

**Sermon Text**

*Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." And he said to them, "When you pray, say:*

*"Father, hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Give us each day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our sins,  
for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.  
And lead us not into temptation."*

*And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything'? I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" Luke 11:1-13*

**Sermon**

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

In this modern age our ability to communicate has almost reached the point of being magical. I remember the first time I sent a fax. I think it was some documents I needed to send for college admissions. It occurred to me that for the

first time in known history, in the matter of a minute or two, a police department in Philadelphia could send the rap sheet for a wanted criminal to Los Angeles. A house buyer in Kansas City could send contract papers to the broker in Sydney. Moms and dads could fax grandparents a picture of their first grandchild. Businesses could immediately put in orders and get detailed price quotes from suppliers.

With today's advanced communications, I'm pretty sure that if a 12-year-old girl took a time machine back to the 1300's and the authorities saw her watching YouTube or using TikTok on her iPhone she would have been burned as a witch. Our ability to instantaneously interact is more advanced than almost anyone would have dreamed just fifty years ago.

The good news is that since we can now immediately communicate text, voice, pictures, and video across the world, we have also become much better at communicating with the Lord. Right? Well, not so much. Communicating with God – prayer – is a spiritual thing. Space age engineering and microchips can't help us much in that area. So, it is always good for us to hear and remember again a little bit on prayer. Prayer, which includes reading the Bible, is one of the "Big Three" (weekly worship, daily prayer, and constant love) that keeps us in the faith and grows us more and more into the likeness of Jesus Christ. And that is the job God has given us as his holy children.

The "mother of all prayers" in the church is the Lords Prayer. Do you pray it every day? You should. The disciples asked Jesus how to pray. He gave them the Lords Prayer. They used it. We should use it. Why would we not use it? Because its memorized? By that erroneous thinking we should remove the liturgy, Ten Commandments and Apostles Creed from church, the pledge of allegiance from schools, and "Come, Lord Jesus" from our dinner tables. Get the picture? If people recite those parts without heartfelt engagement, that's their problem, not ours. We will teach these things to the children and cherish them ourselves to our last breath.

As far as the Lords Prayer goes, we can think about it like the course of a meal. Sometimes the Lords Prayer can serve as an appetizer. It stimulates prayer when are heads are concerned about other matters. When we say the Lords Prayer, we get into the flow of prayer, we may well be reminded of other prayer concerns to

bring to the Lord, and then we can get fully into the personal petitions we offer to the Lord. This is how the Lords Prayer is used in the Daily Office/ Prayer – Orders of prayer for Morning, Noon, Evening, and Night.

Other times the Lords Prayer is used more like dessert. After we have said all our other prayers, we finish things off with the prayer given by our Lord himself. It fills in anything we forgot to pray for in our other prayers. It concludes our time of prayer on a sweet and final note. It leaves us feeling satisfied. This is how the Lords Prayer is used in our church services when we don't include communion.

There are lots of things to talk about and teach on the Lords Prayer. The most important thing is to use it. Learn it. Pray it. Reflect on it. Use it. When we pray this mother of all prayers, we join our voices with a two-thousand-year long cacophony of voicings, chants, and hymns in who knows how many different languages and dialects.

And when we pray, there is not just the lonely voice of one fallen sinner that speaks. Jesus adds his voice to ours through the Holy Spirit as we are taught in the eighth chapter of Romans, "Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us." There are also other people of God offering prayers to our Lord at the same time as we are. It's like when you get up early and go out and get the newspaper, take out the trash, or let the dog out. Early in the morning there's not just one bird singing. There are many different kinds of birds with various songs: tweets, warbles, chirps, and whistles. Picture that the next time you pray. There are countless voices praying and singing to God, each with a unique sound. No wonder Jesus told us to pray, "Our Father." There is never just one who is praying.

Pray the Our Father. Be persistent. Trust that God is good and knows what He is doing. Be assured that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is enough to overcome your doubts, anger, lust, and greed. That is enough to bring you over from death to life. It is enough to compensate for your lacking or missing prayers. That is the point of the Father who knows how to give good gifts to his children.

The rain falls on the good and the evil farmer alike, regardless of prayer, so pray all the more. Part of being a Christian is looking stupid to non-believers. You don't look very tough when you are on your knees in prayer. You don't seem wise when you continue to believe that God cares about you, hears, and answers your

prayers when you do not get any results. You simply cannot expect or even hope for approval from the world. They hated your Lord. You are not above your Master. How often have you prayed for peace, but wars continue to rage and there is conflict all around the globe? There is no real power in prayer. The power is in God. Prayer is our response to that power, our confession that we trust in that power. It is not logical, and it is not based upon results. We do not live by sight, experience, or reason, but by every Word that proceeds from the Mouth of God. We pray because God is good, and He has promised to hear our prayers.

So just do it. Pray. Whether you feel like it or not. Whether you believe it or not. Whether it is convenient, or you feel like it or not. Say, "Our Father" by rote if you must, it's better than saying nothing. And it's better than making up an insincere bit of showy emotionalism. It's better than trying to teach God a thing or two. Just say, "Our Father," "Lord, have Mercy," and the like. God will keep his Word. He will forgive. He will provide. He will deliver. To him be the glory now and forever. Amen!

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