

Rediscover Jesus, Part 39: "Our Lord's Prayer"

Luke 11:1-4

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Sermon Series & Scripture Introduction

Today, we are continuing in the sermon series, studying through the Gospel of Luke in order to Rediscover Jesus, for some of us, discover Jesus for the first time, to learn who Jesus is, what he did, and what it has to do with our lives today.

So far, in Luke chapter 10, we saw Jesus joyfully teaching his 72 disciples to rejoice not in their accomplishments in ministry but to rejoice that their names are written in heaven. Then, we saw Jesus wisely teaching a religious lawyer that he will not be able to be the perfect neighbor that the law of God demands him to be through the parable of the Good Samaritan. And most recently, we saw Jesus lovingly teaching Martha, because she was distracted and troubled by many things, to allow her relationship with Jesus to be the one thing necessary that directs all the many things she was so anxious about.

Now, please follow along as I read from Luke 11:1-4. Jesus continues to teach another important lesson, and this is the first half of his teaching on prayer.

Scripture Reading

Luke 11:1-4 (ESV)

11 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." ² And he said to them, "When you pray, say:

"Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

³ Give us each day our daily bread,

⁴ and forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation."

This is the Word of God. Amen.

Sermon Introduction

Among all the prayers that I've heard and read, there is one that I recently came across in a book on prayer that caught my attention. The author himself describes how in fifty years of being a Christian, he remembers this one prayer, word for word, prayed by a young man one morning:

"Lord, this morning I woke up with a bad attitude. And instead of killing me, you fed me breakfast."¹

In his own words, and in just a few words, this man honestly acknowledged his sinfulness that deserves God's wrath, and confessed his ungratefulness that he had another morning to live but he spent it with a bad attitude. He also acknowledged God's mercy and patience and provisions for him, feeding him his daily bread that he does not deserve.

I wonder if we wake up in the morning to pray with such awareness and dependence on God's unending mercy and overflowing grace. I wonder if we are at such a personal, honest place with God our Father in our prayer lives. I personally feel that I am yet to be. If you're like me, most of our mornings start with a bad attitude and it often lasts until we eat a good meal at lunchtime. How about the rest of our days? Our days might feel so full that we don't have time to pray and communicate with God until we finally lie down at night and we pray as we drift off into sleep. Or even when we try to finally sit down and pray, our mind goes off in all directions, thinking about dinner or unfinished work or about tomorrow's plans.

¹ Pat Quinn, *Praying in Public* (Crossway, 2021), 50.

For Christians, prayer is both a command, that we often disobey, and a privilege, that we often take for granted.² It is simple enough to do, to communicate with God, but difficult to do with the right heart. It is obvious that we need help to pray.

Through his Word today, we will receive the help and guidance we need from our Lord Jesus Christ that we may grow as his disciples in prayer together.

So, the One Thing for us today is this:

The One Thing

Learn to pray from our Lord and pray together as his disciples.

We'll look at how prayer, through the Lord's prayer, forms our hearts. The Lord's prayer teaches us to be:

Overview

1. Together in our discipleship (v.1)
2. Focused on our Father together (v.2)
3. Dependent on our Father together (v.3)
4. Committed to our Father together (v.4)

Prayer for the Preaching of the Word

Sermon Outline

I. Together in our discipleship (v.1)

Luke 11:1 (ESV)

11 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."

- We don't know exactly who it was that asked Jesus but this one disciple made a request on behalf of all the other disciples. "Lord, teach us all to pray." And we see that this disciple had made key observations that led him to ask Jesus.
 - This disciple observed Jesus. He probably heard Jesus' teaching about prayer in multiple lessons. Even this teaching on the Lord's prayer is probably the second time as we see a similar teaching in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:5-15. But not only did Jesus teach on prayer, Jesus modeled prayer by his own prayer life. Jesus often gets caught praying throughout the book of Luke. And if you get caught doing something, it's not because you do it rarely but because you do it regularly, like a regular habit. And Jesus prayed often. Jesus prayed when he was baptized by John the Baptist (3:21-22). When the crowds kept coming to Jesus, he withdrew to desolate places to pray (5:15-16). He had a regular habit of going up to the mountain to pray. And at special times, he would pray late into the night (6:12, 22:39). He would take certain disciples up the mountain to pray with him (9:28-29). And even when he was praying alone, his disciples were able to see that his regular practice of prayer (9:18). So even in verse 1 now, we see that Jesus was praying in a certain place—it was noticeable for this disciple. And he finished his time of prayer—again noticeable. And this is what made this disciple ask Jesus about prayer.
 - The disciple also noticed something about John's disciples. He is talking about John the Baptist, the final prophet who had come just before Jesus to prepare the way for Jesus, and the one who baptized Jesus. John had his own disciples and he taught his disciples to pray. He and his disciples were characterized to be pray-ers, people who pray often (Luke 5:33). This leads us to his final observation.

