

# The Lord's Prayer

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Preacher: Rev. Gordon Matheson

[ 0 : 00 ]     Thank you.

Thank you.

Lord, come, let us everyone a joyful noise. Make to the rock of our salvation. Let us before his presence come with praise and thankful voice.

Let us sing psalms to him with grace and make a joyful noise. We'll sing through to verse 6 to God's praise to five stanzas. O come, let us sing to the Lord.

Come, let us everyone. O come, let us sing to the Lord.

[ 1 : 36 ]     Come, let us everyone. A joyful noise may fill the rock of our salvation.

Let us before his presence come with praise and thankful voice.

Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord.

Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord. Let us sing to the Lord.

Thank you.

[ 3 : 42 ]     Thank you.

Thank you. Heavenly Father, as we draw near to you today in worship, we thank you that we can come praising your name, adoring your loving character, and glory in Christ Jesus.

We thank you that this day, the first day of the week, we gather remembering the resurrection of Jesus. We gather remembering his victory over sin and death.

And we thank you that we can stand before you today with that confidence that in Jesus we have been brought into the family of God.

If indeed today we have faith and trust in him. And so we thank you that you are the God of new birth. You are the God of renewal.

[ 5 : 48 ]     You are the God who brings to life that which was dead. And today each one of us, from the youngest to the oldest, can recognize the wonder and the miracle of that.

We are, Lord, all too familiar with the reality of death in the world around us. Perhaps we don't recognize it sufficiently in ourselves.

So often, Lord, we think we can come on our own terms to you. The Bible describes us as spiritually dead outside of Christ.

And so today we thank you that new life is made possible through Jesus. And it is to him that we come and worship today.

Thank you for the Holy Spirit's work in this. Today the Holy Spirit brings that life of God into the souls of men and women.

[ 6 : 49 ]     And it is the Holy Spirit who gives life, therefore, even to our prayers just now. And enables us to worship and to praise and to pray.

We pray that the Holy Spirit today would also, in his own way, bring home to us the word of God in power. Helping us to understand and grapple with the things of Scripture that we will today study together.

So, Father, we pray your blessing. We ask that today the triune God would be present working amongst us. That we would see the love of the Father. That we would see the grace of our Savior Jesus.

And we would know the fellowship today of the Holy Spirit in our present meeting together. We ask these things then with the confession and acknowledgement of our sins.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Now, boys and girls, I have today with me one of the most amazing pieces of technology ever created.

[ 7 : 59 ] And I mean that. It's an amazing piece of technology. Very little in anything to do with the modern world would work without it. And it's not my pen.

It's actually something that makes my pen work. This one, it's not just an ordinary pen where you've got a lid in it. You know, sometimes you get a biro, you get a lid in it, you can write with it. Put the lid back on and you're fine. Or a felt-tip pen.

You take a lid off, you can draw with it and colour in. You put the lid back on and it's fine. Now, this pen, I don't even know what the name of them is, but it's a pen that you can open and close. So you click the end of it and the pen comes out.

You click it again and you close it. And when you close it, you can put it into your pocket. And you're not going to be scribbling all over your shirt or all over your jacket when you put it inside your pocket. And the piece of technology that makes this work is buried inside the pen.

Does anyone want to hazard a guess what it might be? What is the technology that I'm talking about? Ink? No, it's not ink.

[ 8 : 56 ] Although ink is a good guess. I'll open it up and I'll show you. So if I open up my pen very carefully, I can take the top off the pen. I'm going to put it down very carefully on the pulpit because if I lose it, my pen's not going to work anymore.

And this is what's inside the pen. I don't know if you can see this. Can you see what that is? I'll take my pen away. Can you see what that is? Can anyone see it?

Do you know what that is? This is a spring. Do you know what a spring is? Set back in the 70s.

So like 50, almost 50 years ago. You used to get toys called space hoppers. It was basically a spring and a stick. And you stood on the stick and you bounced around.

And the spring would help you to bounce around. And that's what a spring did. It's a much bigger spring than this. And every car, did all of you come to church today in a car? Or hands up, who was good and who walked?

