

The Lord's Prayer

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[0 : 00] let's pray shall we lord god help me to only say true and useful things and help us all to hear them and humbly respond amen when you pray how do you pray when you pray how do you pray i'm not asking you whether you pray like with your hands together your eyes shut kneeling on the floor i'm not asking you if you pray with like a list or a prayer diary i'm not asking if you pray those spontaneous what people call those arrow prayers just shoot a prayer up to god i'm not asking you if you pray by yourself in church with your spouse with a prayer partner these are all interesting things to think about but i'm asking something more fundamental when you pray how do you pray what shapes your prayers what do you think you're doing when you pray it's a really important question for us to think about as christians because hopefully we spend a good amount of time praying it's worth knowing exactly what it is we think we're doing it's important to think about as well when you think about who god is and if prayer is in somehow in some way talking to god god who is the creator of the universe the sustainer of the universe the judge of all people it's no small thing to have a chat with him and it's worth thinking about what it is we're doing when we pray imagine that you were invited to have a conversation with john howard now whether or not you like john howard is not the point the point is that it would be a big event and you would need to speak to him appropriately you might like to think that you could be super cool and kind of slide up to him hey john how you doing treat him casually because you don't really care or something but if you thought that way it might get a bit of a laugh but it's not really appropriate it's not really the way you would address our leader with acknowledging and respecting who he is there are certain ways that are appropriate to address people based on who they are if that's the case for john howard who is prime minister of a small country for a short time how much more important is it to think about the way we address god ruler of the universe for eternity when we come to him good question to ask how should we pray well fortunately for us in the bible we have some great examples and tonight we're going to look at one of i think the key examples of how christians are to pray because the disciples jesus followers had on their lips this very christian how should we pray when we pray what should we do and they saw jesus praying and i thought now's the chance let's ask him what it is we should do the passage you're looking out is luke chapter 11 verses 1 to 4 i hope you have that open in front of you we heard it read earlier page 845 in the bibles you see there jesus was praying in a certain place after he finished one of the disciples said to him lord teach us to pray as john that is john the baptist taught his disciples and what follows then for us as we kind of overhear jesus answer to his disciples is a lesson on how we should pray it's most excellent that we have this and well worth us listening to jesus gives us what we call the lord's prayer

it's a prayer that many of us probably know quite well and as this little drama really showed quite nicely it's a prayer we can kind of rattle off pretty easily but not necessarily actually have thought through what it is we're doing what it is we're saying what it is we're hoping to communicate to god about but jesus wasn't just giving us a form of words to rattle off it wasn't as though jesus said say this bunch of words in this sequence and then you've kind of done your praying for the day it's not that kind of thing again as the drama brought out quite helpfully jesus gave us words to pray thoughtfully to pray their meaning to our god and so we're going to have a look now at the meaning of these words so that when we pray the lord's prayer we know what it is we're praying we start off by saying father now that's actually a big deal you might not think it's a big deal because when you pray you might say father all the time father god dear god heavenly father you might throw father into your prayer quite a bit but please note that it's significant you see in the old testament before jesus was around people generally don't address god as father there's a couple of occasions where they do but it's pretty rare it's only when jesus turns up that he starts freely using the language of father to talk about god his father in heaven it's a bit radical it's very personal the god of the universe the creator of all things the judge of all people father jesus does this you might think well it's okay for jesus to do it because the bible teaches us that jesus was god's son so the son can speak to the father and call him father but what jesus is saying here is that his followers can also call god father this is because christian believers followers of jesus through what jesus did by dying on the cross become brothers and sisters with jesus therefore we have the same father through what jesus has done we can address god intimately as father it's an amazing thing we do when we say father hallowed be your name may your name be regarded as holy this is not just a prayer that god's name would be kept holy as though the name god needs to be kind of kept in a really special place like never ever say oh my god i don't think that's a good thing to say but that's not what this is talking about it's saying the name and all that that name stands for the person who is represented by that name may he be regarded as holy if you say paul barker's name is held in high regard you don't mean his name you don't say when i have a kid i'm going to call it paul barker because that's just a great name and we want to that's a great no no what you mean is the person attached to that name is held in high regard and that's what jesus is saying here he's saying when you pray pray that god's name god would be regarded as holy it's a prayer that people would acknowledge god as god and in praying that prayer we show that that's what we want to do and so we're actually in a way fulfilling it as we go father may your name be regarded as holy your kingdom come this is a kind of funny thing to pray really isn't it your kingdom come does anyone know what the second last sentence of the bible says it says

