work through local churches.
 - Satan is blinding eyes; the church is there to provide light.
 - Satan is propagating lies; the church is there to proclaim truth.
 - Satan is trying to destroy lives; the church is there to rescue lives.
6. I know this is very hard to understand, but what God is doing is more important than what we are doing.
7. As you pray about this daily, it will help you to keep the proper perspective.
8. Did you notice that the prayer for God’s work to be accomplished comes before any prayer for our personal needs? God’s work and God’s plans should be first and foremost in our hearts and minds.
 - My prayers and my life should be working in harmony with God’s will and God’s work through my local church.
9. God longs for our prayers and our participation in order to fulfill His will on this earth. It is God’s will for the gospel to be proclaimed, to save souls, and to reconcile sinners to Himself (1 Timothy 2:4). Yet, we are told to pray for it (Ephesians 6:18-20).
10. How much time do you spend in prayer for God’s work? You say, “What should I pray for?”
 - Pray for your local church (for Satan to be bound and for unity).
 - Pray for your pastors.
 - Pray for your fellow church members.
 - Pray for open doors to proclaim the gospel.
 - Pray for lost souls to come to know Christ.
 - Pray for the ministries that you are involved in.
 - Pray and ask God to show you how you can better support the work of your local church.
11. Look in the book of Acts. Right before everything significant to the life and growth of the church, we see prayer being offered up to God.

- Before the church at Jerusalem was formed and the Holy Spirit came, they prayed.
- Before the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit, Peter and John prayed.
- Before the gospel went and was received by the Gentiles, Peter and Cornelius prayed.
- Before Paul began planting churches all over Asia and Europe, the church at Antioch fasted and prayed.

Concluding thoughts:

1. Your prayers make such a difference.
2. They are the fuel that powers God's work on this earth.
 - **Illustration:** A car (the church), an engine (the Holy Spirit in us), gasoline (the prayers that fill us and energize us so that God's Spirit can work in and through us, empowering us for His work).
3. Many times God's work and God's church stalls because we simply are not praying.