

Kingdom-Seeking Prayer

Matthew 6:9-15

SS Lesson for 02/16/2020

Devotional Scripture: James 5:13-18

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Key Verse: Matt 6:10

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

THE PATTERN FOR PRAYER (MATT 6:9-15)

A Model to Follow (from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Prayer should include praise and submission (9-10)

Praise God for His righteousness (Ps 7:17)

Praise God for His counsel (Psalms 16:7)

Praise God because He answers prayers for mercy (Ps 28:6)

Praise God because of His greatness and worthiness (Ps 48:1)

Praise God because it is good to do so (Ps 92:1)

Praise God for all His benefits (Ps 103:2)

Praise God for His acts of power (Ps 150:2)

Submit to God to receive eternal life (Heb 12:9)

Submit to God as part of resisting the devil (James 4:7)

Prayer should include petition and confession (11-12)

Petition God because He promises fulfillment (Matthew 7:7)

We can petition God if we remain in Him (John 15:7)

Petition God for wisdom (James 1:5)

Confession that Jesus is Lord is part of our salvation (Rom 10:9)

There is a promise of forgiveness associated with confession (1 John 1:9)

Prayer should include thanksgiving for God's protection and forgiveness (13-15)

Protection through the power of God (John 17:11)

Protection from Satan (John 17:15)

Protection through the faithfulness of Jesus (2 Thess 3:3)

Protection upon which we can set our hope (2 Cor 1:10)

It is a blessing to be forgiven (Rom 4:7-8)

We are to forgive others as God has forgiven us (Col 3:13)

Forgiveness through the grace of God (Eph 1:7)

Forgiveness through the shedding of Jesus' blood (Heb 9:22)

CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS

COMMENTARY THOUGHTS FROM BOB DEFFINBAUGH

Directing the Heart

Sustaining the Heart

Keeping the Heart

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE BIBLE EXPOSITOR AND ILLUMINATOR

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE ECHOES COMMENTARY

Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Christians anticipate the coming of a king. The prayer that Jesus taught His disciples gives us insight into what we can expect from the king whose kingdom is breaking into the world. Though many “kings” try to claim our allegiance, this king alone gives us everything we need and is worthy of our deepest loyalty.

Last week's lesson on Matthew 6:1-8 revealed Jesus' teaching on the dangers and follies of hypocrisy in the areas of giving and prayer. As with that lesson, the historical setting of today's lesson text is Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Today's text studies one of two versions of the Lord's Prayer, the other being found in Luke 11. Regarding distinctives, the prayer in today's text differs from its counterpart in Luke 11 in various ways. For one, Jesus' teaching on prayer that begins in Matthew 6:9 occurred as part of teaching that He was already engaged in after He “[saw] the multitudes, . . . went up into a mountain: and . . . his disciples came unto him” (Matthew 5:1). Luke is more specific in noting that the version of the prayer he records happens after “one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples” (Luke 11:1).

Another major difference between Matthew and Luke is in the length of the prayer: Luke's version is much more concise than Matthew's. The content is very similar, but Luke has recorded a very minimal prayer. The differences suggest that Jesus taught about prayer more than once. Doing so allowed His disciples to learn through repetition what Jesus wanted them to know. Just before our lesson's opening verse, Jesus had criticized hypocritical and pagan prayer, advising privacy and sincerity rather than public performance and verbosity. He followed those negative examples with a positive alternative.

Key Verse: Matt 6:10

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

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

The Lord then turned from the Pharisees' teachings to examine their hypocritical deeds.

6:1-4. Jesus first spoke of the Pharisees' almsgiving. **Righteousness** is not primarily a matter between a person and others, but between a person and God. So one's **acts** should not be demonstrated **before** others for then his **reward** should come from them (vv. 1-2). The Pharisees made a great show of their giving **to the needy... in the synagogues and on the streets**, thinking they were thus proving how righteous they were. But the Lord said that in giving one should **not** even **let his left hand know what his right hand is doing**, that is, it should be so **secret** that the giver readily forgets what he gave. In this way he demonstrates true righteousness before God and not before people, so God in turn **will reward** him. One cannot be rewarded, as the Pharisees expected, by *both* man and God.

