

The Lord's Prayer Directive



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"This Then Is How You Should Pray" - Matthew 6:9

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." - Luke 11:1

Jesus answered that request by giving what has become known as "The Lord's Prayer," and in some traditions it is called the "Our Father." We often pray this prayer in worship services and in our private prayer time. It is often used as the closing prayer in a meeting.

Did Jesus really intend for his followers to pray these words when they prayed, or did he intend for this prayer to be used as a pattern for prayer? I don't think his is an "either or," but I do believe Jesus meant for this to primarily be a pattern for prayer.

That is why we call it the Lord's prayer directive. He was answering the request of the disciples to teach them to pray. This small book is written with that idea in mind.

Every phrase in the prayer is broken down and an explanation is given as to what is being addressed and a sample prayer is given for that phrase. It is not intended for the sample prayer to be "the prayer" for that phrase, but it is just a guide for praying that phrase.

It is my hope that this little booklet will help you in your prayer journey and at least give you some guidance as you Take A Knee In Prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

DIRECTIVE

Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

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

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

“Our Father in Heaven...”

Father brings to our mind two things; loving care and authority. In our prayer we need to recognize that God is truly our father. In fact, it is good to begin your prayer with, “Our Father.”

It is good at the beginning of your prayer to meditate upon the idea that God is Father, and what that means to you.

Our prayer should be: “Father God, I thank you for caring for me more than an earthly father could. Help me to appreciate your love and yield to your authority.”

“Hallowed be your name...”

In every prayer we should take a little time to honor the awesomeness of God. Think of what he achieved in creation. How he rules the universe, yet how he considers each one of us and knows everything about us.

We are given hundreds of names and titles of God in the Bible, and each one of them gives us insight into who he is. Here are some of his basic names:

“Elohim” — This is a unique reference to the Lord God and projects the idea of the majesty of God.

“El Shaddai” — This is the term translated “Almighty God.” This name projects God as the all sufficient one.

“Jehovah” — Here God is shown to be the eternally self existent one. He exists without the limits of time, and without dependence upon any other force. He is the only totally self existent one in the universe.

By taking a moment to reflect upon one or more of these names of God in our prayer we can begin to develop a sense of awesomeness about him.

“Your kingdom come...”

God’s kingdom will come, the question is will we participate in it? This is not a request but a statement, “Your kingdom [will] come.” We must accept that there is a higher force at work in the world, and that he has a plan.

Our prayer concerning the kingdom of God should be that our spiritual eyes are opened to see God working in his kingdom and seek him to know what he would have us do for him.

We should pray: “Lord, help me to see how that you are bringing your kingdom to men and show me what my part is in the kingdom.”

“Your will be done...”

It is easy to say, “God’s will be done,” but it is not always easy to accept God’s will. Even Jesus had to spend a lot of time praying the night of his capture and trial. Finally, after the sweat of his labor of prayer became as drops of blood, he was able to say, “Nevertheless Father, not my will but yours be done.” We don’t have to go to a literal cross like Jesus did, but we must come to the place that we are willing to do the will of God whatever it might be.

Our prayer here should be: “Help me to be willing to be yielded to your will Lord. Whatever you have for me to do I will do it. I will use whatever talent you have given me to do your will.”

“Give us today our daily bread...”

Whether we are employed or unemployed we still need to ask God for our daily provision. Our security should never be in our ability to earn money,

but in God's bountiful supply. Usually his provision comes through our labor, but it is still his provision.

This phrase is dealing with a mindset. Are we truly trusting him to guide us through the day or will we revert back to trusting our own instincts?

Our prayer here should be: "Lord, I need your provision today. Just as you gave daily manna to Israel in the wilderness I need your daily provision now. Open my heart and spirit to receive your blessing today."

"Forgive us our debts..."

We have sinned, and if we say we haven't we are lying. Before you become upset with me for saying that, take note; it wasn't me who said it. 1 John 1:8 says that very thing. But verse 9 of that same chapter says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

God has made provision in Jesus Christ to forgive all our sins, but we have to ask him. In fact, every day when we pray through this prayer we should spend some time thinking through the previous day and ask God to bring to our mind anything we did, or thought about doing that we need to be cleansed of.

Then we should ask God to forgive us of those things. And he will because, “He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins.”

Our prayer should be: “I know I have sinned, and I need your forgiveness. Grant me repentance for all my sins and wash me clean of every wrong desire.”

“As we also have forgiven our debtors...”

It is a lot easier to ask God to forgive us of what we have done wrong than it is to forgive others of what they have done against us, but Jesus said, “If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (Matthew 6:14-15).

We should pray: “Father God, grant me the grace to forgive those who have done things against me. Help me to have a forgiving attitude toward others.”

“But deliver us from the evil one...”

God will protect us from the tempter as we continue to trust him. This prayer is as much a statement as it is a request. We are saying that we will trust and depend upon him to protect us and our family from the evil one.

Our prayer should be: “I know the devil is always after me and my family but I also know you want to protect us. I ask now that you send angels to watch over us and protect us from the evil one.”

“For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.”

Now it is time to give him the honor and glory he deserves. Think about it. He is the only one who can do what you have just asked him to do, and he wants to do it.

Our prayer should be: “Father God, you alone are worthy of our praise and worship. I thank you for being who you are, and for doing what you promised. I commit all things to you now in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.”

The "Take A Knee" Prayer Challenge

I was recently moved by the story a man who was challenged to "Take A Knee" everyday for 30 days. This man had been struggling in his faith walk. He was trying to overcome undesirable behaviors which had become habitual and were affecting his faith walk.

The Challenge was to simply take a knee in prayer every day. Just that simple. We are told that if we will do something for at least 21 days in a row it will become a habit so if we practice taking a knee in prayer for 30 days we should be well on our way to making it a life-habit.

When I heard this challenge an idea sparked in my head and went to my heart. Let's start a 30 Day Take A Knee Challenge. As I have prayed and meditated on the idea over the last few days I have become convinced that this is something which needs to be done. So, here it is - the 30 Day Take A Knee Prayer Challenge.

When you respond to this challenge you are committing to:

1. Bend your knee in prayer every day. It doesn't have to be a long prayer, especially in the beginning.
2. Invite your friends to join you in the challenge. Think of

any of your friends who might accept the challenge then ask those friends to join with you.

When you register that you have accepted the challenge you will be sent a 31 Day devotional on prayer. Each day there is a Scripture verse, a few paragraphs of inspiration and a short prayer.

Why a 31 day devotional for a 30 day challenge? It is our hope that you won't stop bending your knee in prayer after the 30 days but that you will establish a pattern daily prayer.

To register that you are joining the challenge, or just to get more information about it, and to get your free devotional on prayer just click on the link below:

<http://www.take-a-knee.org/join.html>