

Spiritual Rhythms | Prayer

#2: The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

Dr. Matt Cassidy ---- January 12, 2025

Hey, we're in our second week of a series we're calling Spiritual Rhythms. We're studying rhythms for the semester to look at four disciplines, four basics. You can win championships on just four basics. You can find yourself on Centre Court in Wimbledon if you just do four strokes very effectively. And we're looking at doing the same thing in spiritual disciplines: prayer, fasting, giving, and evangelism—areas that sometimes we neglect—maybe sometimes on purpose. And if we get strong in those areas, we might have a better understanding of our relationship with God.

And so, we're spending the month of January on prayer. We have thirty days (or so) of praying, and hopefully, the rhythm becomes a habit, and the habit becomes a lifestyle, and we will be more effective and deeper in our prayer life.

To have a beautiful prayer rhythm, you need to have three structures. One is a structured prayer, meaning a prayer itself. And we're going to spend today looking at that. Otherwise, we find ourselves just praising when we're happy, lamenting when we're sad, confessing when we get caught. There needs to be a healthy balance in that. So, first is a prayer structure.

Another is a structured prayer time for the same reasons. If we're just going to pray whenever, sometimes we don't get around to that. So, I'm asking that you, as part of our series homework, find and determine a structured prayer time, or add to the one you have. So, it could be the first thing you do when you wake up and the last thing you do before you go to sleep. It could be at each one of the meals, which is very helpful. That's why we pray at our meals quite often. It could be on your way to work. I'm not going to listen to anything or do anything except drive this car and pray. Until my prayer time is over, I'm not moving on to the next thing. So, driving to work or driving home from work ... whatever it is, let's make it a regular pattern, so that pattern becomes a habit, and the habit becomes a lifestyle.

You need a structure in your prayer, you need a structure in your time; and then a third thing is a structure in topics—a structure in what to pray about. What we've done here is we've

put together these little prayer prompts that are available near the Welcome Center. There's one for everyone. (The rest of our printing came back.) So, each day, Grace Covenant Church is going to pray for something different, but we'll all be praying on the same subject matter, which is great. On Sundays it's praise and worship. Boy, look at that—it even has attributes of God to pray for. Whoa, Women's Bible Study is studying the attributes of God to help us more intelligently praise. On Monday it says that we're to pray the Lord's Prayer. And we'll all be praying the Lord's Prayer together. And on the back side it helps you know how to make that contemporary.

What we're going to do today is to look at the Lord's Prayer in detail. I mean, start here—it's the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6. I said originally that you need a structure for prayer; this is the perfect structure for prayer. It's the perfect outline. And I say perfect, and I mean it, because this is Jesus telling the disciples—this prayer shows up in Luke 11 when the disciples say, “Jesus, teach us to pray.” And Jesus says, “Okay, here we go.”

So, when you pray the Lord's Prayer, the dozen or so lines of that prayer are the Son telling us how to pray to the Father so that the Spirit will move in our life and in the lives around us. The Lord's Prayer—this prayer here—is, by definition, the heart of God about God Himself and about what we're to long for and how we should be praying for each other. It's the perfect prayer. If we can memorize this prayer (many of us have that)—but if we can get it inside our hearts and our souls and our minds, it can change our lives. You have to move past rote memory and choose to let it marinate.

When you marinate chicken, which I did this week, Melinda asked, “How long are you going to leave that in the refrigerator?” And in my head I'm thinking, *As long as it takes until I don't taste the chicken any more.* I mean, that's the point, right? And so, watch this. If this Lord's Prayer gets in us long enough, we don't taste “me” anymore. Right? I mean, I don't want to think like I think; I want to think like God thinks. I don't want to feel like I feel; I want to feel like God feels. I want to do what God would have me do.

So, we're going to let it marinate our souls until it washes over us. And it's no wonder this prayer has so much power, or that for 2,000 years it is the first prayer many Christians have memorized in all of Church history. It is the first prayer children are taught. And maybe that's the assignment for some of you—to teach your children how to pray this prayer.

So, here it is—the Lord’s Prayer, Matthew 6. There are two big outlines. In the first part, we’re going to pray to the Father about the Father. In the second part we’re going to pray to the Father about His children: us, me, you.