6:5-15 (Luke 11:2-4). Jesus then spoke about the practice of prayer, which the Pharisees loved to perform publicly. Rather than making prayer a matter between an individual and God, the Pharisees had turned it into an act **to be seen by men**—again, to demonstrate their supposed righteousness. Their prayers were directed not to God but to other men, and consisted of long, repetitive phrases (Matt. 6:7). Jesus condemned such practices. Prayer should be addressed **to your Father, who is unseen** (cf. John 1:18; 1 Tim. 1:17) and who **knows what you need** (Matt. 6:8); it is not “to be seen by men.” But Jesus also presented a model prayer for His disciples to follow. This prayer is commonly called “the Lord's Prayer,” but it is actually “the disciples' prayer.” This prayer, which is repeated by many Christians, contains elements that are important for all praying: (1) Prayer is to begin with worship. God is addressed as **Our Father in heaven**. Worship is the essence of all prayer. (In vv. 1-18 Jesus used the word “Father” 10 times! Only those who have true inner righteousness can address God in that way in worship.) (2) Reverence is a second element of prayer, for God's **name** is to be **hallowed**, that is, revered (*hagiasthētō*). (3) The desire for God's kingdom—**Your kingdom come**—is based on the assurance that God will fulfill all His covenant promises to His people. (4) Prayer is to include the request that His **will be** accomplished today **on earth as it is** being accomplished **in heaven**, that is, fully and willingly. (5) Petition for personal needs such as **daily** food is also to be a part of prayer. “Daily” (*epiousion*, used only here in the NT) means “sufficient for today.” (6) Requests regarding spiritual needs, such as forgiveness, are included too. This implies that the petitioner has already forgiven those who had offended him. Sins (cf. Luke 11:4), as moral **debts**, reveal one's shortcomings before God. (7) Believers recognize their spiritual weakness as they pray for deliverance from **temptation to evil** (cf. James 1:13-14). Jesus' words in Matthew 6:14-15 explain His statement about forgiveness in verse 12. Though God's forgiveness of **sin** is not based on one's forgiving

others, a Christian's forgiveness *is* based on realizing he has been forgiven (cf. Eph. 4:32). Personal fellowship with God is in view in these verses (not salvation from sin). One cannot walk in fellowship with God if he refuses to **forgive** others.

6:16-18. Fasting was a third example of Pharisaic "righteousness." The Pharisees loved to **fast** so that others would see them and think them spiritual. **Fasting** emphasized the denial of the flesh, but the Pharisees were glorifying their flesh by drawing attention to themselves. The Lord's words emphasized once again that such actions should be done **in secret** before God. Nor was one to follow the Pharisees' custom of withholding olive **oil** from his **head** during fasting. As a result, God alone would know and would **reward** accordingly. In all three examples of Pharisaic "righteousness"—almsgiving (vv. 1-4), praying (vv. 5-15), and fasting (vv. 16-18)—Jesus spoke of **hypocrites** (vv. 2, 5, 16), public ostentation (vv. 1-2, 5, 16), receiving **their reward in full** when their actions are done before men (vv. 2, 5, 16), acting **in secret** (vv. 4, 6, 18), and being rewarded by the **Father, who sees** or "knows," when one's actions are done secretly (vv. 4, 6, 8, 18).

6:19-24 (Luke 12:33-34; 11:34-36; 16:13). One's attitude toward wealth is another barometer of righteousness. The Pharisees believed the Lord materially blessed all He loved. They were intent on building great **treasures on earth**. But treasures built here are subject to decay (**moth** destroys cloth and **rust** destroys metal; cf. James 5:2-3) or theft, whereas **treasures deposited in heaven** can never be lost. The Pharisees had this problem because their spiritual **eyes** were diseased (Matt. 6:22). With their **eyes** they were coveting money and wealth. Thus they were in spiritual **darkness**. They were slaves to the master of greed, and their desire for money was so great they were failing in their service to their true Master, **God**. **Money** is the translation of the Aramaic word for "wealth or property," *mamōna* ("mammon," KJV).

6:25-34 (Luke 12:22-34). If a person is occupied with the things of God, the true Master, how will he care for his ordinary needs in life, such as food, clothing, and shelter? The Pharisees in their pursuit of material things had never learned to live by faith. Jesus told them and us **not to worry about** these things, for **life is more important than** physical things. He cited several illustrations to prove His point. **The birds of the air** are fed by the **heavenly Father**, and **the lilies of the field grow** in such a way that their **splendor** is greater than **even Solomon's**. Jesus was saying God has built into His Creation the means by which all things are cared for. The birds are fed because they diligently work to maintain their lives. They do not **store up** great amounts of food, but continually work. And believers are far **more valuable to God than** birds! The lilies grow daily through a natural process. Therefore an individual need not be anxious about his existence (Matt. 6:31), for **by worrying he can never add** any amount of time, not even **a single hour, to his life**. Rather than being like **the pagans** who are concerned about physical needs, the Lord's disciples should be concerned about the things of God, **His kingdom and His righteousness**. Then **all these needs will be** supplied in God's timing. This is the life of daily faith. It does no good to worry—**do not worry** occurs three times (vv. 25, 31, 34; cf. vv. 27-28)—or be concerned **about tomorrow** for there are sufficient matters to attend to **each day**. Worrying shows that one has "little faith" in what God can do (v. 30; cf. **you of little faith** in 8:26; 14:31; 16:8). As a disciple cares each day for the things God has trusted to him, God, his **heavenly Father** (6:26, 32), cares for his daily needs.

