

The Lord's Prayer

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Seventh Sunday after Pentecost) is Luke 11:1-13. This is about Jesus' teaching the disciples on the topic of prayer. It includes him giving them the Lord's Prayer as the model of all prayers.

Our reading begins with Jesus praying. This was not a now and then thing but a very regular habit that he practiced. It caught the attention of one of the disciples. This disciple asked Jesus to teach them (disciples) to pray just as John the Baptist had taught his followers to pray.

Fixed forms of prayer were common in first-century Judaism. The people of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the followers of John the Baptist, and other groups used set prayers. (TLSB)

This version of the Lord's Prayer is substantially shorter than the one found in Matthew. Jesus likely taught this prayer differently in a variety of settings. (TLSB)

Jesus teaches us to call God "Father," which means that we are God's children. Jesus has put us in the same relationship He has with God. This is an incredible status that he confirms on us. It should make us quite bold to come to him in prayer.

By hallowing (honoring) God's name, we bring him the first and the last and the highest offering within our power; nor does he seek and ask for more. Moreover, we cannot give God anything else, for it is he who gives us everything else. (LW V. 42 p. 36)

Our prayer is that the kingdom of God may be within us (Luke 17:21). We also pray that this kingdom may continually be spread further abroad so that it may also come to other nations and countries. (Chemnitz p. 49)

The "daily bread" petition is the only one that speaks to our earthly needs. This includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body. "Give" means that it is a gift and not something we deserved or earned and teaches us that God is the sole source.

We are constantly forgiving individuals because individuals are constantly in need of forgiveness. It should be obvious from this text and many others in Scripture that what God forgives us is vastly more than what we forgive our fellowmen.

Jesus also teaches the necessity of persistent prayer. The rules of hospitality in the first century required that the entire community assist in entertaining a midnight guest.

We can depend on God to keep His promise to hear us and answer us because He never breaks His word. Prayer is a blessed opportunity granted by the Gospel.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, thank for giving us your perfect prayer. Make us bold to us it often. Amen