



THE LORD'S PRAYER – A PRAYER OF SUBMISSION
“Your Name ... Your Kingdom ... Your Will”
Matthew 6:9-13

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The days are long, but the years are short. And as the years pass, they seem to pass faster and faster. And it makes us wonder what we’ve accomplished with our years. It makes us ponder what we’re really living for.

And the immediate answer is always the same. Family. We love our families and we work hard to provide for our families. The long hours, the hectic schedule, endless activities, hours of homework, piles of laundry, piles of bills, bedtime stories, summer vacation, college savings, it’s all for the family. And that’s a good thing.

But generations of Christians have asked a grander question. “What is the chief end of man?”¹ What is life all about? And the answer is not family. The grander answer is that chief end of man, the ultimate purpose of life, is “to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.” The New Testament makes that clear. “Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

And how we pray reveals if that is truly the purpose of our lives. Of course, much of our praying is for our family. But much of our praying should be for the glory of God, that our lives would point to God and glorify Him. So the question this morning, *How much of your living and how much of your praying is for the glory of God? Because what you’re praying for reveals what you’re really living for.*

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, He gave them what we call The Lord’s Prayer. So for the next few weeks we’re going to let Jesus teach us how to pray, and let The Lord’s Prayer show us the way to the Father’s heart.

Prayer is an invitation to talk to God. Even better, it is an invitation to talk to *our Father*. Prayer is how we, as God’s children, come to our Father with any need and any question. Prayer is an invitation to pour out our hearts before Him.² When we really think about it, it is amazing that the Creator of the universe would listen to the prayers of such small creatures like us, and yet that’s exactly what our Father promises to do.

And here’s how Jesus taught His disciples, and teaches us, to pray. Let’s recite it together.

“Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.” (Matthew 6:9-13, traditional)

The Lord’s Prayer is a prayer of submission, a prayer of alignment. *“Your name ... Your kingdom ... Your will.”* It calls us to live for His name, glorifying His name. To live for His Kingdom, engaging in His mission. To live for His will, submitting to His leadership. The Lord’s

Prayer teaches us to align our hearts with God before we ask anything from God. As we focus on this section of The Lord's Prayer, I want you to be honest with this question – "What are you really living for?" *How much of your living and how much of your praying is for the glory of God? Because what you're praying for reveals what you're really living for.*

"HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME"

"Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9). God is our Father, but we must remember who we're talking to.

"Hallowed" means sacred. It means holy. Holiness is what sets God apart from everyone and everything. Jesus is teaching us to pray with reverence. To "hallow" His name is to revere His name, to live for His name, to point to His name, and to glorify His name.

When Moses dared to ask God His name, the Lord simply said, "I AM." The Hebrew transliteration is Yahweh. The name of God was so sacred that the Hebrews refused to pronounce it. They called Him Adonai or Lord instead. Wherever you see "Lord" in the Old Testament, it is a substitute for Yahweh.

Jesus' name comes from Yahweh as well. Jesus means "Yahweh saves." The angel told Mary and Joseph, "You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Peter and John later preached, "There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name ... by which we can be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The name of God and the person of God are inseparable. Like Elvis, Lebron, Oprah, or Trump. The name of the person and the character, the fame, the reputation of the person are inseparable. The name of God is the sum of His person. The name of God is the sum of His holiness, His power, His justice, His grace, His love, and on and on and on.

In the Old Testament world, names meant something. Names were more than labels. Names were descriptions of one's character. And the names of God tell us what we can expect from Him.

- El-Roi, the Lord who sees³
- El-Shaddai, the Lord Almighty⁴
- Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord who provides⁵
- Jehovah-Rapha, the Lord who heals⁶
- Jehovah-Shalom, the Lord our peace⁷
- Jehovah-Rohi, the Lord our shepherd⁸
- Jehovah-Shammah, the Lord who is there⁹

The names of God tell us what we can expect from Him. His name reminds us of who He is and what we believe about Him. And it is what we believe about God that shapes how we pray.

So when we pray “Hallowed be Your name,” we are not only praying that His name be revered and glorified. We are also submitting ourselves to His name. Giving ourselves to His name. Living for His name. Pointing to His name. Praising and revering and glorifying His name by the way we live. As Paul said, “Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31). Whatever you do, do all for the glory of His name.

“YOUR KINGDOM COME”

When Jesus tells us to pray “*Your kingdom come*,” He is calling us to join God in what He is doing in the world.

The Creator of the universe is King of the universe. David was a king, yet he knew there was a greater king. “For God is the King of all the earth ... God reigns over the nations. God is seated on his holy throne” (Psalm 47:7-8, NIV). The Creator of the universe is King of the universe, and His goal is to establish His kingdom on earth.

Part of establishing that kingdom is how God worked through the nation of Israel. Part of establishing His kingdom is how God worked through His Son Jesus.¹⁰ Today, part of establishing His kingdom is how God is working through His church.

The kingdom has already begun, but the ultimate establishment and complete victory has yet to come. The book of Revelation tells us that one day a voice from heaven will announce the second coming of Jesus, and declare, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come” (Revelation 12:10, NAS). But until Christ returns, we live in what theologians call “the now, and the not yet.” Until Jesus returns, we pray “Your kingdom come.”

But what does that really mean? When we pray “Your kingdom come” ...

