

Matthew 6:9-10
The Correct Understanding of Prayer Part 5
also Luke 11:1-4

Now for today you should have another supplement to the Matthew 6:5-15 study guide. It is entitled Matthew 6:5-15 and Luke 11:1-4. That is very important because I am going to be working off of this supplement study guide first before we get into the Matthew 6:5-15 itself.

We are in this section in Matthew's gospel Matthew chapter 6 verses 1 through 18, which is part of the Lord's message in Matthew 5, 6, and 7 called The Sermon on the Mount because He is giving His message on a mountain. But He is speaking to the Jews about the correct understanding of the things of God. The Jews understood the things of God religiously, not spiritually. Their religious practice did not involve a personal relationship with Christ. And so the Lord Himself is introducing that into their thinking - that a relationship with the Lord is beyond religion. In fact, has nothing to do with religious practice, it is a personal relationship of interaction with the Lord. So in verses 1 to 16 it is the correct understanding of doing righteousness, that is, practicing one's religion.

And we saw that there is a pattern marker that breaks verses 1 to 18 down into three sections. We saw in verses 2 through 4, the correct understanding of doing one's acts of mercy or helping people. It should be done in response to Christ, not to be honored and seen by people and to be rewarded by people for what you do.

The second section, which is what we are in now, verses 5 to 15 has to do with prayer. That when you pray you should not be as the hypocrites, that is what Jesus called religious people. A *hypocrite*, **ὑποκριτής** (hupokrisis) in the Greek, is an *actor*, someone who functions according to the script. They learn the script, they learn the character, they learn how to talk, they learn how to function religiously. And Jesus says, "That is an actor," someone who it is not real on the inside, it is only a religious function on the outside. **Do not be like the hypocrites who like to pray in public and pray on the street corners so that people would see their spirituality.** He says that has nothing to do with prayer. Wrong motive. They receive their reward by being honored by people. They have no reward with God whatsoever. It is a religious prayer not a spiritual prayer.

And so He says for you, when you pray - in fact I want to read that in Matthew 6:5. If you have that supplemental study guide, the reason why I'm going through this - in fact if you turn to the second page of the study guide, all of a sudden you see two parallel scriptures from Matthew 6 and from Luke chapter 11. Luke chapter 11 verses 1 through 4 is Luke's account, the presentation by Jesus to the Gentiles of what we call The Lord's Prayer. Which is not really The Lord's Prayer but theologically that is what it is called. You hear it recited in church. You hear Christians recite it, which is something Jesus said not to do. So there is a little problem there. Jesus said, **When you pray do not use vain repetitions.** Do not just be reciting something that you have memorized over and over again because God does not hear that kind of prayer. So we want to run these two side by side and there is a purpose in doing it for you.

But on the first page, in Matthew 6:5, The Conduct of Prayer. **And whenever you should pray, you should not be as the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets so that they might be visible to men. Truly I say to you that they are receiving their reward.**

Verses 6 to 7, The Command Concerning Prayer. **Now you, whenever you should pray, enter into your private room and after having shut your door, pray to your Father Who is in secret.** He is a Spirit so pray in secret. **And your Father, the One seeing in secret, will repay you in the open.** That is understand that in the last days openly reward. **Now while praying, you should not speak vain repetitions, as indeed the Gentiles do; for they presume that in much speaking they will be heard.**

Verse 8, The Consequence of Prayer. **Therefore do not become like unto them, for your Father knows of what things you have need before you even ask.** A very important but a very strange statement. Do not be like them trying to find formula prayers to lift up to God thinking that they are going to be heard because of their much speaking. God already knows what we need before we even pray. So that is what was the springboard for the last three weeks when we studied what does the New Testament teach about prayer? Different than what a lot of religious groups and teachings on prayer teach today.

The Bible teaches that prayer is the means by which we express our submission to Him. In 1 John 5:14-15, which is the main verse on prayer in Scripture as John summarizes all the teachings on prayer. He says, **We can have confidence that God hears us if we ask everything to be done according to His will.** He will always hear that. So you can have confidence that God hears every prayer if you ask for His will to be done. The false teaching started coming in when people started saying, "Wait a minute, I cannot accept God's answer because I prayed for things, and they got worse. That cannot be God's answer." But yes it is. Sometimes things have to fall apart so that God can put them back together again right. God's plan and His timing is always perfect. But in the human we could not accept the fact that what John said, **If you ask anything according to His will He is hearing you.** You have the request that you have made. Hard to take.