7:1-6 (Luke 6:41-42). A final illustration of Pharisaic practices pertains to judging. The Pharisees were then judging Christ and finding Him to be inadequate. He was not offering the kind of kingdom they anticipated or asking for the kind of righteousness they were exhibiting. So they rejected Him. Jesus therefore warned them against hypocritical judging. This passage does not teach that judgments should never be made; Matthew 7:5 *does* speak of removing **the speck from your brother's eye**. The Lord's point was that a person should not be habitually critical or condemnatory of a **speck of sawdust** in someone else's **eye** when he has a **plank**—a strong hyperbole for effect—**in his own eye**. Such action is hypocritical (**You hypocrite**, v. 5; cf. "hypocrites" in 6:2, 5, 16). Though judgment is sometimes needed, those making the distinctions (*krinō*, **judge**, means "to distinguish" and thus "to decide") must first be certain of their own lives. Furthermore when seeking to help another, one must exercise care to do what would be appreciated and beneficial. One should never entrust holy things (**what is sacred**) to unholy people (**dogs**; cf. "dogs" in Phil. 3:2) or **throw... pearls to pigs**. Dogs and pigs were despised in those days.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

The Pattern For Prayer (Matt 6:9-15)

9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.

13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

A Model to Follow (from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

Every aspiring artist studies the masters: Raphael and Rembrandt and Michelangelo. Every aspiring composer studies the masters: Beethoven and Brahms, Haydn and Handel. The Twelve noticed that there was something in the prayers of Jesus that they lacked. His prayers had more depth and breadth, and they wanted to pray like that. They were no strangers to prayer. They had prayed all their lives, but they saw in his prayers qualities that theirs did not have. So they said, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). In response to that request, he gave them a model by which they could form their own prayers. Is it wrong, then, to recite this prayer? Of course not. It is never wrong to quote Scripture. But the intent of Jesus was that they should learn from this to word their own prayers. The artist may start out copying some great work of art, but eventually composes his own painting. The composer studies closely the music of the masters, not in order to copy them, but that their work may inform, guide, and inspire her own composition. So, in public and in private, we compose our own prayers, using this model as a guide and as inspiration. We pray remembering that we are children talking to our Father. We want our prayers to be the best that they can be, but we know that the Father accepts our poorest prayer efforts. He does not receive our prayers because of their eloquence, their nicety of expression, or their poetic qualities. He accepts them because he loves his children.

Prayer should include praise and submission (9-10)

Praise God for His righteousness (Ps 7:17)

17 I will give thanks to the LORD because of his righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

Praise God for His counsel (Psalms 16:7)

7 I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me.

Praise God because He answers prayers for mercy (Ps 28:6)

6 Praise be to the LORD, for he has heard my cry for mercy.

Praise God because of His greatness and worthiness (Ps 48:1)

1 Great is the LORD, and most worthy of praise, in the city of our God, his holy mountain.

Praise God because it is good to do so (Ps 92:1)

It is good to praise the LORD and make music to your name, O Most High,

Praise God for all His benefits (Ps 103:2)

2 Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits--

Praise God for His acts of power (Ps 150:2)

2 Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness.

Submit to God to receive eternal life (Heb 12:9)

9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!

Submit to God as part of resisting the devil (James 4:7)

7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Prayer should include petition and confession (11-12)

Petition God because He promises fulfillment (Matthew 7:7)

7 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

We can petition God if we remain in Him (John 15:7)

7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

Petition God for wisdom (James 1:5)

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

Confession that Jesus is Lord is part of our salvation (Rom 10:9)

9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

There is a promise of forgiveness associated with confession (1 John 1:9)

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Prayer should include thanksgiving for God's protection and forgiveness (13-15)

Protection through the power of God (John 17:11)

11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name-the name you gave me-so that they may be one as we are one.

