

- N) Jesus Christ then calls His followers to pray for the forgiveness of their own sins (6:12), but notes that being forgiven by God of debts (sins, cf. Luke 11:4), means forgiving others for their debts (sins).
- O) In other words, since Jesus Christ has provided forgiveness for us, we should likewise extend forgiveness to others! This was (and is) a radical teaching!
- P) Just to clarify, Jesus goes on to explain (6:14-15) that if you are not forgiving to others, it is a proof that God has not forgiven you! We are to forgive those who have wronged us to the same measure that God has forgiven us!
- Q) Those people who show forgiveness toward others when they have been wronged are those who have understood the debt to which God has forgiven them (cf. Matthew 18:21-35). Some people speak of forgiveness as if they were deserving, others speak of forgiveness with such tears and humility that you know they were not deserving.
- R) Finally, Christ appeals to God for help in walking in a way which is free from temptation (6:13). Since we know that God does not tempt (James 1:13), this is a prayer that the circumstances of life do not result in temptation to sin (cf. Matthew 26:41).
- S) Christ closes his prayer asking for protection and deliverance from evil (or the "evil one," 6:13). This recognizes Satan's attempts at turning every opportunity or test into a temptation. We live in a world of spiritual battle where our enemy never rests, we must rely on God's eternal strength for deliverance. The Lord's Prayer was one of total dependence for every need, not just selective aspects of life!

Changeable People Praying To An Unchangeable God

(Part Two)

Long Beach Alliance Church • March 25th, 2007 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**PRAY THEN LIKE THIS:
OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN,
HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME.
YOUR KINGDOM COME,
YOUR WILL BE DONE,
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.
GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD,
AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS,
AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN
OUR DEBTORS.
AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION,
BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.
FOR IF YOU FORGIVE OTHERS THEIR
TRESPASSES, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER
WILL ALSO FORGIVE YOU, BUT IF
YOU DO NOT FORGIVE OTHERS THEIR
TRESPASSES, NEITHER WILL YOUR
FATHER FORGIVE YOUR TRESPASSES.
~MATTHEW 6:9-15 (ESV)**

1) Pray, Then, In This Way...

- A) When asked about how to pray by His disciples, Jesus Christ first called His followers to authenticity (Matthew 6:5-6), and prayer which is consistent with the will of God (6:7-8).
- B) Christ begins His model prayer by addressing God as "Our Father," reminding us of two important things about God.
 - i. First, God is a loving Father who cares for His children (cf. 7:7-11).
 - ii. Second, God already knows what we need (cf. 6:8), so approaching Him as Father is intimate and personal.
- C) Addressing God as "Our Father..." (6:9) is consistent with Christ's call to approach God authentically, without unneeded public fanfare (6:5-6), as you would your earthly father.
- D) Recognizing God as "hallowed" (6:9, a word which means "holy" or "separated from the others") is consistent with praying in a way which is consistent with God's will (6:7-8).
- E) Christ's prayer for God's Kingdom to come (6:10) recognized the hope of every follower of God (Matthew 21:9ff, "Hosanna to the son of David..."), that God would send His anointed One to rule the earth (Isaiah 61).
- F) Jesus Christ was the personal fulfillment of the inauguration of God's Kingdom on earth, and He calls for organizing our lives around the pursuit of God's Kingdom (cf. Matthew 6:33).

- G) Expanding on God's Kingdom, Christ prays for God's will to be perfectly accomplished on earth (through His people) as it is perfectly accomplished (already) in heaven (6:10).
- H) Closely related to this prayer (much like the "Hosanna" prayer) is the "Maranatha" prayer (one of the oldest Christian prayers, 1st Corinthians 16:22, Revelation 22:20) which calls on Christ to "come quickly" to complete the authority of the Kingdom of God on earth.
- I) God's chosen people have always depended on Him for their "daily bread" (cf. Exodus 16), and Jesus develops this metaphor to synecdochically apply to all of the (physical & spiritual) needs of the follower of Christ (6:11).
- J) This idea of "daily bread" should not be plucked out of context... In its essence, Jesus is asking for God to provide "on earth as it is in heaven."
- K) In heaven there is no thought or worry of provision, as God provides for all our needs (cf. Revelation 21). For followers of Christ, we live one day at a time, relying on God for today, in the full knowledge He will not abandon us tomorrow.
- L) In this sense, whenever we sit down to eat food (physically or spiritually), we are participating in an act which anticipates our future in heaven. Depending on God for today, with an eye toward His provision for eternity.
- M) In a broader sense, we are to depend on God for all we need, and utilize all we have for His Kingdom purposes. Nothing we have comes from us, it comes from God!