[ 9 : 53 ] Did anyone walk to church today? So everyone came in a car today, right? That's really good. Every one of your cars has loads of springs inside it. There's springs in the suspension.

And there's springs inside the engine. And there's springs inside part of the steering mechanism. There's springs everywhere inside your car. And in fact, every piece of mechanical technology that we have today, every machine that we run, every tractor, every engine, just every single thing you can think of, even up to the spaceships that go up into space and put satellites in orbit, all of them have got springs inside them.

And a spring, it's an amazing thing. It's a little piece of curved metal. It's coiled around in itself lots and lots and lots of times. And it keeps its shape. So when you squeeze it, it'll bounce back into shape again.

So when you squash it, it's going to ping back up. I don't know if you can see that. I pull it. It pings back into shape again. And that's an amazing thing, because that means that you can push a piece of metal into a particular position.

And when you release it, it'll go back to where it was again. And that's how machines kind of work and do the things they do. It's an amazing piece of technology. But it's so simple, isn't it? You think, wow, that's just a simple little curved bit of metal.

[ 11 : 14 ] It's just coiled around. It's a really simple thing. The great thing about a spring is the metal goes back into the same shape again. And it allows things to kind of work.

Now, there's a season, isn't there, called spring. Have you ever thought about that? The connection between a spring and the season called spring. The spring is when, this is where springs get their name from, actually.

In the spring, the world, which has kind of died through the winter, comes back to life again. And that's where things spring up out of the ground. And the idea with a spring was that something that can be twisted goes back into the right shape again.

It comes back to the right way of being. And the idea was it's a bit like the world. When the spring comes around, everything goes back to the way you want it to be.

Instead of being wintry and dull and gray and no plants growing or anything, you get all of the blossom and all of the life of spring coming forth. And the reason I'm saying all of this today is very simple.

[ 12 : 23 ] Sunday, in the Christian church, Sunday is a spring. You ever think about that?

When you come to church on a Sunday, when you go to Sunday school, what you're coming to is a spring. You're coming to something that is going back to shape.

That's springing back to the way you want it to be. And God's really good to us in this. When God created the world, God said, on the seventh day, we'll have a day of rest.

And in the New Testament, what the apostles did was, they said, well, the first day of the week will become the day we remember the resurrection of Jesus. Because that's the day that God fixed everything that we had done wrong with our sin.

And so, Sunday, the first day of the week, for the Christian church, became the day where we remember God fixing everything back to the way it should be.

[ 13 : 24 ] And so today is like a spring day. It's a day where everything springs back to how it should be. And you've got a chance, every Sunday when you come together as Christians, when we come together to worship, you've got a chance to remember that God has fixed the problems of this world.

And he's given us a day where things spring back into shape again. And in some ways, that's just a foretaste of what heaven's going to be like. Because heaven will be a day where everything is sprung back completely, perfectly, to be without sin and without all of the problems.

So you guys remember, every time you pick up a pen and you push it, you think, that's a spring that's making that work. And it's not a big jump to then think, well, church on a Sunday, Sunday school home and go, we're springing back to remembering God and God's way of things and God's perfect world.

We're going to sing again, this time in Psalm 32. Psalm 32. This is a psalm that's actually about springing back with God as well.

It's a psalm about confessing our sin. So when we tell God what we have done wrong and how we need him to forgive us, we're singing about this and it says, Oh, blessed is the man to whom is freely pardoned all the transgression he hath done whose sin is covered.

[ 15 : 08 ] You know why they're blessed? Because they're blessed. Because they spring back to life. If your sin is forgiven, you spring back to life. So we've seen blessed is the person who's freely pardoned, whose transgressions have been covered up.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not his sin and in whose spirit there is no guile nor fraud is found therein. So we're going to sing in this psalm verses one to one to the end of verse five, sorry.

I think it would be the note maybe says one to six, but one to five in this psalm to God's peace. O blessed is the man to whom this really pardoned all of the God is sin, and in His spirit there is no guile, nor fraud is found therein.

When as I hear it, pray my speech, and silence was my gun.

My God said, what's ever because I know it on day long.

[ 17 : 28 ] For upon me both day and night I've had yet heavy light.

So that my voice heard the bridges, then some words out there by.

