

40-06-08.wpd —The Kingdom Prayer  
 prayer, guidance, creation  
 Mat 6:9-15

Only the King can guide us into proper praying.

### INTRODUCTION:

–Prayer is a learned behavior. Many of us remember learning to pray at night with "*Now I lay me down to sleep...*" And then we may have learned the "*Our Father*" prayer, which is our **text** today, by saying it over and over again in Communion services, which is how I did in the church I attended as a child. If you were in a church that had a prayer book, like the Episcopal church, you may have learned other written prayers by repetition. Some people look at this a ritualistic, but when I attended an Anglican church in Canada, I grew to appreciate the depth and substance contained in those *liturgical* prayers.

–God knows praying is learned behavior. That's why Jesus gave us "*The Lord's Prayer*." Because He is the King, He wanted to teach us *Kingdom praying* (which is why I entitled this **The Kingdom Prayer**).  
 –Since we know this prayer pretty well, and have probably heard many sermons or even read books about it, what can we learn still from it? Well, for my own self, in approaching it, I had to put it into the context of what I've been talking about again and again in this sermon series: If we are servants in God's Kingdom, then *God is in charge*, and if He's in charge, *He gets to run the show*. This prayer teaches that **HOM.idea**.

### **I. God Guides Us into Communal Thinking** ("*Our Father...lead us*")

- A. There is a proper *individualism* in faith: God holds each of each personally accountable for our response to His Word and grace.
- B. But God's goal is not individualistic spirituality. His Kingdom is based on a corporate, communal spirituality. [illus.: Christians can seem very spiritual living on their own, but put them together and there can be quarrels, back-biting, bitter feelings... WHY? It's the *kingdom of self* vs. the *Kingdom of God*] The King is in charge, and He wants His Kingdom to be a Community of *love, peace and cooperative effort*.

### **II. God Guides Us into Creational Thinking** (v.10)

- A. God's original directives in Genesis do not sound that "spiritual" [*ruling earth, naming other creatures, cultivating and taking care of the natural*

world], BUT that's because everything is spiritual, when under the direct leading of God. (This is God will for His Kingdom: to be in charge of humanity's "creational activity" on earth the way He's in charge of the angelic activity in heaven.)

- B. This verse is the key to understanding Kingdom Prayer: God gave us the stewardship over creation, but only under His leading. This is why the best way to start praying this verse is "*your kingdom come [in me], your will be done on earth [in me] as it is in heaven,*" before praying for God's will in any other area.
- C. *Creational thinking is Kingdom thinking*: God is still concerned about His creation, and still has a will for earthly things and earthly situations [Roland Brown of CFO used to spread out the morning newspaper and kneel over it in prayer.... our own reaction to the shocking news stories we hear ought to be prayer!]

### **III. God Guides Us into Provisional Thinking** (v.11)

- A. Remember, we're praying *corporately*, not *individualistically*, and God is concerned about our neighbor's needs as well as about ours.
- B. The language in this prayer acknowledges that He provide for our needs on a "*daily*" basis; therefore, we should stay alert to the needs of our neighbors on a *daily* basis, just as we are aware of our own. (Many times this means to be quiet, so He can tell us how to pray for our neighbors and for our own needs.)

**TRANS:** This is important to stop and think about: **Only the King can guide us into proper praying**. So, we need to be still enough to listen, and stop talking so much. "The Lord's Prayer" is a very short one... not much talking on our part. God doesn't want to listen to a monologue. He wants prayer to be a *conversation*. He knows what we need before we ask Him, so the intent of prayer on His part is not for us to inform Him. *Guess who needs to be informed?* US! And we should come away from prayer with more directions about what to do than we can with anxieties about what we or others are facing.

### **IV. God Guides Us into Restorative Thinking** (v.12)

- A. The word "*forgive*" means "*release*." Sins committed against us hurt the heart, but holding on to the hurt can imprison the heart. The act of forgive is a real "*release*" of that hurt. (God cannot heal the

would until, by forgiveness, we "*let go and let God.*")

- B. Notice how this passage reads (v.12-15): sandwiched between His words about forgiveness is this request "*lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*" That's extremely significant!
- C. One of the biggest temptations in life is this area of bitterness and unforgiveness, and it is the same area where Satan can build a stronghold where God wants to build His Kingdom.
- D. In every prayer time we have, we ought to check out this place in of our heart and be sure it is clear, because, if God is going to *release* us spiritually, we must *release* others— Isa 59:1-2, Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear. (We cannot receive blessings in our closed fists, but only in our open hands....)

### CONCLUSION:

– Jesus is the King, and we are servants in His Kingdom, and **only the King can guide us into proper praying.** It's not about individualism, it's not about us, it's about the King...

– Most new translations drop out from **v.13** what they believe was not part of the original manuscript, but this phrase is still seen in the

NASB: "*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*"

That is a good summation of what we've been talking about.... and it has good Scriptural support elsewhere, such as in Rev 5:11-13, with which I will close: "Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

Matthew 6:9-15 (NIV)

9This, then, is how you should pray:

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

10your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.

11Give us today our daily bread.

12Forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.

14For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.