Protection from Satan (John 17:15)

15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

Protection through the faithfulness of Jesus (2 Thess 3:3)

3 But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

Protection upon which we can set our hope (2 Cor 1:10)

10 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us,

It is a blessing to be forgiven (Rom 4:7-8)

7 "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him."

We are to forgive others as God has forgiven us (Col 3:13)

13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Forgiveness through the grace of God (Eph 1:7)

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

Forgiveness through the shedding of Jesus' blood (Heb 9:22)

22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh

Directing the Heart

So what makes for a good prayer? How are we to pray?

During His sermon, Jesus began a model prayer for us with these words:

“So pray this way: Our Father in heaven, may your name be honored, may your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:9-10).

Jesus tells us to pray to “**Our Father in heaven.**” This should set our mental attitude as we come to a time of prayer. From the Old Testament and much of the New, we understand that we are praying to God, and that He is our Lord and King. We owe Him our lives and our service. But Jesus tells us that we can come to Him and call Him, “**Father.**” This connotes a more significant relationship than we would imagine. But Jesus is very serious about just this aspect. The entire sermon has many references to God as our Father. This relationship is our primary motivation for the lives that we should live.

God as Father is a two-way relationship. As Father, He loves us, and we honor Him. He protects, and we abide. He provides, and we give thanks. He instructs, and we emulate. He disciplines, and we mature. He touches, and we respond. He commands, and we obey. So much of the time we focus on command/obedience, and we forget all the other wonderful aspects of our walk with our Father. When we approach Him in prayer, He is all these things for us, and we need to be all these things to Him.

Jesus tells us to pray in first person plural, “**Our Father ...**.” Prayer, even in private, is to have a community focus. We can pray for our own needs, of course, but it must not stop there. We are to be intercessors. We pray “**Give us ...**,” and we are asking for the Father’s provision for family, friend, and foe. We pray “**Forgive us ...**,” and we seek reconciliation with the Father and among ourselves. We pray “**Lead us ...**” and “**Deliver us ...**” because we all need proper guidance and protection.

We are to pray that the Father’s name “**be honored.**” This is both a request and an attitude. As a request, we are asking for the knowledge of the Father to fill the earth and for the earth to respond in honor. It is our chance to grieve over those things, in our lives and the lives of others, that bring dishonor to the name: hypocrisy, judgment that triumphs over mercy, mercy that triumphs over instruction and discipleship, those who hate God, etc. It is a time to recognize and put away our hypocrisy. As an attitude, we can begin our prayers with worship, praise, and thanksgiving. We worship who He is. We praise Him for His works, and we thank Him for His care and provision.

We ask for the Father’s kingdom to come. Along these lines, we pray for the spread of the gospel and the establishment of the rule and reign of the Father in the hearts of men and women. We pray for the welfare of the distressed and oppressed. We pray for physical healing, deliverance, change of hearts, broken relationships, and such things as would change with an acceptance of the Father and His ways. We also look forward to Jesus’ return to live and rule among us.

So we begin our prayers by focusing on the One to whom we pray. He is Father and King. Turning our hearts to Him helps us to become like Him.

Sustaining the Heart

What we need as people occupies the next section of Jesus’ model prayer:

Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we ourselves have forgiven our debtors (Matthew 6:11-12).

The most literal understanding of “**daily bread**” is a loaf of bread in my hands to last me for the day. Some might say that is all that He means for us to ask for. I believe it is better to expand daily bread to include all that

others and we need. I would, in fact, extend it beyond the material and into prayers for the needs of our bodies and our hearts:

- Food and Shelter—**“But if we have food and shelter, we will be satisfied with that. Those who long to be rich, however, stumble into temptation and a trap and many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction”** (1 Timothy 6:8-9).
- Righteousness—**“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied”** (Matthew 5:6).
- The Father’s presence—**“Whom do I have in heaven but you? I desire no one but you on earth But as for me, God’s presence is all I need. I have made the sovereign Lord my shelter, as I declare all the things you have done”** (Psalm 73:25, 28).

Even though there is nothing in Jesus’ prayer for asking about anything but basic needs, there are two reasons to imagine that requests can go beyond this. The first is that Paul tells us to pray for everything. **“Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, tell your requests to God in your every prayer and petition—with thanksgiving”** (Philippians 4:6). The second is the example of the wedding in Cana, where Jesus, in answer to His mother’s request, turned water into wine in a way that exceeded the needs of the party. We have a generous God. When Jesus boils prayer down to **“daily bread,”** He is encouraging thanksgiving. Ask for anything, expect the basics, and give thanks for everything.