I there upon have found to thee, my sin acknowledged.

Have I voice my iniquity, I have not a friend.

I will confess unto the Lord, my best man to stand high.

[ 18 : 58 ] And of my sin as we did, forgive me and be with me.

Will you turn with me in your Bibles, please, to read in the Old Testament, the book of Psalms.

That psalm we've just sung, actually, Psalm 32. We're going to read a short passage in the New Testament as well, but we'll read in Psalm 32 first.

A mascal of David. A mascal is, just for reference, it's a teaching psalm. So David has something he wants to teach in this psalm.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

[ 20 : 23 ] For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me.

My strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity.

I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord, and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Therefore, let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found.

Surely in the rush of great waters they shall not reach him. You are a hiding place for me. You preserve me from trouble. You surround me with shouts of deliverance.

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Be not like a horse or mule without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you.

[ 21 : 32 ] Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

And then if we can turn forward in our Bibles to the New Testament, to Matthew's Gospel, Matthew 6. This is part of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus is teaching the disciples about prayer.

We'll read from verse 5 through to verse 15.

And when you pray, do not keep up empty.

Pray then like this.

[ 22 : 57 ] 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. Amen. This is God's word to us.

Let's bow our heads once again in prayer. Heavenly Father, we thank you today for the great wonder that it is to have read that psalm.

Psalm that reminds us of the blessing of forgiveness. And we need to have that assurance today. We need to be assured by God Almighty that our sins are indeed forgiven.

[ 24 : 01 ] We need to hear these words of absolution. And so, Father, we pray that today you would assure us in our faith that if we have believed in Jesus, if we have put our trust in him, that we have that confidence to know the forgiveness of sin.

It is not something that we merely hope for. It's not something that we have a vague expectation of. But it is something we can be sure of and something we can live in light of with full confidence.

And so we ask today, Father, your blessing to be upon us as we come in a moment to your word, guide and direct us into the truth. Be with the young folk who've gone out to their Sunday school classes today.

We pray for them and for their teachers that they too would know that same experience of meeting with the living God and the word of scripture as they study it together.

We ask and pray for these young lives that they would come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. We pray, Father, that you would open their hearts, that you would bless to them the witness of their parents.

[ 25 : 09 ] And we thank you, Father, for the wonder of Christian baptism. It's full of promise to believers that their children will have privileges beyond imagining.

And we pray, Father, today for your grace to work through these privileges that have been given to us. That that sign of covenant blessing would be brought home in reality to these young lives.

We want to pray today, Father, for your blessing on this church. We pray for them in all of their particular needs as a congregation. You know, those who are sick, those who are going through difficult times just now, both in body and in spirit.

We ask and pray that you would sustain and help them. We pray, Father, for those who are anxious about what the day will bring and what the future holds. And we ask and pray your blessing in that too.

We want to pray for the vacancy in this congregation and the need for a pastor. We pray, Father, for unity in the church. That the congregation would see a framing of shared thought on how they move forward.

[ 26 : 13 ] That they would have an optimism in your leading and guidance and direction. That they would look to you to be the one who raises up a pastor for them. And we pray that you would open up a door in this place for the work of the gospel to go on powerfully through that ministry.

We want to pray today, Father, for your blessing on not only this congregation, but the others in Rhode Island that are going through the same season just now without a minister. We pray that you would raise up pastors who will lead and minister in our congregations.

Who will do so with diligence and wisdom. Who will be faithful expositors of the truth. Who will stand fearlessly in the face of opposition. Often, Lord, opposition of external threats.

Those who would silence the gospel. And opposition internally in the church as well. Those who would rather the church holds to empty traditions. But who will boldly and fearlessly teach the truth of God.

And stand in the face of all opposition. We pray for the Spirit's blessing to be there for the day on the preaching of the word. And wherever today the word has been preached across not only our island but our nation and indeed the whole world today.

[ 27 : 25 ] May the word go forth powerful. And may men and women be transformed. Lifted out of the darkness of sin and unbelief. Lifted out of the emptiness of human traditions.

And lead people to see the glory and wonder of Jesus as a saviour. Who is worthy to be praised.

