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The Lord's Prayer – Part 1
Introduction to Series
Series: Near to the Heart of God
The Village Church at Shell Point
Evening Service
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I. Introduction

A. **Prayer as the Chief Activity of the Christian**

1. Not religion, but relationship
2. Means of relationship = communication
 - a. Communication = prayer
3. **Theological framework**
 - a. Destitute of goodness, devoid of procuring our own salvation
 - (1) Must go beyond self to receive salvation
 - b. Christ is given as God incarnate
 - (1) Happiness for misery
 - (2) Abundance for want
 - (3) Treasures of heaven in Him
 - c. We turn in faith to Him, depend on Him, hope in Him

B. **Means of receiving treasures** – prayer

1. Calvin on means: “But after we have learned by faith to know that whatever is necessary for us or defective in us is supplied in God and in our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, that we may thence draw as from an inexhaustible fountain, it remains for us to seek and in prayer implore of him what we have learned to be in Him.”
2. Calvin on necessity: “To know God as the sovereign disposer of all good, inviting us to present our requests, and yet not to approach or ask of him, were so far from availing us, that it were just as if one told of a treasure were to allow it to remain buried in the ground.”
3. Calvin on association with faith: “Hence the Apostle, to show that a faith unaccompanied with prayer to God cannot be genuine, states this to be the order: As faith springs from the Gospel, so by faith our hearts are framed to call upon the name of God (Romans 10:14).”
 - a. **Romans 10:14** (NKJV) — 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

C. Only way to be near to God, receive riches, is prayer

D. **Prayers in the New Testament**

1. Contrast with my prayer life

- a. I don't pray like those people!
- 2. Value of studying prayers of those closest to God
- 3. Some recorded prayers – Jesus and Paul
 - a. One of most challenging studies I have ever done
- 4. Learning pray
 - a. Psalms
 - b. Prayers of the NT

II. The Lord's Prayer – Part 1

A. The Misnamed Prayer

- 1. Not the Lord's Prayer
 - a. It's the Lord's instruction on prayer
- 2. Luke 11:1 (NKJV) —
 - a. 1 Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."
 - b. Then follows the Luke version of what we know of as the Lord's Prayer
- 3. The prayer then serves as a model, teaching us
 - a. What constitutes prayer
 - b. How to pray
- 4. Not the Lord's Prayer – but our Lord's teaching on prayer

B. The Danger

- 1. Misuse of the model
- 2. Matthew 6:5–8 (NKJV) —
 - a. 5 "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.
 - b. 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.
 - c. 7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.
 - d. 8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.
- 3. Make prayer a public spectacle
- 4. Engage in meaningless repetition
- 5. Unfortunately, evangelicals have avoided using this prayer frequently
 - a. Missed much instructional value
 - b. Why we use it – not every week, but every communion service
 - c. Recently we've sung it – very special!
- 6. But that's not the primary way it was meant to be used
 - a. Not as a prayer in itself
 - b. Or even as a song

- c. But as instruction
 - 7. **Compare my prayer life with New Testament prayers**
 - a. Found my prayers to be paltry, worldly, selfish – need to pray prayers of repentance for my prayers
 - b. Much of my lack was the failure to order my prayer life after the Lord’s instruction
 - C. **The Importance of Instruction**
 - 1. **Taught to pray in the name of Christ**
 - a. Tendency is to append “in the name of Christ” to prayers as a formula
 - (1) Believe it then receives Christ’s sanction
 - b. Really involves praying according to the will of Christ
 - c. How do we know the will of Christ in our praying?
 - d. Jesus’ instruction on prayer! Aka, The Lord’s Prayer
 - 2. Therefore – prayer which does not conform to this model is not legitimate prayer
 - a. We are not permitted to ask God for anything which falls outside of these parameters
 - b. We are here taught how to pray
 - c. To pray otherwise is the disobey the command of Christ
- III. **The Structure of the Lord’s Prayer**
 - A. **Greeting** – Our Father in heaven
 - B. **Petitions**
 - 1. Hallowed be Thy name
 - 2. Thy kingdom come
 - 3. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
 - 4. Give us this day our daily bread
 - 5. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors
 - 6. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil
 - C. **Conclusion**
 - 1. For thine is the kingdom, power and glory forever
 - D. Implication
 - 1. If our prayers do not relate to at least one or another of these petitions, they are illegitimate!
- IV. **The Greeting**
 - A. **Our**
 - 1. Prayer is corporate
 - a. **Matthew 6:6** (NKJV) — 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.
 - b. Secret closet prayer – immediately precedes Jesus’ instruction
 - c. Even in the secret closet – we never pray alone