Talk to the Father about the Father

Part one: talk to the Father about the Father. It starts with **“Our Father, who art in heaven ...”** Now friends, when the disciples said, “Teach us to pray, Lord,” and He starts the prayer with **“Our Father,”** it would have knocked them over. They would have thought or said out loud, “Wait, can we say that out loud without getting in trouble or being struck by lightning?” This is a radical change. Boy, if there’s a difference between the Old and New Testament, this is it. Because in the Old Testament there are very few (and there are exceptions) times when the word “father” is attached to a personal relationship with God. Multiple times throughout the Old Testament the Father is referred to in His relationship with Israel—the Lord is the father of Israel. But to a person? No.

And then, a baby in a manger. And we have what’s called the New Testament. It’s really the new covenant—it’s the same word. And the new covenant is that the universe has changed, and our status and our identity has changed. And now, just in Matthew 6, twelve times the word “Father” is used for us to talk about Yahweh, Jehovah God. We can call Him “Father.” Seventeen times in one sermon, the Sermon on the Mount, which is what we’re reading, seventeen times Jesus says, *Yes, Jehovah is your father.*

So, don’t take this lightly. Do you understand what’s happened here? *Hey, you, if you’ve trusted that Jesus Christ died and rose again so that only through faith in that, only through His works, none of your works—if you believe that to be true, do you know who you are? This is your identity. Read it and weep. Weep with joy. These are facts: we’re not slaves anymore.*

Galatians 4:4-7

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,⁵ to redeem those who were under the law; that we might receive the adoption as sons (and daughters).⁶ And because you are sons (and daughters), God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Daddy!”⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave but His child, and if His child, then an heir of God through Christ.

Look at Galatians 4. A Jewish rabbi, Paul, wrote it like this: “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law; that we might receive the adoption as sons and daughters. And because you are now sons and daughters, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, and that Spirit is crying out, ‘Abba, Daddy!’ Therefore you are no longer a slave but His child, and if His child, then an heir of God through Christ.”

So, when you start your prayer, you can start by saying, “Our Father, who art in heaven ...” *Dear Dad ...*

Matthew 6:9

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name ...

The next section is about Him. It says, “**Hallowed be Your name.**” “**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name.**” That means “holy.” It’s as though someone says, “Tell me about your heavenly Father. Is there anything that I should particularly know about Him?” “Yeah—He’s holy. Oh, He’s holy, holy, holy.” That means set apart from certainly sin—sure—but from the common and temporal. He is other. He’s the uncaused cause.

When you stop and think about it, much of the most graphic violence that takes place in the Bible is when some fool gets playful with the holiness of God. And then something happens. Oh, just look inside the ark and see what happens. Go lie to the elders and see what happens. It’s

a double funeral. Go to the end of the book of the Bible called Revelation, and there are people being playful with the holiness of God.

Here's a life quest. Try to figure this out—that the holy, transcendent other Jehovah God wants you to call Him “Daddy.” *Dear Dad ...* You'll never make sense out of that. But we're going to do it, because He says so.

Here's what we're going to do from now on. We're just going to read through what's on the screen, and we're going to work our way through the Lord's Prayer together as a church. Here's our first line. Here's what we've learned so far. Everyone ... **“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name ...”**

What God Hopes For

The next section is about what God hopes for. It's what the Father longs for, and that is for His kingdom come. This is the hope and the dream of the Father and the Son and the Spirit and Israel—it's for the kingdom of God—that Thy kingdom would come. It's on some of the Christmas cards that you're putting away now—“Peace on earth, good will toward men”—Handel's *Messiah*—“And He will reign”—(that's the kingdom of God)—“And He will reign forever and ever.” The last sentence of the Bible is “Come soon, Lord Jesus.” Why? Because that's the kingdom.

The kingdom of God is the absolute end, and everything else is a means to that end. All of creation, the visible and invisible, is serving the end: the kingdom of God. Every event in history, what's happening right now, what will happen in the future, is all pointing to a common purpose: the kingdom of God. If you stop and ask the question “Why?” the answer is “The kingdom of God.” For what purpose? It's for the kingdom of God. Why do I have talent? Why do I have an education? Why do I have a career? Why do I have a family? Why don't I have a family? Why am I married? Why am I not married? Why do I have good experiences? Why do I have bad experiences? Every single one of those is going in the same direction, and this is the answer: the kingdom of God.