We pray today, Father, for your spirit to continue to strive with those here who do not yet know Christ as their saviour. We know, Father, that one day these strivings will cease.

Perhaps for some they already have. What a fearsome place that must be. To be attending the means of grace but not to have the Spirit of God working in their lives.

And so, Father, we pray earnestly today for the Holy Spirit's work to go on. For that witness to the truth. And to awaken people from their slumber.

[ 28 : 31 ] From that spiritual deadness that characterises all of us outside of Christ. We long the day for your blessing. We thank, Father, of the land in which we live.

And all of its particular needs. We see, Father, sometimes really difficult things. Three young lives snuffed out not that far away from us over Malik in the last few days.

We pray, Father, for these grieving families. We ask that into the darkness of these experiences that you would send forth your comfort and your light.

I think, Father, of the guys who I know are the chaplains of the L'Habar Shetney team. And we pray, Father, that you would give them opportunities to speak into these situations with grace and compassion and care.

We ask and pray, Father, for these communities, indeed, where, across the highlands and islands, young men are in such despair. And then a tragedy like this comes upon that, Lord.

[ 29 : 41 ] There will be many people grieving and sorrowful, hurting. And we pray for your blessing on those who seek to bring hope into these experiences.

Father, bless your people. To the ends of the earth today, there are many of our brothers and sisters who face persecution. Who are displaced from their homes and from their livelihoods.

Whose families have been torn apart because of conflict. And we ask that you would bless your people today. Remember the persecuted church. Remember, Lord, the church in places of war and conflict.

We pray, Father, for peace to come where there is strife. And for your glorious name to be heralded as the bringer of reconciliation between those who have parted company.

We know, Father, that one day this will come when Jesus returns. One day, one day wars will cease. One day famine will end. One day persecution will come and the wicked will receive their just reward.

[ 30 : 58 ] And so, Father, we pray, come Lord Jesus. Asher in the day of his glorious coming.

And start along with what he will achieve. We ask all of these things in Jesus' name today.

And we remember that God has given us a way to guide our lives. And that's what we hope for and cling to as we study God's word every Sunday as we gather together as a church.

[ 31 : 57 ] And we're going to sing this section of Psalm 119 to 16 to God's praise. By what means shall a young man learn his way to purify?

Thy word I in my heart have it that I open on thee.

For joy, thy testimonies may. Thy riches on me give.

And by thy gates thy heaven will thy holy word forget.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. We often add at the end, for thine is the kingdom, the power, the glory forever.

Amen. These words of the Lord's Prayer. Let's just bow in prayer before we start the word. Father in heaven, as we take a moment just now to reflect on scripture, we pray for your guidance and your direction.

We want, Lord, our hearts to be aligned with you. We want our priorities to be your priorities.

[ 36 : 40 ] We want our desires to be your desires. We want the outcomes that you want for your people and for your glory. And so we ask and pray just now that you would help us to have that.

To know that experience of fellowship with you. A close walk with the Father. We pray this for Jesus' sake. Amen. So the greatest happiness is to be in close agreement with God.

It's a quote from Derek Kidner, who has a commentary on the book of Psalms. The greatest happiness is to be in close agreement with God.

I think as a general rule, we know that is the case in all of the relationships that we have. You know, you have the greatest happiness in your marriage when you are in close agreement with your spouse.

You have the happiest experience in school when you're in close agreement with what your teacher wants you to do in that setting. As a congregation, in fact, the greatest happiness at the moment in a time of vacancy will be found in being closely agreed with one another and coming to a consensus in how you move forward resolving the pastoral vacancy in the church.

[ 38 : 13 ] That's the way our system works. It's important for us to recognize that in our prayer life, in our relationship with God.

That the greatest happiness in our lives is to be discovered through a close agreement with God. And I suppose my main point today is really that that is discovered in prayer.

That we need to think, therefore, about our prayer life in order to discover the greatest happiness that can be had and known.

Because we are closely aligned with God. Because we walk closely in agreement with Him. I suppose in a sense that's really just about fellowship, isn't it?

That we want to have that close fellowship with God in our lives. Before I go into this in too much depth as well, though, I wanted to stop and just for a second explain why this is relevant to everyone here.

