

**HWMR: CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF MATTHEW 5 THROUGH 7 (Week 3)**

**The Prayer That Is Critical to the Kingdom Life**

Scripture Reading: *Matt. 6:6, 9-13; Luke 11:1-13; 19:46*

- Matt. 6:9 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified;  
Matt. 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.  
Matt. 6:11 Give us today our daily bread.  
Matt. 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
Matt. 6:13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.
- Luke 11:1 And while He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, a certain one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples.  
Luke 11:2 And He said to them, When you pray, say, Father, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come.  
Luke 11:3 Give us each day our daily bread.  
Luke 11:4 And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us into temptation.  
Luke 11:5 And He said to them, Who among you will have a friend and will go to him at midnight and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves,  
Luke 11:6 Since a friend of mine has come to me from a journey and I have nothing to set before him;  
Luke 11:7 And that one, from inside, will answer and say, Do not trouble me; the door is already shut and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise up and give you anything?  
Luke 11:8 I say to you, Even though he will not rise up and give him anything because he is his friend, surely because of his shameless persistence he will rise and give him what he needs.  
Luke 11:9 And I say to you, Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you.  
Luke 11:10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.  
Luke 11:11 But what father among you whose son shall ask for a fish will instead of a fish hand him a snake?  
Luke 11:12 Or if he shall also ask for an egg will hand him a scorpion?  
Luke 11:13 If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!  
Luke 19:46 Saying to them, It

**Day 1**

*John 10:30 - I and the Father are one.*

*John 8:29 - And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.*

*John 14:30 - I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing.*

- I. The King-Savior was a **man of prayer** (Luke 3:21-22; 5:16; 6:12; 9:16, 23-24, 28-29; 22:31-32, 39-41, 44; 23:34, 46-47; Psa. 102:7; 109:4), who taught His disciples concerning **prayer for the church** as the Father's house to be a house of prayer (Luke 19:46; cf. 2:49); when the disciples saw the Lord praying, they asked Him to teach them to pray (11:1):
- As a man of prayer, the Lord Jesus was **always one with God**—John 10:30.
  - As a man of prayer, the Lord Jesus **lived in the presence of God** without ceasing; He told us that He was never alone, but the Father was with Him; every moment He saw His Father's face—Acts 10:38c; John 8:29; 16:32b; cf. Exo. 33:14; 2 Cor. 2:10.
  - As a man of prayer, the Lord Jesus **trusted in God** and not in Himself, under any kind of suffering and persecution—1 Pet. 2:23b; Luke 23:46.
  - As a man of prayer, the Lord Jesus was a man in whom **Satan**, the ruler of the world, **had nothing** (no ground, no chance, no hope, no possibility in anything)—John 14:30b.

### Day 2

*Matt. 6:9-10 - You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.*

## II. The pattern of prayer that the Lord taught the disciples in Matthew 6 is the **prayer that expresses God's will:**

- Matthew 6:9-13** is the Lord's instruction to us to "pray in this way" to "our Father who is in the heavens" (v. 9a); this pattern of prayer can be divided into three sections:
  - The three basic prayers concerning God are related to the Divine Trinity; "**Your name be sanctified**" is related mainly to the **Father**; "**Your kingdom come**," to the **Son**; and "**Your will be done**," to the **Spirit**—vv. 9b-10a:
    - This is **being fulfilled in this age**, and it will be **ultimately fulfilled in the kingdom age** when the name of God will be excellent in all the earth, the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of Christ, and the will of God will be accomplished—Psa. 8:1; Rev. 11:15.
    - After the rebellion of Satan and the fall of man, Christ came to bring the heavenly rule to earth so that the earth could be **recovered for God's interest** so that the will of God could be done on earth as in heaven (Matt. 6:10b); the kingdom people must pray for this until the earth is fully recovered for God's will in the coming kingdom age.

### Day 3

*Matt. 6:11-13 - Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

- The three requests concerning our need are protective prayers: "Give us today our **daily bread**. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"—vv. 11-13a:
  - Daily bread* indicates a **living that is by faith**; we should live, by faith, on the Father's daily supply.

- b. The kingdom people should **ask the Father to forgive** their debts, their failures, their trespasses, as they forgive their debtors to maintain peace (by the arbitrating peace of Christ); we have to clear up any separating factors between us and God and between us and others—vv. 14-15; Col. 3:15.
- c. Because we know our weakness, we should **ask the Father not to bring us into temptation but to deliver us from the evil one**, the devil, and from the evil that is out of him (by being filled with the Spirit)— John 17:15; Eph. 5:16-18; 6:13.