You can look at it this way. All of life is a puzzle. The box top is the kingdom—Thy kingdom come. Every piece will fit and make sense out of that box top in the kingdom of God. It's when God reigns. It's when Jehovah rules all of creation.

Let me show you how primarily important “Thy kingdom come” is. We’re all sitting down, right? All right.

Salvation itself—the event is a means to the kingdom of God. It serves the kingdom of God’s purpose. The reason the Father sent the Son to save us was because it was the only way that we could have a transfer of citizenship from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God. We were brought salvation so that we could be part of the kingdom—Thy kingdom come.

When we tell our neighbors and our friends and family about the Gospel, about Jesus and His death and resurrection, we’re telling them to choose their kingdom. Choose your kingdom. And we get a chance to do that every once in a while.

You know what? Here’s a great application. Today at 12:30 (and it’s free) you can go out in the Courtyard here, and a tribe of people are going to go down to the University of Texas, and they’re going to introduce people to the kingdom of God. They’re going to do it in a way that’s so easy—they’re just going to go and say, Hey, can we pray for you? They’re going to do a prayer walk at UT today. At 12:30 meet in the Courtyard. Keaton will take you down there. And they’re just going to bump into Longhorns (who are in mourning, you know), and they’ll say, “If there’s one thing God could do for you, what would it be?” And then they’ll stop and say, “Well, let’s just pray that God would do that.” It’s simple: “Can I pray for you?” And then they pray for them. It’s a great introduction to introducing someone else to the kingdom of God.

And can I tell you, as a Longhorn alum, that I went to that school. It is godless. They need your prayers. Especially some of you Aggies have so much overflow in College Station. You’ve got more than you’re supposed to have. Go down to campus and introduce people to the Lord Jesus Christ. Pray for UT. Honestly, give it a shot. It’ll be fun.

“**Thy kingdom come ... Thy kingdom come ...**” If that’s too obscure and you still don’t grasp what the kingdom is, then this is a survey. What does it look like in the here and now? Because the kingdom of God is certainly about back then, ultimately, but it’s also about right here. What does it look like in my life? Well, the next phrase tells us. “**Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**” The kingdom of God is God Almighty being the King, and He’s ruling and reigning—later, everything—now, in my life. *Your will be done in my life. I’m going to live my life on this earth the way I would live that life in heaven.* When you pray Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, you’re praying God’s prayer. He wrote it. He’s saying, *Make me the way I was meant to be—the design, not the production.* After the bent,

right? In the epistles, Paul would pray “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” when he would say that he was praying for us, that we would be mature and complete and lacking in nothing. Sometimes Paul would pray on our behalf and say, “I pray that you become perfect.” A modern philosopher says “that you would be Christ, if Christ were you.” In your imagination, it would be like if you were Adam and Eve before the fall.

What does it look like to live a life on this earth as if you were in heaven? At Grace, we say this: become like Christ in all of life. And do whatever you would do on earth as though you were in heaven.

Sometimes we’ll say (and I’m going to add another “any” on this), “I’ll go anywhere, anytime, to do anything, with anyone.” But let me add “and be anyone that God wants me to be.” Because I could go on these great adventures serving the Lord and still be a jerk. I can still be selfish and vain. And I think the complete surrender is not just in what I’m doing; it’s who I am. I aspire to be glorifying God in everything and anything. It’s a prayer that says, “God, I can win the lottery, or I can win leukemia. Give me whatever You want to give me that glorifies You the most by transforming me into how I was meant to be, a man without a soulless bent.

Matthew 6:10

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

So, here’s how we pray. Let’s pray this out loud together. Ready? **“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”** That’s the first part.

Pray for Provisions—Daily Bread

Now there’s a transition from vertical praying to horizontal praying. And now we’re going to pray for just stuff that we need. It’s acknowledgment that we have a heavenly Father who is more than adequate to provide what we might ask or imagine. It’s saying that we are dependent. I love it, because it puts us in a place where we’re dependent on the Lord.