The welfare of our souls and bodies also depends on two-way forgiveness. Guilt and bitterness eat away at us. Both are associated with personality troubles and physical ailments. We can make both a matter of prayer. **“Forgive us our debts”** takes care of our true moral guilt for the things that we do wrong. And because we have forgiveness, we can take honest assessments of ourselves, which hastens our sanctification. However, because bitterness is as bad or worse than unresolved guilt, Jesus tells us to link the two. **“Father, forgive us to the same degree that we forgive others.”** Jesus has more to say on this, and I will defer more comments until that time as well. Suffice it to say that it is unbalanced to ask to have our guilt removed so that we can stand comfortably in the Father’s presence, when there are people that we exclude from our lives because they wronged us. If it is good for us to receive forgiveness, it is even better that we give it. Plus, if we have a heart that carries no grudges, then we have confidence at this point in our prayer that we have received the Father’s forgiveness. That is an excellent thing.

If the Father answers what we have prayed so far, we would have healthy bodies and souls fit for service in the Kingdom of God.

Keeping the Heart

Jesus concludes His model prayer with these words: **“And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one”** (Matthew 6:13).

What does Jesus mean by our asking, **“... do not lead us into temptation ... ?”** Is it that we need to fear that the Father will lead us into temptation unless we pray? Will He set us up to see if we will fall? The letter of James tells us, **“Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am tempted by God,’ for God cannot be tempted by evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each one is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desires”** (James 1:13-14). I think most would agree that we must understand Jesus’ words in light of our own propensity to sin.

The Father does not directly tempt us to evil, but He does bring us to moments of testing. And with testing, comes the temptation to quit and not press on. The famous example of Peter’s denial illustrates such a failure. The night before, Peter had confidently asserted that he would stick by Jesus no matter what. Only a few hours later, Peter denied in strong language that he even knew Jesus. When we pray to not be led into temptation, we are asking the Father’s help in avoiding such situations. We ask for doors to be closed that have difficult situations on the other side. We ask for our hearts to be strengthened and focused on good things. We ask for wisdom to recognize and avoid troubling circumstances.

Although we are morally culpable for our actions, it can also be said that even the first sin in our race was not committed in a vacuum. The serpent in Eden, later identified as Satan or the devil, tempted Eve and prevailed. The Lord had commanded that the man and woman not eat from a single tree in the center of Eden. Satan attacked at that point and helped bring forth the sin. And so we need to ask for protection from his schemes.

Satan seeks our failure and prays for it. In Job, we have the record of such a prayer:

Then Satan answered the Lord, “Is it for nothing that Job fears God? Have you not made a hedge around him and his house and all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his cattle have increased in the land. But extend your hand and strike everything he has, and he will indeed curse you to your face!” (Job 1:9-11).

It is interesting that before this, we have a record of Job making offerings on behalf of his children – just in case they sinned. We are not told that Job ever made an offering for himself. Like Peter, he was self-assured. Like Peter, Satan asked to sift Job like wheat. It is just such situations that we pray against in our prayers. We acknowledge our weakness and ask for strengthening. We ask to receive our lessons according to the way of wisdom and instruction.

There are other sources of temptation that we must guard against. The world values make constant appeal. Our inner natures are weak and would like to go along. Through prayer, we can become a different kind of person.

Ultimately, it gets down to character that flows from within. “When is a thief not a thief?” When I ask this question, I usually hear, “When he is not stealing.” That is not correct. A thief who is not stealing is a thief who is out of work. A thief is not a thief when he labors with his own hands in order to have something to give to someone in need (Ephesians 4:28). Such is the goal of this prayer. To change us from thieves to givers, from adulterers to loving husbands and wives, from proud to humble, from hating to loving, from bitter to forgiving, and so on. For each negative, we need to find and nurture its opposite. Prayer can help us do that.

This ends Jesus’ prayer model according to the most reliable manuscripts. Some manuscripts tack on something like, “For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.” I have chosen to go with the more attested reading. In the first place, we can give honor to the Father at the beginning of the prayer. In the second place, if Jesus did not include the ending, there is questionable value in using it. It is a grand ending, but Jesus ended His model with a reminder of our humility. The prayer moves from the greatness and glory of God to our total dependence on Him. I think it is better left that way.