Every proper **prayer** is also man **speaking forth the intention of God**. Yes, it is you who are speaking, but it is **God Who is expressing His heart's intent**. Your words are the expression of God's intention. For example, you may pray, "O God, forgive me of my sins." This word expresses God's desire to forgive you of your sins. Therefore, true prayers do not express our ideas; rather, they express God's intention through our utterance.

We have said earlier that every prayer which measures up to the standard is not initiated by man but by God. This initiation means that **God anoints His intention into man**. After man receives this intention, he converts it into words and utters them to God. This is prayer. Therefore, when you pray for the salvation of your relatives and friends, if your prayer is proper, you ought to believe that in the universe God has the intention to save that particular relative or friend of yours. This intention of God could never be expressed or completed by God Himself. This is a law. **God desires that all men be saved; this is His intention**. But if no one prays for all men, then they cannot be saved. Therefore, unless you pray for your relative or friend and thus express God's desire, His intention cannot be done, and your relative or friend cannot be saved. Hence, when we go before God to pray, we should not immediately pray according to our own ideas, for this kind of prayer is usually initiated by ourselves and not by God. **When we pray we must first be quiet before God, fellowship with Him, and allow Him to anoint His intention into us**; thus our prayer can express God's intention. (Lessons on Prayer, Chapter 2)

#### Day 4

**Matt. 6:13** - ...*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

**Luke 11:1** - *And while He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, a certain one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples.*

- 3. The prayer to the Father concludes with **three reverent praises as extolling prayers**: "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen"—the **kingdom** is of the **Son**, which is the realm in which God exercises His power, and the **power** is of the **Spirit**, which carries out God's intention so that the **Father may have His corporate expression** in glory—Matt. 6:13b:
  - a. Thus, the pattern of the Lord's prayer **begins** with the **Divine Trinity** and **ends** with the **Divine Trinity**.
  - b. It also **begins** with **God the Father** and **ends** with **God the Father**; God the Father is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega.
- B. Such a critical prayer **increases our seeking** of the kingdom of the heavens as the Father's heart's desire and affords us our need of the divine supply of grace to fulfill all the supreme and strict requirements of the kingdom of the heavens for God's good pleasure.

### III. If we pray according to the Lord's instructions in Luke 11:1-13, the result will be that we pray ourselves into God:

- A. Often in our experience we are **distracted** from God; we **do not stay** in God—we **do not remain** in Him; this is why **we need to pray ourselves into God**.
- B. Because we are easily distracted from God, we should **spend time every morning with Him**, praying ourselves into Him—Psa. 5:3; Isa. 50:4.
- C. If our way of praying distracts us from the Lord and does not bring us into Him, we should change our way of praying so that we pray ourselves into Him.

#### Day 5

*Luke 11:11-13 - But what father among you whose son shall ask for a fish will instead of a fish hand him a snake? Or if he shall also ask for an egg will hand him a scorpion? If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!*

- D. When we **pray** ourselves into God, we **receive** His riches (represented by the loaves, the fish, and the egg) into our being for our supply—Luke 11:5-13:
  - 1. Loaves represent the riches of the land; fish, the riches of the sea; and eggs, the riches of something both in the air and on the earth; the **Holy Spirit is the totality of these riches**.
  - 2. When we have **prayed** ourselves into God to **remain** in Him, we **receive the Holy Spirit** as our life supply (signified by the loaves, the fish, and the egg) so that we can feed ourselves and all those under our care—1 John 5:16a; 2 Cor. 3:6; Acts 6:4.
  - 3. “If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”; to receive the Holy Spirit with all His riches as our life supply, **we need to ask the Father for this**—Luke 11:13; cf. John 4:10.
- E. When we **pray ourselves into God** and receive His rich supply, which is the bountiful supply of the all-inclusive Spirit as the reality of the unsearchable riches of Christ, we are **filled and occupied with this supply** so that there is no room in us for demons, evil spirits, or darkness—Luke 11:14.
- F. Because we are filled with the riches of the divine supply, we become persons whose **hearts are full of light**, not having any dark part, and we can illumine others—vv. 33-36; Matt. 5:8.
- G. To pray means that we realize that we are nothing and that we can do nothing; this implies that **prayer is the real denial of the self**—Mark 8:34; 9:29; Col. 4:2; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:3; 4:6-7, 11-13.
- H. To **pray** is actually to declare, “**Not I, but Christ**”; our prayer testifies that we do not exercise our self-effort to deal with any situation—Gal. 2:20.
- I. Even such a short prayer of **calling upon the name of the Lord**—“O Lord Jesus!”—indicates “no longer I, but Christ”—Rom. 10:12-13.