- we are praying for God to be worshiped on earth as He is heaven.
- we are praying for God to rule on earth as He does in heaven.
- we are praying for the return of Jesus Christ.
- we are praying for the defeat of Satan and his ravaging influence in the world.
- we are praying for God to rid the world of pain and suffering, evil and corruption.
- we are praying for God to judge the world, to punish every injustice, and to vindicate every victim.
- we are praying for God to restore and to heal all that is wrong with this world.
- we are praying for the fulfillment of the Great Commission, that the gospel be preached throughout the world and that every person have a chance to repent and be saved.
- When we pray “Your kingdom come,” we are praying that Philippians 2 would be fulfilled in our lifetime, that “at the name of Jesus every knee will bow ... and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Philippians 2:9-11).

The Lord's Prayer is about us joining God in what He is doing in the world. It's about engaging in His mission. How? By developing friendships with our neighbors, co-workers, and classmates with the hope of sharing the Gospel. By praying and supporting the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. That's our role in building the kingdom of God. Across the street and around the world, telling others who Jesus is, what He has done, and why He means so much to us. When we pray "Your kingdom come," we are committing ourselves to the Gospel; not just believing the Gospel, but sharing the Gospel.

"YOUR WILL BE DONE"

"Your name ... Your kingdom ... Your will." The Lord's Prayer is a prayer of submission, a prayer of alignment. To pray "Your will be done" is the same as praying, "Lord, I want what You want." "***Your will be done.***" Lord's Prayer is about aligning our hearts with God's heart. Submitting our will to His will. Submitting our desires to His desires. Submitting our agendas to His agenda.

Yes, God invites us to ask Him for anything we need, and we're going to talk about that next week. But prayer begins with aligning our hearts with God before we ask anything from God.

And that's a daily battle. Every day is a battle of the wills. God's will versus my will. Every morning when we wake up, we must decide all over again if we're going to live that day for Him or not. That's why Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me" (Luke 9:23, NAS). It's a daily decision. God's will versus my will.

Hopefully, as our love for Him and our trust in Him grows, we can, as C. S. Lewis said, "move beyond submission to joyful delight."

And here's why we can do that. "Move beyond submission to joyful delight." Because we believe that God's will is better. Because we believe what God wants for us is better than what we want for us. We believe that God's way is always the best way. You've heard me say that a thousand times, and it comes from Romans 12:2, which says, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the ***will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.***" God's will is "good and acceptable and perfect." That means God's will is better. God's way is always the best way.

To pray "Your will be done," is to pray, "Lord, I want what You want, because I trust that what You want is best."

THE GETHSEMANE PRAYER

The greatest example of submission is Jesus. The most humbling step every taken was when Jesus stepped down from heaven to earth, from glory to humanity, from majesty to a manger, from being praised by angels to being nailed to a cross. We can learn a lot about submission by looking at the process Jesus went through.

After Jesus and His disciples ate the last supper, they went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. Here's what happened, just hours before Jesus was arrested.

They went to Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and James and John along with him, and he began to be *sorrowful and troubled*. Then he said to them, "*My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow* to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me." Going a little farther in the garden, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "*My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not My will, but Your will be done.*" (Matthew 26:36-39).

Jesus prayed that three times that night. Submission to His Father's will was agonizing, intense, and costly. The Bible says He was in so much anguish that "his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground" (Luke 22:44, NIV). He admitted His sorrow. He admitted His distress. Three times He prayed for a way out! He asked His Father to come up with another way; a way to avoid becoming sin, to avoid the pain of the cross, and to avoid the rejection of His Father as He became sin on the cross. But His greatest desire was to do His Father's will. "Not My will, but Your will be done."

Early in His ministry, Jesus said, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" (John 6:38, NAS).¹¹ And that night in Gethsemane, He knew the time had come. He knew the Father's will meant suffering. He knew the Father's will meant the cross.

People often say, "The safest place to be is in the center of God's will." No it's not! Jesus was in the center of God's will and the cross was certainly not the safest place to be. But according to the Father's grand plan, it was the necessary place for Jesus to be. And according to the Father's grand plan, His will for you may not be safe. His will for you may require great sacrifice and great suffering.

In 1755, the Puritan Richard Alleine prayed this prayer. I've translated it from the King's English to modern English. "I am no longer my own, but Yours. Assign me any task, any rank, any job, any suffering. Let me be employed for You, or be laid aside for You. Exalted for You or humbled for You. Let me be full or let me be empty. Let me have everything or have nothing. I freely and heartily yield my life to You, for Your pleasure and for Your disposal. O Lord, You are mine, and I am Yours. So be it."¹² That's a prayer of submission. That's what it sounds like to pray "Your will be done."

CONCLUSION

The Lord's Prayer is a prayer of submission, a prayer of alignment. "*Your name ... Your kingdom ... Your will.*" It calls us to live for His name, glorifying His name. To live for His Kingdom, engaging in His mission. To live for His will, submitting to His leadership.

So let me repeat the question I asked at the beginning, "What are we really living for?" *How much of your living and how much of your praying is for the glory of God? Because what you're praying for reveals what you're really living for.*

NOTES

¹ From the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

² See Psalm 62:8.

³ Genesis 16:11-14.

⁴ See Genesis 17:12.

⁵ See Genesis 22:14.

⁶ See Exodus 15:22f.

⁷ See Judges 6:24.

⁸ See Psalm 23.

⁹ See Ezekiel 48:35.

¹⁰ Jesus said His miracles proved that “the kingdom of God has come” (Luke 11:20, NAS).

¹¹ See John 4:34.

¹² J. I. Packer, *Praying the Lord's Prayer* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 207), page 61.