

The Lord's Prayer

The purpose of these classes is to discuss in detail the parts of the Lord's Prayer and to place them within the context of the Bible and the Christian faith.

Schedule of Classes

September 9 Introduction
 September 16 Our Father
 September 23 Who art in Heaven
 September 30 Hallowed be Thy Name
 October 7 Thy kingdom come
 October 14 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
 October 21 Donuts!
 October 28 Give us this day our daily bread
 November 4 Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us
 November 11 Lead us not into temptation
 November 18 But deliver us from evil
 November 25 For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever
 December 2 Amen Conclusion

[The Lord's Prayer] ...in which there is contained no petition for riches, no thought of honors, no request for power and might, no mention of bodily health and of temporal life. [God] would have men ask of Him nothing uncertain, nothing paltry, and nothing temporal.

John Cassian Conferences c. 420

Who understands in all of its ramifications even the opening words "Our Father who art in heaven"? For if I understood these words in faith, that the God who holds heaven and earth in his hands is my Father, Christ is my brother....

Martin Luther Larger Catechism 1528

The prayer is complete in all its parts.... But the Bible contains other prayers... not to be neglected

John Calvin Institutes 3.20.48 1559

The context of the prayer Jesus gave His disciples in *Matt.* 6:9-13 is the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew places this prayer in the midst of the sermon as part of the central tenets of the teaching. In practice this version of the prayer will be our guide. This prayer is short and easy to memorize; above all it is an oral prayer with all the power of the spoken word. The nearly identical version in *Luke* 11:2-4 occurs after the disciples ask to be taught how to pray, and

begins a general teaching on prayer as a stand-alone sermon. A later version of the prayer in *Didache* 8:2 is nearly Matthew's, but adds "You should pray in this way three times a day.

We should pose some obvious questions and observations asked about this prayer. 1. The apostles asked Jesus for a prayer—why? Why did they not already know how to pray? Why did Jesus not tell them how to pray before they asked? After all, He told them so many other things. Was it simply that His followers, wanted to be like John the Baptist's, who told his disciples how to pray? In this case we have no idea what he told them. 2. Jesus had just told them to be brief in their prayers and then He gave them a very brief prayer. Jesus' prayers in the gospels are generally short (except *John* 17:1-26) but often He went off to pray alone and we have no idea about the actual content of these prayers. How did Jews pray at this time? Some Jews certainly prayed an official four times a day. Some pagans practiced repetitious prayer and Jesus warned people not to babble like the pagans and use many words (*Matt.* 6:7). How and when did it come to pass that later Christians believed that repeating the Lord's Prayer hundreds or thousands of times was worthwhile? 3. As Jesus said, the Father already knew the request before anyone asked in prayer. Nonetheless, people think that He likes to be asked. Are they correct? There was always more to prayer than asking for things, always. God plants in us the desire and need to pray. Through the Holy Spirit He guides our prayers, at least the good ones. What is a bad prayer, and what is a curse?

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 forgive our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 But deliver us from the evil one.
 (For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.) Amen. Book of Common
 Prayer 1559 (modern spelling)

My English version of hypothetical prayer in Hebrew by Jean Carmignac

Our Heavenly Father!
 Hallowed be thy name!
 Thy kingdom come!
 Thy will be done!
 As in heaven, so also on earth!

Give us our manna day by day.
 Forgive our debts,
 As we also have forgiven our debtors.
 And make it that we do not enter into temptation,
 But deliver us from the Evil One.

Didache (200s)

Our Father in Heaven,
 Hallowed be your name;
 Your Kingdom come;
 Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
 Give us today our bread for the morrow;
 And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation, but save us from the evil one,
 For yours is the power and the glory forever.

John Wycliffe's Prayer (c. 1380), modernized spelling

Our Father that art in the Heavens
 Hallowed be thy name.
 Thy kingdom come too.
 Be thy will be done in earth as in heaven
 Give us this day our bread over other substance
 And forgive us our debts,
 As we forgive our debtors,
 And lead us not into temptation
 But deliver us from evil. Amen

William Tyndale's Prayer (c. 1526), modernized spelling

Our father which art in heaven
 Hallowed be thy name
 Let thy kingdom come
 Thy will be fulfilled as well on earth as it is in heaven
 Give us this day our daily bread
 And forgive us our trespasses even as we forgive our trespassors
 And lead us not into temptation
 But deliver us from evil
 For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever Amen