

The Prayer that the Lord Taught

Scripture Reading: Matt. 6:5-15

I. Prayers of the Kingdom People: If our prayers are according to God's will, they will not only be answered, but they will also be remembered and rewarded in the future before the judgment seat.

II. Two Kinds of Prayers We Should Not Follow

- A. Not like the hypocrites who pray in order to be seen by men-vv5-6. The motive behind this kind of prayer is to receive glory from men, and they have already received their reward.
- B. Not babbling empty words as Gentiles do-vv7-8. This kind of prayer has sound only, and it is meaningless. The purpose of our prayer is not to inform God of something but to show Him our trust, our faith, our dependence, and our wish.

III. The prayer that Lord taught us

- A. "You then pray in this way." He did not say to pray with these words. The Lord meant that we should pray '*in this way*'. In other words, the Lord was teaching us how to pray; He was not teaching us to imitate His words, but to pray in His way-v9a.
- B. Generation after generation and age after age, men have been praying to God. But it is hard to find some whose prayers are to the point. Many people pay attention to their needs; they do not pay attention to God's needs.
- C. The Lord told us that we have to pray to "our Father who is in the heavens," which clearly shows that this prayer is for the saved ones-v9b.

IV. This prayer can be divided into three sections.

- A. Three desires concerning God
 - 1. The first desire: "Your name be sanctified"-v9.
 - a. God has an expectation that we all pray for His name to be sanctified by men.
 - b. God's name is not only a title we address with our mouth; it is a great revelation we receive from the Lord.
 - c. This is not only our desire but also our worship to the Father. We should give glory to God. We should begin our prayer with praises.

2. The second desire: “Your kingdom come”-v10a.
 - a. This means that the kingdom of God is in heaven, but the kingdom of God is not on earth. Consequently, we have to pray for God to expand the heavenly sphere to the earth.
 - b. This is not only a desire of the church, but also a responsibility of the church. The church should bring in God’s kingdom. In order to bring in God’s kingdom, the church has to pay the price to be restricted by heaven and come under heaven’s rule. It has to be the outlet for heaven, and it has to allow heaven’s authority to be expressed on earth.
 3. The third desire: “Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth”-v10b.
 - a. This shows that God’s will is done in heaven, but that it is not fully done on earth.
 - b. Prayer means that God wants to do something, yet He will not do it Himself; He will wait for man on earth to pray about it before He does it. God has His will and thoughts. Yet He is waiting for man to pray-Luke 2:25, 36-38; Acts 1:15; 2:1-2; 1 Kings 18:1, 41-45.
 - c. What is prayer? It is first for God to have a will, second for us to touch this will and pray for it, and third for God to answer our prayer when we pray.
 - d. God’s will is like a river, and our prayer is like the channel. If our prayer is big, the accomplishment of our prayer will also be big. If our prayer is limited, the accomplishment of our prayer will also be limited.
- B. Three things to pray for ourselves
1. The first thing: “Give us today our daily bread”-v11.
 - a. Bread is man’s immediate need. It is also a great temptation. When a man falls into a situation where daily bread becomes a problem, he is in a great trial.
 - b. This is the prayer of a Christian concerning his own need; he has to ask for the Lord’s protection.
 - c. The Lord wants us to ask God for our bread day by day because He wants us to learn to look to the Father day by day; He wants us to exercise our faith day by day.
 2. The second thing: “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors”-v12.

- a. On the one hand, there is the demand for our material needs. On the other hand, there is the demand of a good conscience. We have to ask God to forgive us and forgive our debts before we can have a good conscience.
 - b. We have to ask God to forgive our debts as we have forgiven our debtors.
 - c. The Bible tells us not only about our relationship with the Father but also about our relationship with one another as brothers and sisters.
3. The third thing: “Do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one”-v13a.
- a. The first part speaks of our material needs. The second part speaks of our relationship with the brothers and sisters. This part speaks of our relationship with Satan.
 - b. We do not know when temptation will come. But we can pray ahead of time that we not be brought into temptation. This prayer is for our protection.
 - c. We ask the Lord for our daily bread not only because we want to eat. We ask that our conscience be without offense not only for the sake of having a good conscience. We ask the Lord to deliver us from the evil one not only because we want to be delivered from the harm of the evil one. We pray for all of these things in order to live longer on earth to perform the work of prayer so that the Father’s name will be sanctified, His kingdom will come, and His will be done on earth as in heaven.

C. Three things to give praise for

1. “For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen”-v13b.
2. This praise tells us that the kingdom belongs to the Father, the power belongs to the Father, and the glory belongs to the Father. The three things that we give praise for have to do with deliverance from the evil one. They also have to do with the whole prayer that the Lord taught.
3. This is the main point: since the kingdom belongs to the Father, we should not fall into the hand of Satan; since the power belongs to the Father, we should not fall into the hand of Satan; and since the glory belongs to the Father, we should not fall into the hand of Satan. This is the strong reason behind not falling into Satan’s hand. If we fall into Satan’s hand, how can we glorify the Father any longer? If the Father is to have power over us, Satan cannot have power over us. Since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to the Father, we cannot and should not fall into Satan’s hand.

4. The Lord wants us to know that with the kingdom, there is authority, and behind the authority, the power to rule. The kingdom is God's and not Satan's. Authority belongs to God, not to Satan. Consequently, power belongs to God, not to Satan. Of course, glory also belongs to God, not to Satan. Since the kingdom, the power, and the glory all belong to God, those who belong to God should overcome all temptation and be delivered from the hand of Satan.
5. The prayer that the Lord taught always mentions "we" and "us." This is the form of address used by the church. This is a prayer that is filled with a sense of the Body.

Further Readings:

Chapter 2, the Prayer Ministry of the Church, Watchman Nee