So people have come along and changed prayer, "Well, that must not be true because things are not working out the way I prayed for." Did you not pray for God's will to be done? "Yes." But we cannot accept God's will. That is our problem. God must be more sympathetic to the human. He is a God of love so He would never let my human be disappointed. So in entered the false teachings on prayer. Now prayer, especially in our culture here in the United States, prayer is taught as the means by which you take control of your own life. That the Holy Spirit is there to tap into, and you pray in Jesus' name, and you make Him go out and make things happen. Like a genie in a bottle. You rub the bottle and say, "I want this to happen," as if the Holy Spirit goes out and makes it happen for you. That is totally against Scripture. That is not of God. That puts man in control of his own life. Whereas if I pray for God's will to be done I am expressing submission to Him. I am saying, "Let your will be done," and I have to trust Him. And I have committed it into His hands. Once I give it to the Lord it is His and I have to trust Him to work it out the way He wants to work it out.

So we understand prayer. That is why Jesus said, "God already knows what you need." It is not like you are praying letting God know information that He has never had before. He already knows. He wants to hear from me a personal expression of my submission to His will as I place it into His hands. So prayer is to align me up, not to make things happen, but to line me up, and keep me straight and focused and right with the Lord through whatever I am praying about.

But if you notice - and we have parallel columns now - in Luke chapter 11 verses 1 to 4, first of all, we are setting the scene. The last thing the Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:8 was **Therefore do not become like unto them, for your Father knows of what things you have need before you even ask Him.** And then He moves into what we call The Lord's Prayer.

Well, look over at Luke chapter 11 verse 1, **And it happened, as He was in a certain place praying, when He stopped, a certain one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, according as John also taught his disciples."** Completely different scene. Completely different place. And what I am about to introduce to you, completely different way of presenting The Lord's Prayer. What I have listed for you is the literal translation of the oldest texts in both places, especially Luke chapter 11.

Now let me explain to you, and this is important for us to know because in many churches today they use The Lord's Prayer in repetition. The whole congregation recites The Lord's Prayer together every Sunday, or people recite The Lord's Prayer to themselves every day. And that is not what it is for. Jesus said **Do not use vain repetitions.** Do not use formula prayers. Well then, what is prayer for? I am showing you the Jesus taught the same principles and concepts but in a different way. They are not meant to be word for word repeated in a formula prayer.

Now I have to explain this as a technical point. The Textus Receptus is the Greek text from which the King James Bible comes from. King James and New King James Bible comes from the Textus Receptus. What they have done in the Textus Receptus, is both places where the Lord's prayer is taught they make it read the same thing in both places. The oldest manuscripts in Luke chapter 11 do not have some of the wording that is found in Matthew chapter 6. But what the what the constructors of the Textus Receptus have done is made it so that The Lord's Prayer says the same thing no matter what place you read it from in the Bible. But that is not how Jesus taught it and that is part of our problem. What I am doing is showing you from the oldest manuscripts what the literal translation is in both places and you are going to see this is why Jesus never meant it to be repeated as a formula prayer. It is because He taught it differently, He taught it differently to the Jews in Matthew chapter 6 as He left the Hebraisms in and in Luke chapter 11 He taught it differently to the Gentiles. Same concepts, same principles, different words. So it is the concepts and principles that He taught about prayer, not the prayer itself as a formula.

So, He says, and you look Matthew 6:9-13 under The Concepts of Prayer. Verse 9, **In this way, therefore, you yourselves pray.** Over in Luke verse 2 it says, **And He said to them,**

"Whenever you should pray, say." So we have the introductions in both places but look at the first thing that Jesus said to pray for.

