

The Lord's Prayer Introduction

by A.W. Pink

The Lord's Prayer is a perfect pattern of prayer that Jesus taught His disciples, and it is a valuable portion of a Christian's birthright.

Scripture: Matthew 6:9

Topics: "Divine Guidance", "Prayer"

Description

A.W. Pink emphasizes the significance of the Lord's Prayer as a divine model for prayer, highlighting that it was given by Christ to guide believers in their communication with God. He explains that this prayer encompasses all aspects of prayer, including adoration, confession, and supplication, and serves as both a pattern and a form for Christians. Pink argues against the notion that the Lord's Prayer is obsolete or exclusive to the Jewish context, asserting its relevance for all believers today. He encourages the regular use of this prayer in both personal and public worship, cautioning against the extremes of neglecting it or using it superstitiously. Ultimately, Pink presents the Lord's Prayer as a profound summary of the Gospel and a vital tool for spiritual growth and communion with God.

Transcript

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Introduction

After all that has been spoken and written by godly men on prayer, we need something better than that which is of mere human origin to guide us if we are to perform aright this essential duty. How ignorant and sinful creatures are to endeavor to come before the Most High God, how they are to pray acceptably to Him and to obtain from Him what they need, can be discovered only as the great Hearer of prayer is pleased to reveal His will to us. This He has done: (1) by opening up a new and living way of access into His immediate presence for the very chief of sinners; (2) by appointing prayer as the chief means of intercourse and blessing between Himself and His people; and (3) by graciously supplying a perfect pattern after which the prayers of His people are to be modeled.

Note the wise instruction of the Westminster divines: "The whole Word of God is of use to direct us in prayer, but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught His disciples, commonly called The Lord's Prayer" (The Westminster Shorter Catechism). From earliest times it has been called "the Lord's Prayer," not because it is one that He Himself addressed to the Father, but because it was

graciously furnished by Him to teach us both the manner and method of how to pray and the matters for which to pray.

It should therefore be highly esteemed by Christians. Christ knew both our needs and the Father's good will toward us, and thus He has mercifully supplied us with a simple yet comprehensive directory. Every part or aspect of prayer is included therein. Adoration is found in its opening clauses and thanksgiving in the conclusion. Confession is necessarily implied, for that which is asked for supposes our weakness or sinfulness. Petitions furnish the main substance, as in all praying.

Intercession and supplication on behalf of the glory of God and for the triumph of His Kingdom and revealed will are involved in the first three petitions, whereas the last four are concerned with supplication and intercession concerning our own personal needs and those of others, as is indicated by pronouns in the plural number. This prayer is found twice in the New Testament, being given by Christ on two different occasions. This, no doubt, is a hint for preachers to reiterate that which is of fundamental importance.

The variations are significant. The language of Matthew 6:9 intimates that this prayer is given to us for a model, yet the words of Luke 11:2 indicate that it is to be used by us as a form. Like everything in Scripture, this prayer is perfect--perfect in its order, construction, and wording. Its order is adoration, supplication, and argumentation. Its petitions are seven in number. It is virtually an epitome of the Psalms and a most excellent summary of all prayer. Every clause in it occurs in the Old Testament, denoting that our prayers must be Scriptural if they are to be acceptable.

"And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us" (1 John 5:14). But we cannot know His will if we are ignorant of His Word. It has been alleged that this prayer was designed only for the temporary use of Christ's first disciples, until such time as the New Covenant was inaugurated. But both Matthew and Luke wrote their Gospels years after the Christian dispensation had commenced, and neither of them gives any intimation that it had become obsolete and no longer of service to Christians.

It is contended by some that this prayer is not suitable for believers now, inasmuch as the petitions in it are not offered in the name of Christ, and contain no express reference to His atonement and intercession. But this is a serious misconception and mistake; for by parity of reasoning, none of the Old Testament prayers, indeed none of the Psalms, could be used by us! But the prayers of Old Testament believers were presented to God for His name's sake; and Christ was the Angel of the Covenant of whom it was said, "My name is in Him" (Ex. 23:20, 21).

Not only is the Lord's Prayer to be offered in reliance upon Christ's mediation, but it is that which He specially directs and authorizes us to offer. In more recent times, certain "students of prophecy" have objected to the use of this prayer on dispensational grounds, arguing that it is exclusively a Jewish prayer and legalistic in its tenor. But this is nothing more nor less than a blatant attempt of Satan to rob God's children of a valuable portion of their birthright. Christ did not give this prayer to Jews as Jews, but to His disciples.

It is addressed to "Our Father," and is therefore to be used by all the members of His family. It is recorded not only in Matthew but also in Luke, the Gentile Gospel. Christ's injunction, after His resurrection, for His disciples to teach believers to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them (Matthew 28:20) includes His commandment in Matthew 6:9-13. There is nothing whatever in this prayer unsuited to the Christian today, and everything in it is needed by him. It has long been a matter of dispute, which has

given rise to much acrimonious controversy, whether the Lord's Prayer is to be regarded as a form to be used or a pattern to be imitated.

The right answer to this question is that it is to be considered as both. In Matthew it is manifestly brought forward as an example or pattern of the kind of prayer that is to be offered under the new economy. "After this manner therefore pray ye." We are to pray "with that reverence, humility, seriousness, confidence in God, concern for His glory, love to mankind, submission, moderation in temporal things, and earnestness about spiritual things which it inculcates" (Thomas Scott).

But in Luke 11:2 we find our Lord teaching this: "When ye pray, say. . . ," that is, we are to use His words as a formula. It is, then, the duty of Christ's disciples in their praying both to use the Lord's Prayer continually as a pattern and sometimes as a form. As for those who object to the using of any form of prayer, let us remind them that God Himself often puts into the mouths of His needy people the very language that they are to employ in approaching Him. For example, the Lord says to Israel, "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously" (Hos. 14:2).

Doubtless, we need to be much on our guard against merely formal, and still more so against a superstitious, observance of the Lord's Prayer. Nevertheless, we must as sedulously avoid going to the opposite extreme and never employing it at all. In the opinion of this writer, it ought to be reverently and feelingly recited once at every public service and used daily at family worship. That it has been perverted by some, whose too frequent use thereof seems to amount to the "vain repetitions" that the Savior prohibited (Matthew 6:7), is no valid reason why we should be altogether deprived of offering it at the Throne of Grace in the spirit that our Lord inculcated and in the very words that He dictated.

In every expression, petition, and argument of this prayer, we see Jesus: He and the Father are one. He has a "Name" given Him which is above every name. He is the blessed and only Potentate, and His "Kingdom" ruleth over all. He is the "living bread" which came down from Heaven. He had power on earth to "forgive sins." He is able to succour them that are "tempted." He is the Angel that "redeems from all evil." The Kingdom, power, and glory pertain unto Him. He is the fulfillment and confirmation of all Divine promises and gracious assurances.

Himself "the Amen, and faithful Witness." Well did Tertullian term the Lord's Prayer "The Gospel abbreviated." The more clearly we understand the Gospel of the grace of God, "the Gospel of the glory of Christ," the more shall we love this wonderful prayer, and glorying in the Gospel which is "the power of God and the wisdom of God" to them that believe, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable as we offer the Divinely prescribed petitions and expect gracious answers (Thomas Houston).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-pink/the-lords-prayer-introduction/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net