come lord jesus that's how the bible ends when all this has been said and done what's on the lips of the christian believers is come lord jesus and as we close our bibles with those words come lord jesus jesus wants to get us to pray those words into our prayers come lord jesus may your kingdom come when jesus comes back you see he'll finish the work he began when he came first time two thousand years ago jesus christ came to galilee to the part of the world we now call israel palestine and he began a work he kicked off the great work of establishing god's kingdom on earth in a new and special way and when he comes back that kingdom will be fully realized and so we're praying for jesus to come back and finish the work he began come lord jesus it's a prayer focused on god's glory when jesus kingdom comes everyone will regard god's name as holy everyone will bow the knee everyone will confess that jesus is lord on that day god will be treated as god should be treated god will be called holy in a secondary way it's also a prayer for us though you see when we say may your kingdom come come lord jesus we're praying that the world would be set right would be made how it should be that all the hardship and suffering and pain and death and mess of the world will be cleaned up because that's what's going to happen when jesus kingdom comes right none of that stuff has a place in his kingdom so when jesus kingdom comes everything will be set right everything will be good so for those of us who believe in jesus we wait for that day we want that day we look forward to the end come lord jesus father may your name be regarded as holy come lord jesus next jesus tells his disciples to pray give us each day our daily bread here we turn to focus jesus encourages his followers to turn and focus more closely on their own needs to ask god for what they need um he says daily bread but it's not just a prayer for daily bread we can get weekly bread here which is great it's a bit of a bigger ask though it's all our daily needs but the reason i think that jesus uses the phrase daily bread is because it draws us back to something very significant in the old testament when israel were captive in egypt god threw moses part of the waters of the red sea and out they came from slavery in the exodus to express their gratitude they started grumbling at god and moaning about how they didn't have anything to eat there was nothing to drink well what god did you may remember is he provided for them a funny kind of bread that in the old testament is called manna and what happened was you can read about this in exodus chapter 16 what happened was every morning there'd be this kind of flaky white bread on the ground and the israelites were told go out pick up the bread you need for the day just enough for the day one day's worth only and go home and eat it and that will be your bread the thing that happened was if someone didn't get enough bread miraculously when they looked in their jar there was enough and if anyone took too much and tried to save some for the next day it went foul and there were worms in it and the point was this it wasn't just that they asked god to supply them for their food

but that they depended on him every single day they couldn't save up their dependence on god if you like they couldn't say lord give us bread now for a month and then we won't think about you for the next month no every day they needed to go out to get what they needed and god supplied it day by day and so when jesus says to his disciples give us each day our daily bread he's calling them back to remember that they need to call on god daily for everything not just occasionally not just when there's a big pressing need but every single day sometimes it's easy to depend on god or to ask god rather for the big things to ask god for the major wants in our lives our major needs and that's not a bad thing to do but like when israel came out of egypt they trusted god to get them through the red sea but they were pretty faithless when it came to trusting him for their everyday needs and they complained and they were told to trust him daily and jesus says here again give us each day our daily bread father may your name be regarded as holy come lord jesus every day we ask you for all we need well while it is important to depend on god daily there's one thing one area one part of life where we need to depend on god particularly more so than any other area something we need most it's the forgiveness of our sins if god doesn't forgive our sins we're in big trouble if god doesn't forgive us the things that we do wrong then when he comes back when jesus comes back when his kingdom comes and all the mess is cleared away we're going to be cleared away with it you can't enter god's presence as a sinner you need your sins forgiven and so jesus says it's appropriate as part of this prayer when you pray ask god to forgive your sins this is a prayer that god always answers god always answers this prayer if it's asked not just as a rote prayer as part of your trotting out the lord's prayer every day but if it comes from your heart and interestingly here jesus shows us how we'll know if it comes from our heart he shows us the heart that can pray this prayer and it's the heart that is itself forgiving of others to have your heart in the right place and to ask for god's forgiveness you have to be able to say for we ourselves have forgiven everyone indebted to us we can't ask god to forgive us if we're not willing to forgive others we learn in chapter 18 of matthew's gospel that god will treat us in the same way we treat others with respect to forgiveness if we don't forgive we should not expect forgiveness brothers and sisters if you're christian believers here you must forgive those people who've wronged you if you want forgiveness from god but forgiveness is letting go of the things that people have done wrong not holding it against them let me give you a simple example just to help us maybe think a bit more about the idea of forgiveness imagine someone nicks my wallet i need to forgive that person but the forgiveness is not to be dependent on whether or not they give