In Matthew chapter 6 to the Jews He says, **Pray: Our Father, the One in Heaven.** In Luke chapter 11 in the oldest manuscripts all it says is, **Father**, that is it. Not *Our Father*, not *the One who is in heaven*. Those are Hebraisms. So to the Gentiles they are just to pray **Father**. But the Jews were to pray **Our Father, who is in heaven**. How is that applicable to the Jews? Well to the Jews it is *our* Father, it is not the Gentiles' Father. It is the Jewish Father and He is the one in heaven. Gentiles do not have that concept. They do not have a religious Heavenly Father concept. They have a pagan concept. And so when Jesus taught in Luke chapter 11 He just said, **When you pray, just address God as Father.** For the Jews, **Our Father who is in heaven.**

Secondly, in Matthew 6, **Let Your name be sanctified.** Also in Luke 11, **Let Your name be sanctified.** Both the same.

Next in Matthew 6:10, the third thing, **Let Your kingdom come.** That is also found in Luke chapter 11, **Let Your kingdom come.**

But here is something in Matthew chapter 6 Jesus said, **Pray: Let Your will happen as in Heaven, also upon the earth.** That is not even found in Luke chapter 11.

Verse 11 of Matthew chapter 6, **Give us today our necessary bread.** In Luke 11:3, **Give to us our necessary bread according to the day.**

Verse 12, **And forgive us our debts as also we also forgave our debtors.** But in verse 4 for the Gentiles, **And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves are forgiving everyone being indebted to us.** So He talks about *sin* being *a debt to God*. But also forgiving others their debt to us as we are asking God to forgive our sins, which is a debt to Him.

Verse 13 of Matthew chapter 6, **And you should not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.** The little phrase on the end *but deliver us from the evil one* is not found in Luke chapter 11 at verse 4.

And then on the last column on the left-hand side in Matthew chapter 6, this is not found in most manuscripts, it is definitely not found in Luke 11. So it is in brackets, and it is underlined because some people believe that a scribe actually put it into Matthew 6, and it was not original. **Because Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, into the ages. Amen.** It is not found in Luke chapter 4 but to the religious Jews it is.

Why go through it like this? Again to emphasize to you that Jesus is teaching people the very principles and concepts of prayer, what makes up your prayer life. This is like an outline of how you are to approach God. It is not quoting the exact words. It is not a formula prayer but teaching us what prayer is all about. Now for the last three or four weeks I have gone through the New Testament with you and shared with you the major teachings on prayer and scripture. All of those principles that we studied is found in the Lord's prayer.

So let us start at Matthew chapter 6 verses 9 to 13 and take a couple of these for today. You can go back to your study guide if you wish. So Jesus is teaching concepts, not a formula prayer. These concepts are divided up into three groups.

- 1) The first group or the first principle or concept is the very first thing that He says that we should pray and that is to our Father, or to the Father who is in heaven.
- 2) The second group comprised of three things that has nothing to do with us and it has to do with God. **Let Your name be sanctified; Let Your kingdom come; Let Your will happen on earth as it has been decreed in heaven.** Three things. We have not even gotten to us yet.
- 3) And the last three things all have to do with us. Verse 11: **Give to us our necessary food; Forgive us our debts;** and we are looking to You **to not lead us into temptation but rather to deliver us from the evil one.**

And then the doxology.

So we have three categories listed and the very first category is probably the most important. It is the one we skip over very quickly when we pray. But it is one of the most important concepts in Scripture. That concept is: know who you are talking to. Know who you are talking to. Do not just use *God* or *Father*, know that you are talking to your Heavenly Father that rules from heaven and He is over everything. He is the Father of all creation. He is the Father of me. Know who you are talking to. That understanding is what makes everything we are praying about come into focus.

If you are like me and you are in a very important situation that is causing a lot of anxiety and panic and this is like emergency prayer time, which is most of the time we pray, we say, "Lord." That is just to introduce - it is like calling on the phone, "Hello, it is me." But we call out, "Lord," and then we just rattle off all of our anxieties, and all the things that we are worried about, and all of the things we are upset about. And it is like, whoa. You understand that if when you pray - because prayer is that communication line where I express my submission to His will - part of me submitting things to His will is understanding who He is. Who am I submitting to for His will to be done?

Now an example of this is in Acts 4:23-30. In Acts chapter 4 the disciples went out preaching the gospel. The religious leaders of the Jews called them in and said, "We forbid you to preach anymore in this Man's name," and they threatened them. So when they left, Acts 4:23 says, **And after having been let go, they (the disciples) came to their own,** that is, to the other Christians. It is kind of interesting because the other Christians were meeting in a home and so they went and joined the other Christians who were praying in someone's home. **And reported whatever things to them the chief priests and the elders had said.** They said, "Here is what we were doing, we were out there preaching, they called us in, they had us arrested, and told us, 'Do not preach anymore in this Man's name.' They threatened us."