And in this part in my personal prayer life, I like to envision and imagine myself having an audience with God. And I’ll tell you that when I was younger, I envisioned myself walking

into this grand, regal, royal throne room, addressing the Most Holy God. And I would come and say, “I’ve got to pass this calculus test.” And then later I started looking at it as though maybe He’s got a corner office, and it’s really nice, and I just sit down and talk to Him, and I’m giving Him an update on how life is going. And then I finally evolved to realize He’s Abba, Daddy. When I get to horizontal now, I envision Him tucking me into bed as a nine-year-old, or sitting on the couch at home. And He says, “What’s going on? Is there something I can do? Can we talk?” It’s way more intimate, because that’s what He says: **Our Father who art in heaven ...** “And His Spirit calls out and says, ‘Abba, Daddy.’”

And this part I love because it just says that I have physical needs and spiritual needs and moral needs, and I can’t do them without Him.

The first request we have of our Father is for daily bread. This is startling for a number of people, because they try to turn it into something it’s not. It’s daily bread. It’s just a loaf for today. It’s so simple and common. And that’s the point. *I can ask Him for anything? Yes. Even the little stuff?* (Everything’s little.) That’s what is great about the grandness of God. He is so omni-everything that every little piece of trivia is not too small for Him to want to overlook. And every huge, crazy, insurmountable miracle that’s required is not too big for Him. And so, you bring Him everything—everything.

Look, you don’t have to pray for a good parking place. But you can walk, too. And you don’t have to pray for some big hairy thing. But you might miss out on a big hairy miracle—a God story. Pray for everything.

Matthew 6:11

Give us this day our daily bread.

And so He says this—we’ll pray this together: “**Give us this day**”—our what?—“**our daily bread.**”

Pray for Pardons: Forgive Us Our Sins

Then after provisions it goes to pardons. It says, “**Forgive us our sins.**” And as followers of Jesus Christ, as Christians, we are supposed to be famous, in the neighborhood and the office and everywhere in between, for receiving mercy and giving mercy. We catch it in big buckets, and we send it in big buckets. And that’s why the prayer says, “**Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.**”

Augustine called this “the terrible petition.” Augustine didn’t like this, and I don’t like it either. Because if we translate it into modern speech, it would say, “**Forgive me, Lord, in the same way that I forgive other people.**” This section of this prayer is the definitive cure for self-righteousness, the single most common disease in the Christian life has a cure, and this is it. It cures self-righteousness in two ways. One, because it’s part of our structure of our regular prayers, we stop and we pause. And we have a habit of self-reflection, a self-inventory, kind of a moral inventory, and a confession and a repentance. That’s happening regularly in every Lord’s Prayer.

And then part two of this is that we realize that we are going to receive grace in the same way we distribute grace. We’re going to receive grace—“**Forgive our debts in the way we forgive our debtors.**” You can imagine that you’re going to give mercy out, and you go through all the cabinets at home. Are you going to give it out in that big popcorn bowl? Or are you going to go for the thimble? Because whatever you give out is going to be the same utensil used to take in. And that brings us to sobriety, doesn’t it? It forces us to realize that to whom much is forgiven, much love is expressed. The more you’re forgiven, the more gracious you are. And if you’re not gracious, it means you don’t know how much you’ve been forgiven.

This part of the prayer is a beautiful transition from maybe the theoretical to the real. It’s saying that what you believe has to be expressed in how you treat other people. You do unto others as you would have them do unto you. It’s like this: you can’t say you love God and not love everybody else around you. That’s not possible. You can’t receive this kind of forgiveness and not give this kind of forgiveness.

If you want a healthy, robust relationship with God that goes back and forth, He can’t have a relationship with you while you’re being mean, cruel, spiteful, and holding grudges

against your brothers and sisters. No more than to some of you who are parents—you can't allow your son to have a great relationship with you while he's bullying his sister—your daughter. You can't have an active prayer life if you're being mean to someone who is a child of God. You have to get those things right.

1 Peter 3:7

You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

That's why Peter writes it this way: "You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way." You don't have to understand her—I mean, you don't have to understand to understand—just try to understand her. (That's my version. That makes sense to half our audience.) "And grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life ..." *That sister is my daughter. You treat her like my daughter. I gave my life for her.* "... so that your prayers may not be hindered."