² Adapted from H. B. Charles Jr., *It Happens After Prayer* (Lift Every Voice, 2013).

- He says, “Lord, teach us to pray.” He wasn’t just asking for himself to learn. But he realized that together as Jesus’ disciples, they were not characterized by prayer. He saw John’s disciples and their prayer life. He saw Jesus’ own prayer life. But he didn’t see that Jesus’ disciples were praying like their Teacher and their Lord, Jesus Christ. So he asks, “Lord, teach us, your disciples, to pray like you.”
- For a moment, let’s be an observer like this disciple. Let’s look to Jesus and acknowledge that Jesus prioritized prayer. Even as the Son of God, who is the very nature of God in the flesh, he prayed to our Heavenly Father regularly, passionately, humbly. As he taught his disciples how to commune with God, he modeled for us what a prayer life looks like.
 - Then, let’s look outside. We live in a context where prayer is so clearly emphasized. The followers of every other religion in Indonesia regularly practices prayer, praying throughout the day from morning to evening. They pray in ways that are noticeable, and in ways that they are characterized as people who pray often. They are devoted to prayer for other reasons apart from the gospel of grace, but the challenge for us as disciples, is this: If we understand that we are saved by God’s grace into a relationship with our Lord and Savior, then it will show from our approach to prayer
 - So, lastly, let’s look inside at our church. What is the culture of prayer in our church? In this local group of disciples that God has brought together to reveal Jesus to the world, our culture of prayer should be noticeably distinct from the rest of the world in the way we approach, understand and practice prayer. This should change our understanding and attitude toward church prayer gatherings. And this is not to make us feel guilty, because, personal confession: Even pastors at times don’t feel like going to prayer gatherings, and we’re the ones leading it.
 - The point of making these observations is to lead us to cling to God’s grace, that we come to Jesus, humbly and together asking him, “Lord, teach us to pray.” We see that we’re not praying, so we ask, “Lord, teach us to pray.” We see that we’re praying for the wrong things with the wrong heart, so we ask, “Lord, teach us to pray.”
- Our Lord Jesus teaches us to pray because this is how we will grow as his disciples together. We mature together by praying together. We become selflessly aware of our brothers’ and sisters’ needs and areas of immaturity and we can humbly address these important matters by praying together. We stay united together through difficult seasons of trial and suffering as a church when we learn to pray together. We learn to forgive and love another deeply, and see reconciliation take place as we pray together.
 - Yes, we could be learning and doing a lot together in serving, sacrificing, speaking the truth to one another and proclaiming the gospel out there in the world. But when we overlook praying together, we as a church can easily become distracted by many things, even many good things that we want for our church. Jesus is teaching us that praying together is how we prioritize regular communion with him and with one another. Without prayer together, we can easily become troubled and anxious about many things, and it’s no longer the Lord leading us in our discipleship but our own wisdom, fears and preferences.
 - So the Lord’s prayer starts by teaching us to be together in our discipleship, calling us to learn together and to pray together. As we move into the content of the Lord’s prayer, Jesus teaches us to be focused on the Father together.

II. Focused on our Father together (v.2)

Luke 11:2 (ESV)

²And he said to them, “When you pray, say:

“Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

- In response to this one disciple’s request to teach them to pray, Jesus teaches them what to say (the “you” here is plural). Now, we know that this prayer was not meant to only be recited over and

over again. We realize this because we have two versions of the Lord's prayer. In Luke's version, Jesus leaves out some phrases. So the Lord's prayer can be recited but it mainly serves as a teaching model for prayer. It highlights the priorities of proper prayer that we as disciples should be praying.