[ 39 : 22 ] I sometimes fear that you think, well, a sermon on prayer is aimed at, and then you might put an X, Y, or Z in there.

You might think, well, a sermon on prayer is aimed at young Christians who need to know better how to pray. Or a sermon on prayer is aimed at experienced Christians. You might even think it's aimed at male Christians or men who are members in the church and who will lead in prayer in the prayer meeting or whatever else it might be.

But actually it's relevant to everyone. Firstly, there are people here who have not yet come to know the Lord as Savior. There are some people here, I'm sure, who simply do not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

And to you I would say simply that you must pray. Because your salvation depends on that.

Not that your salvation is made possible through prayer. But at some point you're going to have to ask God to save you. And that is prayer.

[ 40 : 30 ] At some point you're going to have to come to God seeking His salvation. And if you think that you can be saved without ever doing that, then I want to persuade you away from that opinion.



And so the question really is how should you come? What is it about God that you need to think about in order to come to Him? How do we come to God at all? And then there's young Christians here today who are starting on that road of fellowship with God.

And who I want to encourage so that you will grow and build a life of discipleship and closeness with the Lord in prayer.

it's one of these disciplines that we need to cultivate and work at that is a great danger in fact in falling into the trap of complacency in prayer which is why this is relevant as well to older Christians who've been on the road a long time sometimes our prayer life can become routine our prayer life can become very formulaic we can literally sometimes say exactly the same words every time we pray and that's not a healthy place to be because that suggests that you're not really thinking about what you're praying anymore you're just going through the notions and these are the very things Jesus warns about about the formulaic form of prayer the repetition of empty phrases perhaps even the great danger of your prayer life just becoming a public thing something that's only exercised when other people see it there is a great deal to be learned in the closet in the private place where you're alone with God and where that needs to be worked at so there are relevance here I think for people of all stages in that experience of Christian life right the way through there's four things I want to raise today that come out of the Lord's Prayer there's lots of ways you can approach the Lord's Prayer it's broken into two halves one half is directed towards God's situation and priorities and one is perhaps more directly focused on our situation and the immediate priorities that we need and the things we have to receive there's that sense there's six petitions you can look at six different petitions there's actually four things that spring forth and that are important for cultivating a life of prayer that can be demonstrated from the Lord's Prayer and which are the reason I read Psalm 32 is because they're echoed there as well and it's helpful to have that practical example in Psalm 32 of what this looks like from David's perspective the reason David's a good example of this is because David was a man who God himself described as a man after my own heart and prayer I think is about pursuing the heart of God and so David is a great example of a sinner like us pursuing the heart of God and seeing the blessing of God flow in his life so the first thing is that I want to note that Jesus teaches us to adore God so when we come in prayer

Jesus begins by saying you come seeking the adoration of God our Father in Heaven hallowed be your name hallowed means simply to be made holy and when you think about hallowed ground a lot of places in the country not so common in fact I don't think there's any in the island maybe apart from St. Peter's in time the old point was that churches used to have cemeteries around them the area of a church was considered hallowed ground it was given over to a purpose and the idea was that you would want the saints to be buried there you would want believers to be buried so the church would be buried in the grounds of the church the church people would be buried in the grounds of the church yard and so when you think about hallowed ground it's ground and land that's been set apart for a special purpose so today this building it's it's set apart for the worship of God it's dedicated to that purpose and when we think about hallowing God's name it's that same idea that God's name would be set apart in people's minds that when people think about our God they would think about him in a special way and what we're wanting them to think about is not just the name of God literally the name Yahweh or Jehovah or Jesus or even the Holy Spirit but rather the name that someone has the reputation that they have

[ 45 : 35 ] God has a name it is a name that is known for his salvation that is known for his grace that is known for his steadfast love his chesed and so when Jesus is teaching us to pray he says begin your prayer by reflecting on your father in heaven your relationship with him and how you want him to be known how you want him to be thought of how you want people to remember him how you yourself remember him and think of him his fame among the nations I mean ask yourself that in your own immediate community whether it's your community here in Kalanish or your own family perhaps perhaps it's in your workplace how is God thought of in your workplace or in your family in the community here in Kalanish and is that something that preoccupies your prayers are you thinking about how well you want God thought of in these contexts the adoration of our father in heaven hallowed be your name is a challenge I think in our generation we want to make our priorities the most important thing don't we