So when they heard it, with unity together, they lifted up their voice to God, and said, (listen to this), "Master, You are God, the One who has made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and everything in them." Do you think they have a perspective of who they are talking to? "God, You are the Creator. You are not just a God of my religion. You have created everything." And not only that, verse 25 of Acts 4, **You are the One who through the mouth of David your servant has said, "Why did the nations rage, and the people planned vain things?"** That is in light of the fact that the Messiah was going to come hundreds of years later and already the Psalmist was saying, "Why do the people rage, and imagine vain things? Why do they come up against the Christ?" In other words, You are the Creator of all things. You knew that they were all going to come against Your Son when you sent Him. You knew all that, ahead of time. **The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together (over this same reason) against the Lord, and against his Christ.** You are the one that said it hundreds of years before He even came. **For upon a truth against thy holy Servant Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatever Your hand and Your counsel determined before to happen.** Notice that.

Even though Herod and Pontius Pilate were reigning over Jesus to hand the sentence down to have Him crucified; even though the Gentiles were involved, even though the Israelites, the Jews were involved, yet they said, "Even though all these people were involved they were doing according to whatever Your hand and Your counsel determined to happen ahead of time." You get the sense they know who they are talking to. You see by the time you get to - they have not even prayed their prayer yet. What is the prayer request? The request is so diminished it is like why even mention it because now everything is in proper perspective. I am praying to the God who created the Universe. I am praying to the God who has determined all things to happen before they even happened. It is not a surprise to Him. Things do not happen by accident. Everything is happened according to His determination and His plan. This is who I am talking to. Now what do you want to pray about? Whatever is happening. Cause whatever is happening is determined by God. You already said it. You already confessed it.

If He is God and He is in charge, it is not like He is over there in the city and I have this emergency, all this information I have to give Him about my emergency because He does not have this information yet. And I have to wake Him up. Hey, get some angels up there, maybe tell the Lord I am in trouble here and I need His help. He already knows that.

Like in Matthew chapter 6 verse 8, **He already knows what you need before you even ask.** How does He know? Because He designed the whole thing. I am the only one, like the first hour, I am the only one that does not know the future. I am the only one that does not understand all that God is going to do and He does not tell me. Why? Because He does not want me to trust in information, He wants me to trust Him. It does not matter whether I understand or not. It does not matter whether I know what He is going to do or not. It is trusting Him because of who He is, not because of what He is going to do or not going to do.

And now, Lord, verse 29, now they get to their prayer request. **And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings,** that is it. That is great. Me? I would have gone on, I would have said, "We have to add another chapter to the book of Acts because I have got a prayer request

that is like fifty verses long here. I got some stuff I really have to spill out to the Lord." **Behold their threatenings.** So it is like, "Notice the threatenings." It kind of fits in with, "You already know this, but we are just letting you know." **Look upon their threatenings: and give to Your servants, with all boldness to speak Your word.** We are looking for Your Spirit for us to continue to preach the gospel in spite of their threatenings. Just notice the threatenings and You take care of it. **To stretch out Your hands for healing; and signs and wonders to happen to the name of Your holy servant Jesus.**

They said, "May Your spirit infuse us with your power to continue to preach the message in spite of the fact that we were just called in and threatened not to do it." They did not make a big lamentation about what the problem was. That does not mean that you cannot do that. The emphasis is that before you even get to what you want to pray about, know Who you are talking to. Because that has a lot to do with our perspective of what we think is important about our prayer. We think it is of the utmost importance. In fact, some things that we pray about it is like life-and-death for us. This is life-and-death. But in perspective it is important, but it is not life-and-death. God has designed it. He has already been there. He has already answered it. Even though the answer is not here, He has already answered. He already knows what the answer is. He created the situation for Him, not for me. And for Him to reach me and for Him to reach the people that I am all upset about and that I am praying about, He has to bring in difficult circumstances to make people realize their need for Christ.