I feel like God's not hearing my prayers.

How have you been treating your wife—God's daughter?

Oh ...

Handing out mercy in thimbles, are you?

Matthew 6:12

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

So, we pray that part of the prayer. Let's pray that together. This is the hard part: "**And forgive our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.**"

Pray for Protection: Temptation and the Evil One

So, we prayed for provisions, and here we are—the last one is for protection against temptation and the evil one. The last request is declaring to God the Father that we cannot be left alone; that we're dependent on Him for our spiritual and moral health. This part of the prayer

says, **“Lead us not into temptation.”** *I cannot be trusted with free will. Don’t let me choose, God.* It’s saying that you’re starting to understand your boundaries, and you’re realizing that pride is just arrogance and leads to ruin. And if you get enough strikeouts, you start realizing that you’re not so good at batting anymore. It’s going to the Father and saying, *Can you get me out of this event? Can you lead me not into temptation? I don’t want to go to this event. If I go to this event, could you ruin the event?*

When our kids were young—I’m sure you did this—I did this growing up—you might have done it too—the kids would be on the phone with a friend, and the friend wants them to spend the night or something, and that’s not a good thing. So, our son’s on the phone saying, “Yeah, let me ask my parents. Yeah, can I go spend the night with Eddie Haskell?” [Shaking head “no” while asking.] “No? Come on, Mom! Come on, Mom! How come? Okay, Eddie, I’m sorry, I can’t come over.” You know why? Because he knows nothing ever good came out of an overnight at Eddie Haskell’s house. And he didn’t have the ability to say no, so he needed his mom or dad to say no for him. **“Deliver me from temptation”**—deliver me from myself.

Hopefully, if you haven’t been there, it’s coming your way. You’ve come to the realization that you’re a weak and fragile soul and you could ruin fifty years of character in one afternoon. When a person grasps that about themselves, there’s a word for it. Do you know that word? It starts with a “W.” It’s not “weak.” The word is “wise.” Now you have wisdom. Now you get it.

Proverbs 30:7-9

⁷ Two things I ask of you, Lord; do not refuse me before I die:

⁸ Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread.

⁹ Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, “Who is the Lord?” Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.

The second wisest man who ever lived was Solomon. Here’s how Solomon prays, and it’s very much like our prayer today. It’s from Proverbs 30: “Two things I ask of you, Lord; do

not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread.” *I can only be trusted with daily bread. And here’s why.* “Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or I may become poor and steal.” *I just know it—I’m going to steal.* “... and so dishonor the name of my God.”

And so, in the wisdom of Solomon, who says that he can live between these two curves—guardrails—walls—**“Deliver me from temptation.”** Fear your weakness and bring that weakness to your Father. *Stop me before I even start.*

And if that weren’t all—that I can’t be left alone—the prayer continues and says that there is evil. There’s an evil one, and he wants to destroy God’s reputation through my conduct. He wants to eat me alive. And so, the rest of this section says, **“Deliver me from temptation, and deliver me from ...”** literally, it says “... **the evil.**” And so, some of your Bibles are going to say **“the evil one.”** Some of your Bibles are just going to say **“evil.”** And the reason it’s difficult is because the word “evil” is both neuter and masculine, so it could be a person or it could be a thing. But there’s a definite article—the word “the”—that precedes the word “evil.” So, that makes me want to go to **“the evil one.”** It doesn’t matter.

The bigger point is that we’re in a battle, and it’s not just flesh and blood. There’s a spiritual war going on all around us: principalities, powers, ranking evildoers. And it takes the bent, that temptation that we’re broken, and then fuels it spiritually, and calls us to want to say, **“My kingdom come, my will be done.”** **“With these hands I have made this daily bread.”** It says, **“I’m denying mercy to you, to you, a little bit for you. I’m the one who decides.”** That’s the power of the evil one. He wants us. And we need to acknowledge that we need help. Do not be naïve here.

Fifteen years ago I had a very dark year—the worst year of my adult life. Personally, I was chronically ill, and I had multiple deaths in my circle of friends and family. And then, while that was happening, a dark cloud descended upon our church. I mean, if I were making a film, I would have some fog and dark lighting settle right here on this hill. Something happened here. And we were perplexed. It was bad. We were in a state of constant confusion and petty divisions over little stuff. And for months the leadership couldn’t make sense of it.