I mean I know myself there's an awful lot of times where I will come on God to God rather than prayer and my prayer will immediately rush to the thing that is preoccupying me and troubling me at that moment I'll be worried about something and I want to pray about that straight away and what Jesus is doing is he's giving us a sort of reset to stop and say well what is actually the ultimate most important thing that we can discover that needs to be realized in the world what is actually in the sense what is the world for what does life exist for what's it all about and the answer is God's reputation the greatest happiness that men and women can know is to be in close agreement with God and so therefore the greatest happiness is going to be found in aligning our priorities with God's priorities and so the question is what is God's greatest priority and the answer is his own glory and God's this is a strange thing for us because we think if a human was to do this we would think they were vain we would think that they were egotistical we would think that it was horrible in fact if I was to go around thinking the most important thing that anybody around me can ever realize is just how great

I am then you would rightly think there is something wrong with me there's people like that and there is something wrong with them but God who is the creator of all things who is the sustainer of all life who is the end of all things for whom all things have been made it is okay for him to pursue his own glory it is in fact right that he should pursue his own glory because he is most glorious above all things and the way amazingly that God pursues his own glory is in sending his son to die for sinners he is exalted in humbling himself he is glorified in his death and the salvation that he brings to unworthy sinners he is glorified really ultimately in the character that he shows in the character that he reveals to his people you see it in

Psalms 32 where David is writing and there are a few different points you could go to in Psalm 32 but the one I find really striking is where David says you are my hiding place it is not that David is playing a game of hide and seek and he is really thankful that he found somewhere where people can't find him what he means is he is thankful that there is a place where he can be hidden from the hatred and the fear and the anxiety and the troubles of the world he can go to God and there he can be embraced and surrounded by the chesed of God God's steadfast love it will shield him and shelter him and so David the highest expression of praise that he can manage in that Psalm is to say you are my hiding place you are the one I can go to shelter with and there I find solace and comfort and shelter and David adores God because of that God I wonder today if that's what we do in our prayers that's what we ought certainly to do in prayer is to reflect for a moment to pause in our prayer life and to revel in rejoicing in who

God is and what he has done for us that makes him so precious and it's important because it's on that preciousness of God that we build a confident prayer life it's because God is adorable it's because God is our greatest delight it's because God is worthy of our faith and our trust because of who he is that we can come to him with all of the rest of our prayers and everything else that we might devote time to in our prayers and we remember our God is a preserver of us in times of trouble and therefore all of the troubles can be brought to him and addressed to him with confidence we remember therefore God's character and we come to him for his salvation for his love for his grace towards us and in our prayers we pray that that would be known so we adore

[ 52 : 08 ] God secondly we come in confession a huge significant component of the Lord's prayer is just that confessing our sin it's hugely important you see it in the Lord's prayer as I say forgive us our debts strangely as we also have forgiven our debt there's an important point there in Christian doctrine morality and ethics that we should not expect from God what we will not give to others and that's certainly true of confession of our sin as we acknowledge our wrongdoing to God and expect God to forgive us for our wrongdoing we should equally forgive those who have wronged us but it applies across the board in fact everything that you can ask of God for yourself you really ought to be willing to bless others with as well so you want shelter and safety and security and comfort you should not deny these to other people who are in need the two go hand in hand what you ask from

God and receive from him you ought also be willing to give and bless others with too and so there is this sense of recognizing that our sin needs somehow to be dealt with continually in God's presence I mean Jesus when he's saying this he's addressing it to his people he's addressing it as a template for the church the sermon on the mount is not a temporary sermon that belongs to a particular phase of the church there was a fascinating thing recently on the internet I came across someone suggesting that the Lord's prayer particularly the prayer forgive us our debts refers only to the church in that period between the ministry of Jesus and his resurrection because after his resurrection all things are made new the Holy Spirit has come the church no longer needs to worry about sin that's just not the case we need continually to be forgiven as John says in his letters whoever says he is without sin deceives himself we'd rather not be deceived we'd rather be honest and so we come to God in humble acknowledgement of our sin and our need for his forgiveness happiness it's there continually and in fact when you think about it that's where the greatest happiness is to be found isn't it in your relationship with your husband or your wife it's not built on and solely exists on the basis of what happened on your wedding day when everything was perfect when you didn't see each other's flaws when you didn't snap at each other when you weren't grumpy the reality of life together in any relationship is one where our brokenness needs to be addressed and the brokenness that we take into these relationships the offence that we cause needs to be continually addressed and it's the same with our relationship with God we need to keep addressing the fact that we do fail we stumble we're not perfect and what we need is