Most of our prayer if you ever notice that we pray for people, "God, do not let harm come to them." Oh, they are just going to skate through life and never realize their need for Christ. Okay. The Lord will do whatever it takes to reach every person before they leave this earthly life. And for most people it takes drastic measures to interrupt their pilgrimage in this earthly life in order for them to wake up and realize their mortality. That they are dying, this is temporary, you are getting ready to move on into eternity. We do not think about it until we are faced with those realities.

So understanding, number one principle of the three, understand who you are talking to. Stop. Take the time to address Him. Take it all in. Let Him know who He is and make the confession of who He is. And it is not only for His sake, but it is for our sake. Rather than just saying, "Lord!" and then going into our emergency dialogue for a half an hour.

The second thing is - and we will stop with the second thing - **Let Your name be sanctified.** This is the first of three things that have to do with God, not about us. We are addressing Him as being God our Father. We recognize that He is in heaven in charge of all things, and three things that we are praying about that have to do with God not us. **Let Your name be sanctified.** King James says *hallowed*. Many English texts say, *hallowed be Thy name*. The word *hallowed* is the word *sanctified* and it means *to be set apart, to be honored and set apart, to be glorified*. **Let Your name be sanctified.**

Now this is fascinating. If you remember our study from two weeks ago, remember we had introduced about understanding prayer in the Bible from 1 John 5:14-15. John says to pray according to His will then you know that He is hearing your prayer. Just pray for his will to be done, that is what prayer is for. Then people come back and say, "Well, what about what Jesus

taught?" And we gave you four places within three chapters that Jesus mentioned the same thing to His disciples: In John 14:13; John 15:7; John 15:16; and John 16:23. In all one message, Jesus said in four different times to His disciples before He was going to be crucified, **If you ask the Father anything in My name, I will do it.** That kind of sounds like a blank check. Except you try to do that and not everything happens, so there is a problem. There is nothing wrong with Jesus' teaching. It has to do with our understanding. It is not a magic formula. People say, "Well, there is power in His name." Well then, all you have to do is mention His name and ask and He says, "I will do it." He did not say, "I might do it." He did not say, "I should do it." He says, "I will do it." It is a promise. So what is the problem? People pray and it does not happen. The formula does not work. It is because it was not meant to be a formula.

To pray in someone's name. The name in the Middle East represented someone's attributes and characteristics. All of God's names in the Old Testament represented something about His character as God. There are a lot of names of God in the Old Testament, and they all represent who He is. Therefore if you go in someone's name you are going in their authority and for their purposes. It is another way of saying to ask for God to do things according to His will, "Answer this prayer Lord in the authority of Jesus and for His purpose." That is what it means to pray in His name. It is not a magic formula.

You and I represent His name. When we tell people we are Christians we think that represents a religion, but it actually represents Christ. Every day I go in His name representing Him and His purposes for my life. So the first thing after I pray to the Father in heaven and I confess to Him the realization of my understanding of who He is, the first thing I want to pray for is, "Lord, let Your name be honored and glorified and set apart in my life. Not mixed up with all the other junk that I have as a human being, but may Your name be honored and set apart. May You do things for Your namesake, for Your honor and glory, and for Your purposes. Let Your name be sanctified."

I will do one more. The second thing in this group, **Let Your kingdom come.** We find John in the book of Revelation say, "Lord Jesus, come quickly." We look forward and we pray for His kingdom to come, for Christ's coming. This is not our kingdom. This is not our world. We are citizens of the kingdom of heaven and the Lord says that when you pray you should pray looking for and asking for God's kingdom to come. This is the kingdom of man. It is a fallen world under sin. Pray for His kingdom to come.

Now the third thing, and I am going to reserve that for next week, **Let Your will be done. Let Your will happen as in heaven also upon the earth.** So as You have decreed Your will to be done in heaven, let it be done on the earth as you have already decreed it and planned it in heaven. Now we have already talked about that in length. That is what John said, right? Pray according to His will. I am asking for His will to be done. But there is something else to this and I want to share it with you next week of what is missing in the gospel message in the day in which we live. The salvation message in Christ, as far as I am concerned, is misrepresented. There is something about the element of salvation, not only that saves you in Christ Jesus, but it is something that you are doing with your life, in your expression to Christ when you receive Him, that is badly missing in our day and age. I want to share that with you next week. Let's close with prayer.