- Jesus starts the prayer with the address, making sure we know who we are praying to. There are many names for the one true God we worship: Sovereign Lord (Acts 4:24), Creator God (Romans 1:25), or Almighty King over all the earth (Psalm 47). These names would properly honor God because it points to how great, and high and mighty God is. But the address that Jesus teaches us to use is, "Father." It is still a term of respect but brings us much closer to God.
 - As we call upon God as Father, we are starting our prayers by addressing our doubts and worries with a comforting trust in our Father. The fact that we can call God, Father, means that we still reverently fear God but that we also trust him in his authority. We trust God in his strength and we are safe in his love. Therefore, we can humbly approach God yet boldly run to him as his children, secure in our Father's love and strength.
 - Brothers and sisters, what does it mean for you that you are a son or a daughter of God through the saving work of Jesus Christ? Does it affect how you approach God in prayer? Is it marked by trust and security in our Father's love?
 - Even earthly fathers want to be in a relationship with their children. They don't want their children only going to them for things. This was a significant milestone in my relationship with my own father. In highschool and college, I called or talked to my dad mainly because I needed extra money and extra things. I immaturely believed that if he didn't give me what I asked, that he didn't love me and that I couldn't trust him. But our relationship started to deepen, and my trust in him grew when I started to call my dad just to talk with him, to see how he was doing and wanting to hear what he wanted to say to me.
 - In this way, God our heavenly Father desires his children to come to him for him, not only for things.
- To learn how come to God for Him, to learn how to center our focus on our Father, Jesus teaches us to pray two petitions:
 - The first is, "Father, hallowed be your name." This is an old English word that means "to honor something or someone as holy." So, when we ask for our Father's name to be hallowed, we are asking God to do what we are unable to do as sinners before him. His name is full of glory, perfect beauty and wonderful excellencies, but we are completely unable to honor our Father's holy name in the way it should be honored.
 - Only God alone can work for his name to be hallowed. For his own name's sake, God executes his righteous judgment against sin so that sinful people know how holy he is and learn to fearfully honor him. With that, for his own name's sake, God also offers mercy and forgiveness so that sinners know how loving he is and learn to faithfully adore him. The ultimate end of all of God's work in creation and redemption is his own glory alone (Romans 11:36), and even through our sin-stained, broken world, God is getting his glory. He's working to get his glory and praise from all creation and from the ends of the earth (Psalm 48:10; Acts 1:8).
 - Humbly, then, we pray for God to help us to do what only he can do, asking him for his grace to enable us to honor his name and to glorify him with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. And through prayer, we learn to live for his name. For his name as Father to be hallowed in our hearts, but also in our homes, our neighborhoods, our schools and our offices. To desire our family and friends, classmates and coworkers to come to know God personally that we may call God, our Father, together as brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - So, this desire for our Father's name to be hallowed naturally flows into the second petition, as we pray, "Your kingdom come." Here's the connection: As we learn to desire our Father's name to be hallowed, we learn to desire his kingdom to come and be established. As we learn to trust and honor our Father, we also learn to submit to our King.

- These two petitions go together because they guard our hearts from approaching prayer with self-focused and self-glorifying desires. Do I pray for my name's sake or our Father's name's sake? Am I asking for my glory or God's glory? Am I building my kingdom, or our Father's Kingdom? If we are honest with ourselves, we naturally pray for God to make people treat me with honor and respect my name. We naturally pray when our little kingdoms are threatened and we ask God to preserve and protect what we have been building for ourselves.³
- It also helps us to identify both in ourselves and in one another any idols we have. Because when we start praying for our needs, for things, it is very tempting to take good things that we pray for and make them ultimate things we worship. We can pray for health, but we shouldn't worship health. We can pray for wealth, but we shouldn't worship wealth. We can pray for a job, a spouse, for children. We can pray for reconciliation, peace, direction in life, but we shouldn't worship anything other than God our good Father. So we must learn to pray together, "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come."
- As we establish the focus of our prayers on our Father, his name and his kingdom, we can move into the personal petitions of prayer. But even when we ask for ourselves, the Lord's Prayer still guides us and teaches us to be...

III. Dependent on our Father together (v.3)

Luke 11:3 (ESV)

