

MATTHEW SIX, NINE AND TEN

Intro: One of the subjects of greatest importance to the child of God is the subject of prayer.

The need to pray is recognized by every child of God, and even by many who do not know the Lord as Savior. BUT HOW TO PRAY IS SOMETHING WHICH WE CAN ONLY LEARN FROM THE WORD OF GOD.

The Lord knew that the scribes and Pharisees did not know how to pray. In the verses just before our text He points out some of the things that were wrong.

Evidently the Lord gave this prayer pattern on another occasion (recorded in Luke 11:1-4). There it was in response to a request from the disciples themselves. They knew something about His prayers and the frequency of them. They also knew that John the Baptist had taught his disciples to pray. And so they asked the Lord to teach them.

Strictly speaking this is not the Lord's prayer. There is no evidence that He ever prayed it; it is certain that He could not pray it because of what it says about sin.

Neither is there any evidence that the disciples prayed it as such. THE EVIDENCE SEEMS CLEAR THAT THIS IS A PATTERN, A MODEL WHICH CONTAINS THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF REAL PRAYER.

Tonight we want to take just the first part. We can see the change when we get to v. 11 because we leave the word, "thy" (until the latter part of v. 13), and we come to the word, "us." THEREFORE, THE PART THAT WE HAVE TONIGHT HAS TO DO WITH THE LORD--a fact which shows us that all true prayer must begin with the Lord.

I. ADORATION (Matt. 6:9).

A. Who He is: "Our Father."

This is very rare in the OT. Cf. Ex. 4:22, 23; Isa. 1:2; 63:16; 64:8. Galatians explains the reason for the difference.

It is a term used by our Lord ever so frequently. Cf. John 17 (6x). See also John 20:17.

Therefore, one of the amazing features about this expression is that it brings us to a place like that of our Savior Himself.

In this we see our nearness to God,
the simplicity of our approach,
the affection it expresses,
and the power.

Obviously, this can only be used by one who is His child. Cf. John 1:11-13.

B. Where He is: "Who art in heaven."

As the first speaks of our nearness to God, the one we have now speaks of our distance from Him, and the difference between us. Cf. Isa. 66:1; 1 Kings 8:23-27, esp. v. 27 (Solomon's prayer). God must never be brought down to the level of men. We may be His children, BUT HE IS STILL GOD!

Cf. Ecc. 5:2,

"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few."

C. The holiness of His name: "Hallowed be Thy Name."

Here we come to the first of three imperatives so stated that they suggest urgency.

His name is to be regarded and treated as HOLY!
How it has been cheapened and desecrated by men!

Cf. Ex. 3:13-15; Isa. 42:8.

His name, Jehovah, was considered so sacred by the Jews that they would not pronounce it. That might be extreme, but how much more we need to speak with the greatest of reverence whenever His name comes from our tongues.

This expression always includes the revelation of what kind of a God He is. Cf. Isa. 29:23; Ezek. 20:41; 38:23.

II. THE WORK AND WILL OF GOD (Matt. 6:10).

After worshipping God as a Person, both as our Father and as our God, we now see Him in His sovereign position as KING.

Again there is an expression of urgency.

A. "Thy Kingdom come."

Here we are getting our perspective straight as far as the work of God is concerned. This petition indicates that God is the One who will establish His kingdom on earth, AND THAT HE HAS THE POWER TO DO SO!

How necessary it is for us to pray with this understanding! When we know this, we will pray more.

There may be a millennial emphasis here, but the principles are what we are after. There is a sense in which we are in the kingdom of God (John 3). We have gotten there in much the same way as is indicated in Matt. 3:

- 1) The acknowledgement of Christ.
- 2) The settling of the sin question.
- 3) The fact that it is not just outward, but inward.

How wonderful for us to confess in the Father's presence that He, and He alone, will see to it that His work is fully accomplished on the earth. If it had been dependent upon us, it would have failed long ago!

B. The will of God.

Here the emphasis shifts to the effect of the work of God in the lives of men.

The person who has come to know the Lord and is doing His will years to see the whole world, the whole universe, brought to do the will of God.

What would Central Bible Church be like if we were all doing the will of God as it is done in heaven? Would it be a better church, or worse?

How is the will of God done in heaven? It is done:

- 1) Constantly.
- 2) Completely.
- 3) By all.

Paul has described the will of God in Rom. 12:2-- "good, and acceptable, and perfect."

Concl: Do you pray like this? Do you worship and praise before you petition? Are you concerned more about God's glory than even about your own needs?

Such praying as this is not only the way God wants us to pray, but it is the kind of praying that gives us joy and blessing.