And then, oddly enough, one of our missionaries from another country who was coming in to see friends and catch up with everything came to a service. And she deals almost exclusively, but definitely extensively, with what’s called an animistic culture. Think steles and

witchcraft. And she has a beautiful gift of discernment. Her radar is always on. And she was in the lobby on Sunday morning at Grace, and she saw one of the leaders here at Grace, and she saw a spirit of darkness surrounding him, and didn't want to touch him—she wouldn't touch him. And then one of her co-workers in the same kind of culture with that type of discernment saw the same person in a different context, and they both saw the same thing. And she called and said, "Listen, the devil is using this person. How's it working?"

And I said, "Well, I don't know. We're very confused, and we're constantly divided over everything."

She said, "That's it. That's demons. That's confusion and division."

And so, we called a leadership meeting, and we had her come and give us (the elders and pastors) a lesson or two. And she went around and taught us about spiritual warfare and how to defend ourselves, how to pray more effectively. That was fifteen years ago.

And one of the elders said, "We need to pray for Sunday." I thought Sunday was safe, you know. That cost us. "Sunday mornings we're going to pray before church—every Sunday." We started doing that fifteen years ago. They still do it today. They met today. They meet every Sunday. And they pray for us. They pray for our protection. For fifteen years, they've prayed for our protection. They pray, "**Deliver us from temptation.**" And then they pray, "**Deliver us from the evil one.**"

Matthew 6:13

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

Let's pray this out loud. "**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**"

The disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray."

And Jesus says, "When you pray, pray to the Father about the Father—that He's holy. Pray that the dreams He has, that His kingdom would come, and that His will would be done in your life. And when you pray to the Father, pray to the Father about your family, for just simple

provisions, and for daily pardon. And you need to pray for protection—from yourself, and from evil.”

And then, after this—that’s chapter 6 of Matthew—in chapter 7 of Matthew, He talks about prayer again. And I want to leave it with this. This is the heart of Jehovah. Jesus comes and He teaches this Sermon on the Mount, and He says, “Hey, you guys, why don’t we talk more? Why don’t you pray about everything all the time?” Because He says this: “Ask, seek, and knock. Because everyone who asks is going to receive. And everyone who seeks is going to find. For everyone who knocks, there’s going to be a door opened for you. Why don’t you talk to your Father in heaven?”

“Look, some of you dads, if your son asks you for a loaf of bread, would you give him a rock? And some of you moms, I mean, if your daughter wanted a fish, would you give her a python? No. And you’re evil. You’re evil parents, and you wouldn’t do that to your kids. How much more would the all-loving and all-powerful God, your Father in heaven, give to you?”

We should talk more to God. We should talk to Him about everything. We should talk to Him all the time. That’s what Jesus says about prayer. Let’s get in a rhythm like that.

Why don’t we all stand together, and we’re going to pray the Lord’s Prayer together? All you have to do is read the screen. Here we go—ready?

**“Our Father who are in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy 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 thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”**

[Prayer]

This is hard for me to say—“*Dear Dad—my dad in heaven—holy is Your name, holy are You. You are like no other. You do not enslave—You set us free. You want only what is good for us. Your desire is for who we were meant to be, the goal of salvation. Jehovah, Jehovah—Lord, Lord—You are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and*

faithfulness, maintaining the love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness and rebellion and sin. You know how to leave the guilty unpunished; they'll have their day.

It is our hope that Your kingdom would come soon. Come, Lord Jesus. And until then, we surrender our complete lives to You. We'll go anywhere to do anything with anyone at anytime, and be holy. We'll be whoever You want us to be.

I'd ask that we would find ourselves coming to You for everything, all the time—our daily bread; that You would help us be generous distributors of mercy and forgiveness; that Your Spirit would convict us when we hold grudges.

Lord, I'd ask that we have a new understanding of our vulnerability—not just in our own temptations, but with the evil one who desires to destroy Your reputation through our life choices. Dear God, our Father, we are so grateful that we can pray to You in this most intimate way. :et Grace become a church of prayer. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.