

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

Monday, February 2

Reading: Matthew 6:9-13

Matthew 6:9 *"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name..."*

Most people, whether they attend church regularly or not, have heard of the Lord's Prayer. It has been recited in churches and homes for centuries. In the Catholic tradition, it is called the "Our Father" and is central to every mass and home prayers like the Rosary. While Protestants still recite the Lord's Prayer, it is seen as a model for our personal interactions with God. In all cases, the Lord's Prayer is very important in daily Christian practice.

The title can be a bit deceiving. While this is indeed a prayer given by our Lord, it is a prayer that He never prayed for Himself. He would not pray "our Father" as His relationship with the Father is different than ours. He is the eternal Son of God. Neither would Jesus pray "forgive us our debts/transgression" as He was sinless and thus had nothing to forgive. This is a prayer for Jesus' followers. We might more accurately call it "The Disciple's Prayer." It is a guide to help us connect with our heavenly Father and keep our minds on the important things.

Pastor David Jeremiah calls prayer "the great adventure." His book titled "Prayer: The Great Adventure" discusses the Lord's Prayer and Jesus' High Priestly prayer in John 15. Quoting Eugene Peterson, he writes:

"Untutored, we tend to think that prayer is what good people do when they are doing their best. It is not. Inexperienced, we suppose that there must be an 'insider' language that must be acquired before God takes us seriously in our prayer. There is not. Prayer is elemental, not advanced, language. It is the means by which our language becomes honest, true, and personal in response to God. It is the means by which we get everything in our lives out in the open before God."¹

Prayer is not meant to be a boring list we rapid-fire to the throne of God nor an appeal to 'the great Vending Machine in the sky' to get our wants and will done! It is communication with the Almighty as we grow and walk with Him. It is an adventure!

In the coming weeks, we will look at the background and content of the Lord's Prayer to discover how this model prayer should shape our lives. Whether you are a new believer or have walked with Christ for a long time, it is my prayer that these devotions will be helpful to make your prayer life an adventure with God. Below is my simple outline based on the Lord's Prayer to get started on this adventure.

P – Praise	"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name"
S – Submission	"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"
R – Request	"Give us this day our daily bread"
R – Repentance	"And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors"
P – Protection	"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"

¹ David Jeremiah. Prayer: The Great Adventure, p. 13-14