³ Give us each day our daily bread,

- The image here of daily bread reminds us of the Israelites in the Exodus, escaping slavery from Egypt. As they were being led by God through the wilderness, they were learning to not grumble against the Lord but to depend on him for their daily bread (Exodus 16). Literally, each day, every morning, God provided for them bread from heaven that they called manna, on the desert floor. They could not work to make it or buy it, they couldn't even save any extra for the next day because it would spoil. But each day, for 40 years in the wilderness, God faithfully provided their daily bread and God's people needed to learn to depend on God alone for all their needs, both for spiritual and physical.
- The most common prayer Christians pray comes just before mealtime, with food before us to thank God for the food we are about to eat. Some pray for a long time when everyone is hungry, and those are the people who won't be asked again to pray. When we ask our 4yo to pray, she says, "Jesus, thank you for the food. Amen." It's short and sweet but I think she rushes through it a bit too fast. Anyway, of course we can thank God for the food we are about to eat but looking carefully at verse 3, thanking God for food is not exactly the prayer Jesus is teaching us to pray.
- "Give us each day our daily bread" is a daily prayer request for God to feed us. Many of us, if not all of us here, might not have had to ever worry about eating food on a certain day. If anything, everyday, we plan to eat and we are confident that we will. We have options to choose from and we are able to eat multiple meals and even snacks in between. This prayer is not only for those who are dying of starvation and have nothing to eat. It is especially for those who think they can take care of themselves. This is why Jesus is teaching to pray this way so that we learn dependence on our Father.
 - When we pray, do we come to God depending on his provisions for all our needs, or do we pray just for the things we know we cannot get for ourselves? We should not come to our Father in prayer only when we need extra help from God in our lives. But as we ask for our daily needs like food, shelter, work, etc., we must acknowledge that God is our ultimate Provider and that we are such needy people before him.

³ John Onwuchekwa, *Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church* (Crossway, 2018), 50.

- Dependence on God looks and sounds like this: “Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God” (Proverbs 30:8–9 (NIV). Do not give me poverty or I may resent you. Do not give me riches or I may forget you.
- Do we see that prayer is an expression of our dependence on God? Therefore, it is also a measurement of our dependence upon God. The things you pray about are the things you trust God to handle. The things you neglect to pray about are the things you trust you can handle on your own” (H. B. Charles Jr.)
 - By God’s grace, the difficulty of certain situations in our lives is enough to bring us to our knees and cry out to God for help. For me, it’s been parenting, as I am exposed of my inadequacies, my temper, my lack of patience and wisdom. Parenting brings out my past hurts and trauma I faced as a child. For some time, I was trying to figure it out on my own, which frustrated me even more because I couldn’t produce the results I was aiming for. I wanted to be a perfect father and I was miserable because I was not. Until finally, by God’s grace, I came honestly and humbly to God with simple prayers, saying, “Father, I can’t do this. Please help me.”
 - This is how prayer changes us, to be able to pray for the things we think we need with hearts of surrender that our Father knows what is best. If he provides for us what we ask, praise God for his generosity. If he doesn’t provide for what we ask, all the more we praise God for he knows what we don’t.
 - We should be well-prepared that our Father says “No” to certain prayers, we need to learn all the more to depend on God.
 - Paul’s prayer to remove the thorn. God says no, this is for you to learn in your weakness my strength. From retreat, the lesson of not to change our theology in circumstances of suffering and trial. Very practically, we wrestle with this in our prayers.
 - Jesus’ prayer to remove his cup of suffering. But knowing this was the Father’s will in the plan of redemption for sinners, Jesus fully drank that cup for the Father’s name sake, his name to be hallowed, for God’s kingdom to come and offer salvation to whoever would believe and trust in him. We thank God that the Father said No to take the cup of suffering away from the Son, Jesus Christ. He has secured our salvation, and in Christ, we are secure in his promises to supply all our needs in Christ (Philippians 4:19). God is saying No to some of your prayers. Will you still trust him?
 - As we learn to depend on our Father, for all our needs, and even when he says, No, the final lesson the Lord teaches us in prayer is to be...

IV. Committed to our Father together (v.4)

Luke 11:4 (ESV)

⁴ and forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.
And lead us not into temptation.”

- The Lord’s prayer teaches us to be committed to our Father by being committed to our personal holiness. Jesus was perfectly sinless and perfectly committed to holiness. So this prayer is for sinners like us to be praying everyday, for we have a greater need than daily bread. We have an ultimate need for daily forgiveness as sinners before a holy God. We have seen so far that when we sin, we are dishonoring our Father’s name. When we sin, we are living not for his kingdom to come but for our kingdoms of pleasure and comfort to be built up. When we sin, we are not depending on God but depending on ourselves and forgetting God.
- Jesus describes our sin like a financial debt that we cannot pay. We owe God perfect worship and obedience but we cannot give it. But unlike a financial debt, we cannot say to God, please be patient with me, and I will repay you everything I owe later. We are unable to pay what is due to

our holy Father and righteous King. What makes it worse is that our sin is a multiplying debt as we continue to sin against God in the evil thoughts in our mind and the selfish desires in our hearts. We sin against God in our actions and in our inactions. And we do not know how much we owe to God.⁴ God's kingdom will be fully established when Jesus comes again and then, every person will be judged for their debts. Each of us will be judged for the debt that we owe. The cost of sin is eternal death and the punishment of sin is the wrath of God and condemnation of our souls to hell. Only those who believe in Jesus Christ and that he died on their cross for their sins will have their records clear of all their debts.