my wallet back you see the giving back is up to them the forgiveness is up to me it's possible that they could give back my wallet and i could still not forgive them i could still hold it against them i could still say you're the person who nicked my wallet i don't forgive you for that even though i've got it back but on the other end of the spectrum it's possible to forgive when i don't get my wallet back that is you did nick my wallet but i don't hold it against you now that's a bit radical isn't it you think it makes sense for jesus to require me to forgive people once i've got my wallet back they give my wallet back you should forgive them kiss and make up that kind of stuff why should i forgive them if they haven't given it back to me that doesn't seem right but i have to be very careful if i start thinking this way because once i start down that path i need to realize that's exactly the sort of forgiveness that i want from god i can't repay god for all the wrongs i've done i can't make it up or fix it or make it better i need to be let off set free from what i owe him otherwise i'm in trouble because i can't make it up and if i want to be set free and let off like that then that's the way i need to forgive other people who have wronged me this is hard teaching i think it's manageable for little things if someone nicks my wallet i can probably do it if someone makes a joke of me behind my back i can probably do it if someone breaks a promise i can probably do it what about big things i've had friends who have been raped and i've had friends who've been abused how can they be expected to forgive how can they be expected to forgive really well it's very hard and it takes a lot of work and there's lots of anger and tears but i want to say that at some point they need to start moving towards that forgiveness i'm not saying it's easy i'm not saying just go and do it but i'm saying it's something that we need to work towards if we want god's forgiveness we have to be forgiving people it won't always be easy but i think it will be necessary father may your name be regarded as holy come lord jesus every day we ask you for all that we need forgive us the things we do wrong as we forgive anyone who's done wrong to us well the last thing that jesus tells his disciples that they should pray is do not bring us into the time of trial at first glance this seems mostly about a prayer for protecting ourselves and i think it is that don't let us suffer don't let us be persecuted don't let people abuse us or treat us badly keep us safe but it's more than that it's also a trial of faith i think the reality of being a christian is you will face trials other parts of the new testament tell you that the christian life involves suffering it's intrinsic to being a christian but what you don't want to do when you suffer trials is compromise your faith and i think the prayer we need to pray is don't bring us into the time of trial not just because i just want a cushy safe life always but because we don't want to ever be in

[20 : 04] a position where we give up on god where we chuck in our faithful obedience to god so for that reason it's good to pray away trials because trials might break us and cause us to dishonor our great god which is a terrible thing to do to him and can be a terrible thing consequentially for us keep us safe and protected keep us from times when we might stuff up our faithful following due to hardship father may your name be regarded as holy come lord jesus every day we ask you for all we need forgive us the things we do wrong as we forgive anyone who's done wrong to us don't put us into positions where we'll suffer and we will suffer so much that we're tempted to act faithlessly so here's the prayer that jesus gives to his followers when the disciples said teach us how to pray this is what jesus said this is the lord's prayer the prayer of the lips of jesus for those of us who follow him to pray if you want to know how to pray this is an excellent place to start this prayer first and foremost recognizes god as god and submits to god's good will father may your name be regarded as holy come lord jesus that's treating god as god should be treated that's wanting the things that god wants this is a prayer that does ask for the things we need for ourselves but it focuses on the important things like that we would be dependent and that we would continue to ask god for what we need that we might have forgiveness it focuses on if you like the spiritual things every day we ask you for all we need forgive us the things we do wrong and it's also a prayer that asks us that we'd live the way that god would have us live as forgiving people as faithful people we forgive anyone who's done wrong to us don't bring us into the time of trial help us that we're not in places where you might act faithlessly this is a god-centered and spiritually oriented prayer and the question i want to ask you then is the question i asked the beginning when you pray how do you pray how different from this are your prayers is this part of the regular way you pray do you just pray things off lists lists of wants dear god can i have or do you just pray lots of thanks that's a good thing to do thank you god for please don't get me wrong it's not wrong to ask god for what we want it's not wrong to thank god for lots of things other prayers like those might be good and legitimate and healthy parts of your prayer life this doesn't have to be the only prayer you pray but this prayer i want to say should be a very important part of your prayer life and should be a very important prayer that you pray it's a basic prayer for christian believers the prayer that the lord jesus gave us and i just want to encourage you to say please think about your prayer life think about how much it's god-centered how much it asks for your deepest and regular spiritual needs and how much it asks that you would be god's person and how much your prayer uses these words that jesus gave us when you come to god what the church and thank you to the

visitors day for the VA milis this is a topic of work and as well as we will turn you on today let us know thank you thank you thank you for thank you for whenever you guys come up everybody there we have in um time to keep you you indailable to manage child and to make you i hear that you you know you