(Adapted from URL:<https://bible.org/seriespage/18-jesus-prayer-matthew-65-15>)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Matthew's text of the model prayer has been prayed by Christians since the earliest days of the church. It's a simple prayer, with an introduction, seven petitions within four couplets, and a closing pronouncement. Each element teaches about God and how to relate to Him in prayer. Jesus' teaching shows us how we can assess our prayer lives. We need to acknowledge God as our Father, who loves us and gives us what we need. In that light, we need to be completely honest before Him, concerned about His will and power not our own standing with others. Moment by moment we need to rely on Him to provide what we need for life and for spiritual wholeness. When we pray for the coming of the Father's kingdom, we pray for the coming of a king. When we proclaim the kingdom of Heaven, we proclaim that God is king. The Christian message is the good news that God is king, and the king has come to save us.

Concluding Thoughts from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

In our text, Jesus taught that true prayer aims to please God alone. The "closet" is a reference to an inner room. Based on the architecture of that time, Jesus was probably referring to the only room in the house that could be locked. The instruction in this text is part of a larger discussion consisting of a series of warnings against doing good works in order to gain human approval. Jesus warned against drawing attention to oneself when giving alms (Matt. 6:1-4), when praying (vss. 5-8), and when fasting (vss. 16-18). To do these things for the sake of human approval is a way of gathering treasure on earth rather than in heaven. Thus, in each instance of incorrect motivation for doing good, Jesus repeated, "They have their reward" (vss. 2, 5, 16). This repetition leads up to His final conclusion: "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (vs. 20), not on earth (vs. 19). The text begins a subsection of instructions on prayer. It begins this section by warning us against praying in order to gain human approval. Jesus then went on to warn us not to think that we will be heard on the basis of repetitive wording (Matt. 6:7). Finally, He offered a model prayer for the disciples to imitate (vss. 9-13). When Jesus said to pray in the inner room, He did not mean that we can never pray in public. He Himself prayed in public on a number of occasions (cf. John 11:41 -42). Nor was Jesus giving an absolute prohibition on keeping other people in mind when we do good works. It is interesting to compare Jesus' words here with His words earlier in the sermon: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works" (Matt. 5:16). Initially, it might seem that these two sayings of Jesus are in conflict with each other, since one seems to be saying that we should

do good things so that others will see them and the other that we should not do good things so that others will see them. The end of Matthew 5:16 clarifies the meaning. We want people to see our good works so that they might "glorify [our] Father which is in heaven." Both in that text and in our text, the concern is that we do good works to glorify God, not to gain human approval. Jesus' teaching here corresponds to His teaching throughout the sermon that true obedience is not just outward but inward. God is concerned not only with the external act of adultery but also with adulterous thoughts (Matt. 5:27-28). God condemns not only murder but also its root cause, anger (vss. 21-22). For that reason, we ought to be willing to pray when there are no humans to see us. If we want the approval of God rather than men, we will do what is right even when no one is looking. As Jesus said elsewhere, not just our prayers but everything we do in private will be exposed to the world on the Day of Judgment (Luke 12:3). With that kind of penetrating judgment, we desperately need the righteousness of Christ that comes through faith in Him (Rom. 3:22). Having received His righteousness, our prayers are transformed. We pray to please God.

Concluding Thoughts from the Echoes Commentary

The Model Prayer - Jesus' disciples asked the Master to teach them to pray. He responded by giving them a pattern to follow. This model can be used to help us know how to communicate with the almighty God.

Our Father in Heaven - We start praying by addressing God in this way; it demonstrates a tender, loving relationship between God and His children. At the same time, "in heaven" speaks of where God resides and His supreme sovereignty.

Hallowed Be Your Name - The second part of the prayer is a declaration of God's holiness. He ought to be worshiped as a holy God, distinct and set apart, with His name honored.

Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done - We then pray for God's plan and desires to be accomplished, to be manifest on the earth, not our own selfish desires. Heaven on earth would be His will always being done by all people.

Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread - Everything we receive comes from God. We should acknowledge that fact and at the same time request that He meet all our needs.

Forgive Us Our Debts, as We Forgive Our Debtors - We owe the Lord a huge debt; we are debtors. God freely offers forgiveness in Christ. This act of mercy ought to so touch hearts that we then forgive those who have offended us.

Lead Us Not into Temptation but Deliver Us from Evil - We plead for protection from the attacks of Satan, the world, and our own flesh—the evil desires of our heart.

Kingdom Business - This prayer addressed a concept Jesus often taught: the Kingdom, or God's reign. To be a part of God's kingdom it's necessary to accept the Good News about Jesus. Accepting His truth allows fragile, sinful man to become a part of God's holy family and a resident of His kingdom.