- d. Matthew 18 – “Where two or three are gathered in My name, I am in the midst of them”
 - (1) Misapplied frequently – deals with witness to discipline
 - (2) Still, a principle is evoked which is applied in the case of discipline
 - (3) Principle – when two believers gather in the will of God, He promises to be present
 - (4) Real presence of Christ is experienced when we pray according to this pattern
- 2. Even private prayer is done with a view toward community
 - a. Impossible, then, to pray selfishly, even when we pray for ourselves
 - (1) We recognize that God’s normal way of responding to our needs and requests is through His people
 - (2) Look to the church first as God’s means of answer
 - (3) Church is the body of Christ!
- 3. Special bond of love for each other in prayer
 - a. **Galatians 6:10** (NKJV) — 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.
- 4. Remember with whom and for whom we pray
 - a. And what they mean to us
 - b. And what they mean to Christ
- B. **Father**
 - 1. Taught to pray in the name of Christ
 - a. Implied in this expression is that we pray to our Father
 - b. Only means of calling Him Father is by adoption
 - c. Only means of approaching the Father’s throne is through Christ
 - d. **John 1:12** (NKJV) — 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name...
 - e. God is not the Father of all – liberal heresy
 - f. God is the Father of all who are in Christ
 - g. Those who are in Christ can pray “our Father”
 - 2. No greater love than to call us sons
 - a. Don’t deserve such a Father
 - b. Human tendency is to disown a wayward child
 - c. God doesn’t do that
 - (1) **Romans 5:8** (NKJV) — 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
 - (2) **Psalms 27:10** (NKJV) — 10 When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the LORD will take care of me.
 - (3) **Matthew 7:11** (NKJV) — 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more

will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

3. Implication of our humility and sinfulness
 - a. Don't deserve a Father like that
 - b. What kind of Father? Merciful Father
 - c. **2 Corinthians 1:3** (NKJV) — 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort...
 - d. Most exquisite picture of our Father is the father of the prodigal son (**Luke 15**)
 - (1) Receives openly rebellious, wayward son who sinned grievously against him
 - (2) Doesn't even wait until the son asks for pardon, but anticipates the request, runs to meet him, consoles him, and celebrates his return
4. Calvin's paraphrase: "O Father, who art possessed of so much affection for thy children, and art so ready to forgive, we thy children approach thee and present our requests, fully persuaded that thou hast no other feelings toward us than those of a father, though we are unworthy of such a parent."

C. **In heaven**

1. Not confined to another place
 - a. **1 Kings 8:27** (NKJV) — 27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!
2. Calls attention to His majesty, greatness, holiness, incomprehensibility, power, eternity
3. Obligates us to raise our thoughts far beyond the mundane and ordinary
 - a. Conscious effort to lift our souls above
4. Helps us to recognize who it is that we address
 - a. One who knows our every need
 - b. One who rules the universe
 - c. One who is unchangeable
 - d. One who is omnipotent
 - e. One who is omniscient
 - (1) We can't begin to understand His ways
5. Helps us to remove doubt
 - a. Prepares us to ask in faith
 - (1) **James 1:6-7** (NKJV) — 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord...

D. Summary

1. Not merely a formula to use
2. Jesus prepares us for prayer

- a. Most intimate, loving of relationships
 - (1) Confident in coming to Him
- b. Most majestic, holy, supreme Being
 - (1) Confident in His ability
- c. Reminds us that we always pray in community