The Gospel of Matthew shows us the new law of the kingdom, which is the highest demand on the kingdom people; the Gospel of John reveals that the **divine life can enable us to meet all these demands**. We can meet the highest demand of the kingdom not by our natural life but by the divine life in us as regenerated people. The secret, therefore, to meet all the demands of the new law of the constitution of the kingdom lies in what Paul says in Galatians 2:20 : “It is no longer I...but...Christ.” How can we live the kingdom life and live out the nature of the kingdom people? The answer is “**not I but Christ**.” How can we meet the highest demand of the new law of the kingdom? The secret is not I but Christ. And the secret to experience not I but Christ is **prayer**.

We must not underestimate prayer. **Prayer is the real denial of the self**. To pray is to declare, “Not I but Christ.” We need to ask ourselves: in our living, in our work, in caring for our family, and in serving the church, are we praying more than before? If not, it proves that we are still living and working by ourselves. If we have truly seen that our living and work **must be not I but Christ**, we will certainly **pray more than before**. Whether or not we are increasingly applying not I but Christ depends on whether we are advancing in our prayer life, whether we are praying more and more. (*The Ministry of the Word, vol. 29, No. 19*)

## Day 6

*1 Kings 8:48* - ...If they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul..., and they pray to You toward their land that You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen, and the house that I have built for Your name.

*Dan. 6:10* - ...Daniel...went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God...

### IV. In order for God to listen to our prayers, we need to **pray toward God’s interests**, signified by the **Holy Land**, the **holy city**, and the **holy temple**— 1 Kings 8:48:

- A. The **Holy Land** typifies **Christ as the portion** allotted by God to the believers (Col. 1:12; 2:6-7; Deut. 8:7); the **holy city** signifies the **kingdom of God in Christ** (Psa. 48:1-2); and the **holy temple** signifies **God’s house, the church, on the earth** (Eph. 2:21; 1 Tim. 3:15).
- B. During the Babylonian captivity Daniel prayed three times a day by opening his windows toward Jerusalem; this indicates that God will listen to our prayer when **our prayer to God is toward Christ**, the kingdom of God, and the house of God as the goal in God’s eternal economy—Dan. 6:10.
- C. This means that no matter for whom we are praying, **our prayers should be aimed at the interests of God**, that is, at **Christ and the church** as God’s interests on earth, for the fulfilling of God’s economy.

During the Babylonian captivity Daniel prayed three times a day by opening his windows toward Jerusalem; this indicates that **God will listen to our prayer when our prayer to God is toward Christ, the kingdom of God, and the house of God as the goal in God's eternal economy.** Our prayer should be not merely for people to get healed or find a job; these things need to be prayed for, but they are not the goal of our prayer. Our prayer should be directed toward the goal of God's eternal economy, which is Christ, the kingdom of God, and the house of God.

We should practice praying for the saints in this way: "Lord, our brother is sick. May You take this opportunity to dispense Yourself more into him. Lord, may our brother gain Christ during the course of his illness. Lord, there is also another saint who is in need, and You know his need. Lord, as You meet his need, may You gain him so that he would live more for Your building; Lord, for this one, and for that one, and for Your church, Lord, all we want is that You would increase, that Your church would be Your corporate expression, and that Your church would grow stronger and stronger to become God's kingdom on earth." This was how Daniel prayed. **He prayed to Jehovah God with his window open, facing the Holy Land, the holy temple, and the holy city.** Today, we do not need to open our windows toward any direction; instead, we need to **pray desperately, aiming at Christ, the church, and God's kingdom.** We need to pray for what is happening on earth today among the nations, but our prayers should be directed toward the goal of God's eternal economy.

This means that no matter for whom we are praying, our prayers should be aimed at the interests of God, that is, at Christ and the church as God's interests on earth, for the fulfilling of God's economy. What are God's interests on this earth? They are **Christ and the church.** He wants Christ to fill all things, and He wants the church to be Christ's enlargement, spread, and expression. Our prayers should be aimed at this.

We should learn to intercede for others in this way, instead of just saying, "Lord, this person is sick. Please heal him." This does not mean that we should not have such prayers but that our prayers should be aimed at the interests of God. We should pray, "Lord, remember our brother, that in him, in his sickness, you may be glorified. Lord, work in this brother according to Your best will. May You take this opportunity for this brother's whole being to be gained by You so that he may continue to be a channel for Your life to flow on earth. Lord, may Your economy be fulfilled more in him." (*The Ministry of the Word, vol. 29, No. 19*)