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Andrew M. Davis

Sermon Notes

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The Lord's Model Prayer **Matthew 6:7-15**

I. The Priority of Prayer

II. Overview of Chapter 6

A. Chapter Deals With Christian Piety... the positive exercise of religion

1. Almsgiving: charity towards others
2. Prayer: relationship to God
3. Fasting: discipline towards self

B. Storing Up Heavenly Treasures- 6:19-21

C. Christian Piety in Physical Concerns-6:19-34

D. Christ's General Warnings

1. Avoid hypocrisy!!
2. God your only audience
3. Eternal (heavenly rewards)

III. Prayer: Some General Thoughts

A. The Incredible Importance of Prayer

Martyn Lloyd-Jones: "Prayer is beyond any question the highest activity of the human soul. Man is at his greatest when, upon his knees, he comes face to face with God."

1. A test of one's true spiritual state

Jonathan Edwards, June, 1740: "Hypocrites Deficient in the Duty of Prayer"... basic premise: those who are not truly converted to Christ tend gradually more and more to forsake private prayer to God... while they may begin with a prayer life, after a while those who are not truly converted eventually give it up

2. Greatest saints in church history: people of prayer
3. Greatest man in human history: Jesus constantly prayed
4. Church's greatest need: "Lord, teach us to pray!!"

Is that the longing of your heart today? Then come let the Master teach you how to pray!

B. Christ's preliminary comments

1. Without hypocrisy... don't pray for the applause or honor of people
2. Without "vain repetition"... endlessly repeated phrases; a vain trust in words

Illus. Buddhist prayer wheels and the Rosary... ironic that the Lord's prayer itself became the prayer most endlessly heaped up vainly!!

3. Piling up of words no proof of piety... nor are long prayers wrong
 - a. some of Jesus' prayers were very brief:

John 12:28 "Father, glorify your name!!" (5 words in the original text)

- b. YET Jesus frequently spent all night in prayer to God
4. WITH a vital trust in God's providential care:

vs. 8 "Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him."

- a. NEVER think that you are bringing God some new information
- b. NEVER think that God doesn't care or lacks love: is standing between you and what's best for you
- c. NEVER think you need to persuade God to do something He doesn't want to do

Illus. The child in the control room of the nuclear reactor

C. The Lord's Prayer in General

1. A misnomer... this is not a prayer Jesus would pray! "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors..."
2. John MacArthur calls it: "The Disciple's Prayer"

3. I chose “The Lord’s Model Prayer”
4. This is a pattern of prayer

vs. 9 “This is how you should pray...”

- a. it has all the basic elements needed for a complete prayer life...PRINCIPLES
- b. words are beautiful, concepts deep
- c. stunning economy of words!!... 57 words in the original... it takes 22 seconds to say the KJV translation, yet so much is there
- d. NOTE... this model prayer is for all Christians and for all ages of the Church (contra Dispensationalists)... SHOULD BE USED IN WORSHIP
- e. BUT... not merely to be repeated mindlessly

D. General structure

1. Addressing God properly... **Our Father in heaven**
2. Three petitions of God-centered worship

Hallowed Be YOUR Name... YOUR Kingdom come... YOUR will be done on earth as it is in heaven

3. Three petitions of human-centered needs

OUR daily bread... OUR sins... OUR temptations

NOTE: God’s glory comes first!! “Chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.” ...trouble comes with temporary needs above our concern to glorify God

No matter how great your need, even if you are praying for someone who’s terminally ill, or yearning to see someone come to Christ... YES even over the greatest of human concerns, FIRST AND FOREMOST comes the glory of God

E. The Need to Pause

1. We rush boldly into God’s presence and forget who we’re addressing
2. MUST stop, pause before praying, quiet yourself and remember the eternal God you’re about to address

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2, 7 Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. ² Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. . . . ⁷ Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore STAND IN AWE OF GOD.





Job 40:4 “I am unworthy, how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth.”

3. We are too familiar with God... have too low a view of Him; hopefully today’s sermon will correct that

V. Addressing God Properly

vs. 9 “Our Father...” The Fatherhood of God

A. **Shocking to the Jews** of Christ’s day: EXALTED view of God... Jesus revolutionized it

1. Would not even say His Name... when they came to     they wrote in sounds for “adonai” = “My Lord”
2. Christ’s teaching here was revolutionary... to call God “Father” had never been heard of before
3. How much more, when Christ called God “Abba” (as He does in Gethsemane), he was introducing the idea of intimacy unheard of before: “Daddy”

B. HOWEVER... this is not the universal fatherhood of God taught by liberal theology

John 1:12 “Yet to all who received [Christ], to those who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God...”