Jesus what we need is the covering of our sin through the blood of Christ what we need to keep coming to is the sufficiency of Jesus as the atonement and propitiation for us the one whose blood covers the mercy seat as a barrier between God's righteous holiness and us that thing that cleanses us of our sin and sets us on a new path of righteousness before you see in Psalm 32 David actually says that when I kept silent when his sin goes unconfessed he says when I'm slow to come to you and confess and when I'm slow to claim your grace and your forgiveness he says my bones wasted away the word in Hebrew literally actually means wore thin like jeans you know like when you're wearing jeans for a long time the knees on them get thin a great trouble to us because our kids go through jeans really quickly they're always scrabbling about on their knees doing stuff outside or in the garage or wherever else and so we boys jeans they wear thin really quick and he needs new ones and that's kind of what David's saying there's something about my life that wears thin my bones waste away when I'm not coming to you when I'm not receiving your refreshing and your renewal when I'm not receiving that spring back in my life to be brought back to what I ought to be in a relationship with you and so in our prayer life confession is essential for that springing back to life for that bringing us back to the way

God wants us to be in order to thrive and flourish we need to keep coming back acknowledging our sin and therefore being set free and released when I was young I had cousins who stayed outside Glasgow and they were about ten years older than me and they had toys that I could only imagine when I was a wee boy and one one of the toys that they had was a slingshot and the slingshot was quite a sophisticated one actually it was a sort of metal shape that had a brace that would hold in your forearm and you could really pull it pretty hard and I remember the first time playing with that slingshot and putting a stone into it and firing it down the garden into the trees at the far end of their garden and you know that's what what what confession is like in the prayer life of the

Christian it's like that release of a slingshot being pulled back and we confess our sins and we're set free and given like a boost a blast off into a new future given direction in our lives because the overwhelming experience of having your sin forgiven is one of praise and adoration and service and delight for our master and so there's this wonderful expression of confession of sin there's also thanksgiving now this is a tricky one because you know Paul says it explicitly he says in everything make your request to be known to God with thanksgiving so Paul is saying your prayer life has to be saturated in thanksgiving and when you look at the Lord's prayer you think well where is thanksgiving in the Lord's prayer our father in heaven hallowed be your name your kingdom come your will be done on earth this name give us this day our daily bread forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil and there's no thankfulness in any of this is there

[ 59 : 46 ] I mean it's interesting that Jesus isn't explicit about that and he doesn't stop and explicitly express that for us and there's lots of reasons for why that might be but I think that the key one to think about and you can reflect on this perhaps a bit today if you want it's to reflect on what Jesus teaches about who you're praying to and the relationship that Jesus is constantly wanting the disciples to understand and build on he wants the disciples to understand that they're coming to their father and he wants the disciples to come to their father with bold requests and these are bold requests the coming of the father's kingdom the doing of the father's will on earth as it is in heaven the giving of us of our daily bread these are big asks I'll come to that in a moment a bit why that's such a big ask but these are grand things that you're asking for and I think what Jesus is driving at is that when we come to our father we're coming to someone that we have confidence in as children come to their father and what I'm driving at is

I think that thankfulness is implicit in the asking we're asking because we're thankful that we already know he can give us these things we're thankful because we know that that or not experience he has done these things before and we can come to him again there's an implicit thankfulness in asking our father for our daily bread because we know he's the one who provides our daily bread and we're really grateful for that and we live in humble dependence upon him we're thankful that he is the one whose will has to be done there's something wonderful about our father's will being done on earth and we rejoice in that and we're really glad of it and we want to see more of it and so I think thankfulness is implicit in children asking for these things of their father but the point is that there is a constant thankfulness great happiness remembers to be found in close agreement with