- So by faith in Jesus Christ, we confess all of our specific sins, trusting that Jesus is faithful and just to forgive us of all our sins and to purify us from all unrighteousness, not just once, but each and every day we sin (1 John 1:9). Asking for forgiveness is daily trust that Jesus has covered our debts. Asking for forgiveness is a daily commitment to holiness.
 - For those who have not yet personally put your trust in Jesus Christ, I pray that you now understand God's holiness and that you see your sinfulness. I hope you understand that we cannot work for our forgiveness but we depend on God to give us all things, including what we ultimately need, our forgiveness. We desire for you to believe in Jesus so that with us, you can pray "Lord, forgive us our sins" with confidence in what Jesus has done for you. We long for you to be adopted into his family and to be called a child of God. To not have God as a judge who punishes us for our sin, but a Father who has given up his one and only son, Jesus Christ, to die in our place for our sins.
- The next line directly connected to confession is this: "For we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us." Part of our commitment to holiness is to be resolved to forgive others who have sinned against us.
 - The wording might sound like our forgiveness from God earns our forgiveness but that's not the case. This should be obvious because no one can actually do this as sinners apart from God. Who can truly forgive everyone who has sinned against him or her? Without any bitterness, resentment or grudges against everyone who has sinned against us. God, in forgiving us, casts our sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19), but we struggle to replay people's sins against us in our minds, over and over again. If God only forgives those who forgive everyone, then no one would be forgiven. So forgiving everyone is not a condition to be forgiven by God.
 - But this is the prayer of commitment: When we truly understand how great the debt we had because of our sinfulness against God, and how great God's mercy is that we have received, we pray to commit to God, saying, "As much as I have received your great mercy, Lord, I will extend mercy and forgiveness to everyone who has sinned against me. So help me, God."
 - Forgiving people in our lives is extremely difficult to do. But that's why Jesus teaches us that forgiving others and reconciliation even with our enemies starts in our prayers to our Father.
 - The bible assures that for those who have faith in Jesus, God is our Heavenly Father, that we are his children and that he hears us when we speak to him and he speaks to us as we come to him in the Word. But the bible warns us of how our sin and our unforgiveness of other people hinders our prayers from being heard by God (Psalm 66:19, Mark 11:25-26). Knowing the forgiveness you have received, will you commit to pray for those who have sinned against you and commit to forgiving them? The warning here is that if we do not commit to forgive others, especially one another in this church, we are rejecting God's forgiveness for us. Please do not keep yourself in such a dangerous place.
- Lastly, the Lord's prayer ends with a final petition: "And lead us not into temptation."
 - To be clear, God is not the one who tempts us to sin (James 1:13). But in his sovereignty, he does allow us to be tempted, just like Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1). So when we pray this prayer, we are asking God to not keep us in temptation that we cannot bear.
 - "Lead us not into temptation" = "keep us far from every sin because sin keeps us far from you"

⁴ Adapted from Thomas Watson's commentary on the Lord's Prayer.

- “Father, the more I love you, the more I hate sin that separates us, I am resolved and committed against sin so keep temptation far from me.”
- Together = accountability = helping one another keep far from sin and flee temptation
 - (i) We also don’t wait until someone asks us, but we are serious about sin to bring it up and confess to someone.
- Second Commitment in our Church Covenant:
 - (i) We will walk together in brotherly love, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.
 - (ii) May we reflect God holiness, hallowing his name together in the fellowship of our church.

I suggest 4 ways for us to consider as we strive to obey and apply God’s Word in our lives.

Life Application:

- 1) Reflect: What are the principles of prayer that we need to address in our prayer life?
- 2) Repent: How have we approached prayer in self-glorifying, self-focused ways?
- 3) Rejoice in the forgiveness of sins we have by faith in relationship with our loving Father.
- 4) Reveal Jesus together as his disciples by initiating prayer with one another and showing up to church prayer gatherings.

The One Thing

Learn to pray from our Lord’s prayer and pray together as his disciples.