1 John 3:1 “Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us that we should be called the children of God. And that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him.”

-There are the children of God and the world... the two are in opposition to each other

John 8:42, 44 “If God were your Father, you would love me... You belong to your Father, the devil...”

Summary: All who love Jesus, who have believed on Him for eternal life are children of God and can say “Our Father...”

C. **Fudged on by some evangelicals:** the “inclusive language debate” with NIV

“Our Parent” rather than our “Father”... Zondervan

C. S. Lewis: “Since God is in fact not a biological being and has no sex, what can it matter whether we say *He* or *She*, *Father*, or *Mother*, *Son* or *Daughter*? But Christians think that God Himself has taught us how to speak of Him. To say that it does not matter is to say either that all the masculine imagery is not inspired, is merely human in origin, or else that, though inspired, is quite arbitrary and unessential. And this is surely intolerable.”

D. **Damaged by some modern fathers**

1. Some fathers abandon their children to be raised by their mother by herself
2. Some fathers are harsh and abusive toward their mothers or toward them
3. Some fathers are cold and aloof and show no affection
4. Some fathers worship their careers and are seldom home
5. BUT Scripture tells us what kind of Father our heavenly Father is... loving enough to send Christ, compassionate enough to weep when we weep; gentle enough to care for all our hurts, powerful enough to protect us from all our enemies; King enough to rule us perfectly

E. NOTE: “OUR Father...” Not just “My Father”

1. very first word destroys the isolationist religion we prize
2. God is not just MY Father... He is OUR Father

1 John 5:1 “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves his child as well.”

[We must love other believers... God is not just MY father... He is OUR Father]... this also expands our later petitions from a selfish focus... not just my daily bread, my sins, my temptations BUT our daily bread, our sins, our temptations

THEREFORE NOTE:

vs. 9 “Our Father IN HEAVEN...”

F. Unlike Jews in Jesus’ day, we are **too chummy with God**... have far too low thoughts of Him

Modern choruses: "He's a great big wonderful God..." D.A. Carson says "I never fail to think of a great big wonderful teddy bear."

1. Remember Solomon's words in Ecclesiastes:

Ecclesiastes 5:2 "God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few."

1 Kings 8:27 "But will God really dwell on earth? Heaven, even the highest heavens cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!"

2. God lives in heaven & is high and lifted up

Isaiah 57:15 "This is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, and whose name is holy: 'I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit....'"

G. Balance: The Great Majesty of the Eternal God & the Great Compassion of Your Heavenly Father

NOW... Three Petitions of Adoration

vs. 9-10 "Hallowed be your name; your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

VI. Highest Priority: Exalting God's Name (vs.9)

A. Exalting the Name of God

1. to "hallow" = to revere as holy, to exalt, to honor, to hold in high esteem
2. "your Name" = sum total of all God has revealed about Himself

Yahweh = "I AM"... self-existent God, no beginning, no end... no Creator, no Sustainer; "Jehovah" = combination of consonants for "Yahweh" & vowels for "Adonai" (= "my Lord")... Jehovah Jireh = the Lord who provides; Jehovah Rapha = the Lord who heals; Jehovah Nissi = the Lord our banner

- a. "believing in the name"

John 1:12 "Yet to all who received [Christ], to those who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God..."

b. “call on the name...”

Romans 10:13 “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

c. “baptized into the name”

Matthew 28:19 “Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit...”

B. The consuming passion of Christ... the glory of the Father

John 12:28 “Father, glorify your name!!”

John 17:4 “I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.”

3. So, this is a prayer that God would be worshipped and held in highest honor by people on this earth

a. humanity’s thoughts of God too low

John 17:25 “Righteous Father, the world does not know you...!”

b. many worship false representations of God called “idols”

c. this prayer is a desire that God would be rightly worshipped as He has truly revealed Himself

Psalms 34:3 “Magnify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together.”

How strange? Magnify means make something larger or greater... how does someone magnify the infinite God? Illus.: Telescope looking at the moon

The nations do not think of God properly... neither do we; let YOUR NAME be held in the highest honor, let your reputation be established in all the earth

A BURNING DESIRE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD TO BE REVEALED IN THIS SIN-CURSED WORLD!!