God and God basically wants us to depend on him he wants us to realize his great strength and for us to live out a life of humble acknowledgement of our utter dependence on him for his grace and thankfulness just overflows out of that experience it just runs like a river through the lives of Christians who dwell this way and then finally we come with supplication or if you want another S a shopping list a series of requests of God from the small to the great you might think that some of these are small things give us this day our daily bread on the face of it's a small thing just the means to get through the day but you begin then to imagine what's involved in that and in our day and age there's a whole supply chain that lies behind us getting our daily bread and how a loaf of bread gets to Tesco or to the

Co-op or your local shop there's a lot that goes on behind the scenes there isn't there and that flows all the way back to the harvest and the world producing the means to sustain us so what looks like a small thing is actually a huge thing isn't it and then you've got this other one which we barely understand deliver us from evil it's interesting actually in Greek that the word evil there is almost not just evil in a sort of generic sense there's evil in the world that we need to be kept from but delivering us from the evil one himself that we're requesting that God deliver us from Satan the greatest cosmic threat that the church faces because he's seeking to destroy us and we're relying on God to deliver us from all of Satan's schemes and attacks there is a whole range of experience there basically everything is included every aspect of our lives there's no corner of our lives where being able to come and pray and request

God's help and God's blessing and the security of God's deliverance there's no aspect of our lives where these things don't matter that's why in Psalm 32 David simply says it's a mictum remember it's teaching and this is the teaching of Psalm 32 therefore let the godly offer prayer because God is an abundantly merciful God who has forgiven sin and who pardons us and who has brought us to salvation and therefore we can adore him and we can confess our sins to him and we can pour out thanksgiving to him therefore because God has done all of these things let the godly come to him and pray that's our rationale entirely for praying is that God has done it all and so therefore we come to him in adoration and confession thanksgiving and supplication the word is act some of you maybe know it already as a model for prayer adoration confession thanksgiving supplication it's a simple model simple way of thinking about our prayer life not just our individual prayers but our whole approach to prayer and our relationship with

[ 66 : 07 ] God that longs for his blessing to be poured out upon us let's bow to him in prayer heavenly father as we come to you in prayer we thank you for the wonder of your grace we thank you for the salvation that is available to men and women like us we thank you for Jesus we thank you for his cross and for his resurrection we thank you that he has died to take away our sin for our forgiveness we thank you that he has risen that we may know new life and that he has today sent the Holy Spirit that we may follow him as our king and so bless us in pursuing him and in a relationship with you fill our prayer life with wonder and awe and richness and we ask it in his name amen we are going to conclude singing in psalm 116 and we are going to sing the first four stanzas verses 1 to 6

I love the Lord because my voice and prayers heeded here I while I live will call on him who bowed to me his ear death the cords and sorrows did about me compassed round the pains of hell too cold on me I grief and trouble found upon the name of God the Lord then did I call and say deliver thou my soul O Lord I do thee humbly!

How does God respond? God merciful and righteous is gracious is our Lord God saves the meek I was brought low he did me help afford this is the story of someone's walk with God just in a few verses of this psalm so let's sing these words of peace I love the Lord because my voice and prayers I love the Lord because my voice and prayers keep to hear and while I live with all long and if back to me is here if back to me is here if back to me is here and while I live will come on him fill!

back to me is the air of death! the course and sorrows did have become!

the the the! the the the! the!

[ 69 : 15 ] I grief and trouble find, I grief and trouble find, I grief and trouble find.

The pains of hell took hold on me, I grief and trouble find, upon the name of God the Lord, and did I call and say, deliver thou my soul, O Lord, I do thee humbly pray, I do thee humbly pray, I do thee humbly pray, deliver thou my soul, O Lord, I do thee humbly pray.

God makes me full and righteous, is me gracious, is the Lord.

God saves the meek I was brought low, He did me help afford.

He did me help afford. He did me help afford.

[ 71 : 34 ] God saves the meek I was brought low, He did me help afford.

Now the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit, be with each one of you now and always. Amen.