Habakkuk 2:14 “The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

“Our Father in heaven, may your name be revered, may your name be exalted, may your name be glorified...!!!”

[Is this YOUR passion... that God's name be held in highest honor??]

4. NOTE: This is a prayer to GOD that WE would exalt His name!!! Does God have any control over that??? YES, because "Salvation is of the Lord!!!" (Jonah 2:9)

VII. The Advance and Consummation of the Kingdom (vs.10)

"May your Kingdom come"

- A. The Kingdom of God: where He is honored with glad obedience

NOTE: logical order to these petitions... God's name honored leads to the coming of His Kingdom

BUT... why isn't God exalted and His Kingdom everywhere??

- B. The Kingdom of Satan: constant opposition

Question: If God is so glorious, why don't all people bow down before Him and worship Him?...ANSWER: The competing Kingdom of Darkness

- a. Satan called "the god of this world"... BUT nowhere close to equal to God's power
- b. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil... to destroy systematically the evil empire Satan has set up
- c. He does it one person at a time, as more and more of them throw down their weapons of rebellion through repentance and enter the Kingdom of God

- C. How God's Kingdom "comes"... Past, Present and Future

1. Past: Christ's first appearance

- a. it came in one sense when Jesus entered the world

Matthew 4:17 "From that time on, Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.'"

- b. power demonstrated by Christ's miracles

Matthew 12:28 "If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you."

- c. an advancing Kingdom

Matthew 11:12 “From the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing...”

2. Present: gradual advance of the gospel

Matthew 13:33 “The Kingdom of Heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

3. Future: second coming of Christ

“May your Kingdom come...”

Summary: So “Thy Kingdom Come” is a missionary prayer that Christ’s Kingdom will be built up one saved soul at a time... that more and more rebellious sinners would throw down their weapons of rebellion and come into the obedience of the Gospel

BUT...

5. The Ultimate Coming of the Kingdom

Matthew 24:29-31 ²⁹ ***“Immediately after the distress of those days ”“the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.”*** ³⁰ ***“At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.*** ³¹ ***And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.***

Revelation 19:11, 16 “I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True.... On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written, ‘King of Kings and Lord of Lords.’”

- a. At that time all rebellion against God will forever be crushed
- b. The Kingdom of Christ will be established on earth
- c. All who have not yet thrown down their weapons of rebellion against God will mourn, for then it will be too late
- d. CHURCH PRAYS **“Thy Kingdom Come”**... in the ultimate sense a prayer for the second coming of Jesus Christ... a deep longing for that great and final day when Jesus Christ will be revealed in power and great glory

***1 Corinthians 16:22 “If anyone does not love the Lord—a curse be upon him!
MARANATHA [Come, O Lord]!!”***

***Revelation 22:20 “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming soon.’ AMEN,
COME LORD JESUS!!!”***

Aren't you weary of all the evil in this world... all the rebellion and wickedness... aren't you distressed that people do not know God and do not obey Him? Aren't you troubled that Jesus is blasphemed and thought little of? Then pray, "Your Kingdom Come..."

VIII. Glad Submission to the Will of God (vs.10)

“May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”

A. Logical progression to these petitions

-God's name hallowed... honored, kept holy

-God's Kingdom = the place where he rules and where people submit gladly to that rule

-God's will done on earth as it is in heaven = consummation of the Kingdom

B. How God's will is presently done on earth

Matthew 10:29 “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny. Yet not one of them falls to the ground apart from the will of your father.”

Ephesians 1:11 “God works out everything according to the purpose of his will”

Nations do God's will... BUT NOT GLADLY!!!

C. How is God's will done in heaven?

All the way, right away, with a happy spirit...angels rejoice to do God's will

1. angels do it completely, just as He has commanded

2. they do it without delay or hesitation

3. they do it joyfully, no matter what it is

Revelation 19:1-2 “After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory belong to our God, for true and just are his judgments.’”

That is how God's will is done in heaven: all the way, right away, with a joyful spirit...The angels are gladly and joyfully in total submission to the eternal God who sits on His throne and rules righteously; This prayer is a deep desire to see the same glad submission on earth

It is also the same prayer that earned your salvation, for Jesus prayed in Gethsemane: "Not my will but your be done." ... Christ was willing to submit to God's will, even though it would cost Him his life; as you pray, pray in this way... Our Father who is in heaven, may your name be exalted; may your Kingdom come, and may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven