

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

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Open your Bibles to Matthew 6. We're looking at the Sermon on the Mount. We've come to a portion known as the Disciple's Prayer, referred to in theological circles as the Lord's Prayer. In my judgment, a better name is the Disciple's Prayer because he was teaching the disciples how to pray, what they should pray about. If you really want the Lord's Prayer, I believe that would be the high priestly prayer of John 17 before his crucifixion. This is when he prayed to the Father summarizing his whole life and his purpose.

If you'd be kind enough, let's just go to a moment of silence. Know that the Lord is God, and individually, let's just prepare our hearts for what he might have. Father, we just come now trusting that you'll be pleased to guide us this morning. [MOMENT OF SILENCE] Father, in silence, your glory is profound. In silence, your character is magnificent, when we just stop to be still for a few moments and know that you are God. Father, we just need to do that more than we do. In the busyness of life, we think activity is the means by which we are pleasing to you, when really it is just our love and devotion to you that is pleasing to you. May that be the case today as you are our Teacher, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

As we come to this portion of the Sermon on the Mount, if you recall, Matthew 5 dealt with the characteristics of a Kingdom Citizen, the witness of a Kingdom Citizen and it ends with the wonderful summary statement in Chapter 5, verse 48, "Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect." Then in Chapter 6, verse 1, he says, "Be careful." The whole issue of that transition is he's talking about hypocrisy. The hypocrisy he deals with in Chapter 6, as you recall on our previous weeks, the hypocrisy of our giving. We do it for our own accolades, for our own reputation. Or do we do it with the intention of glorifying God as he would lead us?

Then we go into the same thing about prayer. He says, "Don't be like the Pharisees who pray for public affirmation, public witness, public demonstration." He says, "Don't do that." He's teaching us through some of the disciplines of the Christian life—giving, worshiping, fasting and money management. Those are the four areas covered in Matthew 6. Those are all expressions of our worship. We worship by our giving, we worship by our praying, we worship by our fasting and we worship by the means and how we manage our funds. Those are all expressions of our worship experience with the Heavenly Father. In the context of all of that, he says you've got to be careful that you're not hypocrites. A hypocrite is somebody who wears a mask. That's what the word means. You just wear a mask. People say, "Oh, he's this or that," when in reality, you're something else.

We come to this area of our Christian life, the area of our prayer life, which for many of us, if you're like me, it's probably one of the more lack of disciplines that I have. If you recall the book that I gave you all last year on prayer, written by several of us, the reason we got together and decided to do a book on prayer was we all got together and said, "What is the least effective Christian discipline we probably have as a pastor and a teacher?" The consensus among all 11 of us was probably our prayer life. We're so busy studying—30 hours for a 20 minute sermon, or 40 hours for a half hour sermon, whatever that is—all the counseling for all the teaching, for all the activities we do, that we probably we neglect our prayer life more than anything else. That's why we all penned a chapter on that book of prayer.

Who of you do not have a copy of that, because I gave most of the men copies? How many hands? I'll try to get some more. Anybody not have that? We need about another 20 books. Okay, I'll see if I can get those for you and bring them to you next week.

As we come into this section on prayer, it's really critical that we understand the context of what Jesus is

teaching us. Look at your Bibles in Matthew 6 and begin to pick it up at verse 8. Jesus is teaching us what we should pray about, not how we should pray. In other words, this is not to be recited thoughtlessly. It's just not something that is repetitious thought that we recite and say our prayer life is over. Nor are these words that we are to pray specifically, but we are to pray in this manner. He's teaching us how to pray in the manner of prayer, he's teaching us the method of prayer, and he's teaching the matters, the things about which we should pray.

We use this prayer as a pattern. It's not as a substitute. This is really, you could look at this as a pattern of prayer. As we begin to dissect this a little bit, there are six petitions in this Lord's Prayer, or the Disciple's Prayer. The first three concern God directly—concern his name, his kingdom and his glory. Whatever your prayer life is going to be, somehow there has to be some involvement of understanding God's name, God's kingdom and God's glory has to be a part of our prayer life. That doesn't mean, as we'll walk through this over the next couple of weeks, that we don't pray for our earthly needs. We certainly do. The prayer covers those for us very, very specifically.

Basically the three themes are his kingdom, his glory and his name. The next three deal with mankind and our needs. That would be our daily needs, our sins and our temptations. When you look at those six issues, that's basically the pattern of prayer that he's saying. This is not to be a substitute for prayer, but it's a pattern for prayer. This is how one should be praying.

The prayer deals with both the spiritual and the physical needs of the human person. Let's take a look at, first of all, the invocation. The words "Our Father." Notice it is "Our Father," not my Father. There are tremendous implications to that. First of all, there are no personal pronouns in this prayer. You don't see anything that says about "I" or "my." In other words, the emphasis is not upon me as much as it is the whole body of Christ. There's significant inferences to this word "our," not being "my Father." We are part of God's wonderful family. We're part of his worldwide family. When you're saying "Our Father," you're basically saying the prayer that I'm going to pray is a prayer for me, but it's also for the rest of my spiritual family. When you're praying, you're praying for the whole worldwide family of the kingdom of God because we are part of his union, as we'll see in a moment.

We have no right to ask for ourselves anything that might hurt another member of the family of God. In other words, is the prayer that I'm asking, do I understand that it is a very personal, intimate family prayer? What I'm praying for, I need to make sure that the things that I am praying for do not hurt any other member of the family of God because we're all under this invocation of the "our," not "my."

What does the word "Father" mean? That's what we see in the word "our." It implies that we're members of the worldwide family. It's very important that we understand that. As we pray, we're praying for the whole worldwide family of the Christian church of true believers, God's elect. We come to the word "Father." This signifies our oneness with God, the word "Father." Now the word "Father" was rarely used in the Hebrew culture, in the Jewish culture. They used the word "Sovereign Lord," "King of the Universe," and so forth. They never used the word "Father" per se. Jesus called him Father. You'll see that in Matthew 11:25 and many other Gospel verses. We'll also see that the Aramaic word for father is the word "Abba," which means papa—very, very personal. What we see in the second word, "our" is the universal membership of the family of God. The word "Father" means something that's very personal because of our position. Jesus here is identifying by this phrase, "Father," our oneness with God in a very personal relationship.

What Jesus is doing here by saying the manner of your prayer is by saying "Our Father," he's encouraging us to pray with the same understanding that we are one with God positionally. Not personally. There's a difference. We're talking positionally. When you are justified by faith alone, God declares you righteous, he gives you credit for the sinless perfection and perfect obedience of Christ, and

positionally, he looks at you differently. We're talking about, when you say the words "Our Father," you're not saying that you're one with God, personally, in the fact that you have his attributes. That's not what we're saying. We're saying that you are one with him positionally. God looks at you differently. He looks at you differently. He's referring to the oneness, the intimacy that we have positionally with him. That same position is the same position that every other believer has. Hence the word "Our Father" is critical for us to understand.

Negatively, we need to understand this word "our" has reference to believing people, which really is a death blow to this idea that God is the Father of mankind. We need to understand that. We talk about the Fatherhood of God, that God is the father of mankind, and we're all one people. You can only say that from a creative ordinance sense. You can't say that from a positional sense. Not everybody is justified by faith alone. You have to be very, very careful that when you say, "God is our Father," what do you mean? You can say that if you are understanding and have taught somebody that God is our Father creatively. He is the Creator of the Universe. He is the Creator of all mankind. Mankind is created in his image. In that sense, he is the Father of all mankind, but only creatively. You can't say that relationally. You can't say that filially. There is not that personal positional relationship unless a person is justified by faith alone. We have to be very, very careful because it's very, very easy just to say we're all one, big, worldwide family. We are in the sense of being created in the image of God, but we are not positionally. That's why the critical word "our" is a death blow to that idea of the total humanity fatherhood of God concept. We have to be careful of what we understand. You understand the difference now?

**Sig:** *At this point in time, would the disciples, I mean, this may sound weird to you, but would the disciples have been born again? I mean, would they, like when he met with Nicodemus, would that have been after the Sermon on the Mount? To your point of positionally with God...*

This is his first staff meeting. At this point, he's introducing them to what it means, how do you become a kingdom citizen in chapter 5. Now he's saying this is how you live as a kingdom citizen. I don't know, positionally, where they were at that time in their relationship to a loving Father. I don't know that. All I do know is this is his very first staff meeting, so I think the assumption would be that they are not regenerate at this time, per se. They r his elect, certainly, but in the process of that, I really can't say that. Bishop Rogers, can you add anything to that?

**Bishop Rogers:** *No.*

It must be okay then. {LAUGHTER}

**Ted:** *They were elect, but they may not have been converted.*

That's right. Exactly. There's a difference. That's what I'm saying. Positionally, where you look where they are in the history of their life, this is the first time they're really hearing this. This is the first time they've ever heard, "This is how you pray, guys." He's teaching them how to do this. He will basically spend the next three years working this out in their life. That's when they may have been converted to Christ later on.

We need to understand that this is only true in one sense, and that is the sense of God being Creator. You can see that in Malachi 2:10 and Acts 17:22. You would see there that the Fatherhood of God concept only applies to us as created beings, not as relational beings to the Father.

**Audience Member:** *What were those citations?*

Malachi 2:10 and Acts 17:22-29. You've heard people say, when they say that we Christians are so closed minded because we're all God's children. You've got to be careful with that. That's a nice panacea of just making people feel comfortable where they are. Yeah, if you're very, very understanding, as we've seen before, that the Bible clearly teaches that there are only two families in this world, two kinds of people—the children of God and the children of the devil. There are only two. You're either in Christ or you're in Adam. There's no in between. You're in Christ or you're in Adam.

That's why Paul uses the phrase 129 times when he describes a person who has a saving relationship with God the Father through God the Son, he refers to them as being in Christ. His whole emphasis there is you're in Christ; you were in Adam. But you've been transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son he loves and you're no longer in Adam. You're now in Christ. There are only two kinds of families—one in Adam or in Christ. You're the children of God or the children of the devil. Some verses there for you would be 1 John 3:7-10, Ephesians 5:8, John 1:12 and 2 Peter 1:1-4. You'll see this in your handout. The critical issue is there's only two kinds of people—in Christ or in Adam. You can go to Romans 5 and 6 and you will understand that very, very clearly.

What does the word “father” also signifies a special relationship between God and the followers of Christ. Not only does Jesus use the word “Father” to mean a oneness that we have positionally with God, but now he's also saying that there's a special relationship between God and the followers of Christ because of the use of that word “Father.” You see, the followers are born of God. That's John 3. Children of God of by adoption—that's Romans 8. After the resurrection, Jesus said that he was returning to “My Father” and “your Father” to my God and your God.

Take a look at John 20. This is a very significant verse. This is after his resurrection in John 20 beginning at verse 17. Jesus says this, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” You see, there he is really, this word “Father” here signifies a very special relationship between God and the followers of Christ. He is His Father, but he's also our Father. He is His God, but he's also our God. Not only does this word “Father” bespeak of a oneness that we have with him positionally, but it also speaks to the relationship that we have with him personally through the person and work of Christ.

There's an absolute and abundant relationship between God the Heavenly Father and those who have become his children by faith in the obedience toward his Son. There's a very unique relationship that we have to God the Father through God the Son. It works out like this, just in quick summary. What God the Father ordains, the God the Son accomplishes, God the Holy Spirit applies. What the Father ordains, the Son accomplishes, the Holy Spirit applies.

When did you become a Christian? If you're in Christ today, you're not in Adam. You're not part of the family of the devil. You're part of the family of God. When did you become a Christian? When did you become a believer? When did you become a follower of Christ? When you look at theologically and positionally, soteriologically, the whole concept of salvation, you became a believer when God the Father ordained it before the foundation of the world. That's the first time you became a Christian. The second time you became a Christian is at the cross when he accomplished your salvation. You see, he didn't make your salvation possible at the cross; he accomplished it. That's why he said, “It is finished.” What is the “it”? The redemptive work of salvation is accomplished for God's elect. What the Father ordains, the Son accomplished.

Thirdly, when did you become a Christian? When the Holy Spirit applied the Gospel to you. You repented and believed, when the Holy Spirit convicted you of your sin, convinced you of your sin, converted you from your sin and comforted in your new way of life. You see, all of that's wrapped up in

that word “Father” because of the unique relationship that Jesus had with the Father, he has with us, and we have it with the Father.

*Tom: I think one of the things we have trouble with is putting it all into relationship and time. As Ted was asking, is this when the disciples were converted. When he says they're elected [UNCLEAR], but then in John 20, He breathes on them and says, “Receive the Holy Spirit,” but yet then he gets crucified and then he comes back to them. It just doesn't happen one...*

We have to be careful not to put things in a human timeframe because that's just very, very difficult for us to do that. I mean, when you take a look at this, just on a micro, quick scale, which comes first? Justification or regeneration? Justification. Just like that. You see, he changes his view, and then he regenerates you. When you look at Romans 5, 6, 7 and 8, it's rather obvious that you're either in Adam or you're in Christ. He has to change his view of you before he can do something.

We just have to be careful. Be careful not to systematize things like... Remember this—salvation is supernatural. The problem that we have in America in the church today is we try to make the Gospel human. It's not. Paul says in Romans 1:16, “For it is the power of salvation to all who believe.” What is the word “it”? It's the message of the Gospel. You see, we do have a methodology. We're always talking about new methods in the church, “We need to do this,” and a new method here and a new method there. We've got a methodology. The method is this—the miraculous, supernatural power of a Holy God. That's our method. That comes through the proclamation of the Gospel.

We have a problem because we're trying to make the Gospel human. We talk about the holiness of God, the sinfulness of man, the person and work of Christ and repentance and faith—we try to de-deify that and make it human so that it's easy for us to understand, when we need to realize that the conversion experience is a supernatural event. We should never lose the supernaturality of conversion and try to humanize it by saying this is something that you can do to earn your salvation or choose your salvation, when really it is a supernatural event. The methodology is this—it is the method of a miraculous, supernatural God. That's our methodology. We should never forget that.

We're always trying to say, “Let's go dance the Gospel. Let's go sing the Gospel. Let's create a play.” You see, we try to humanize it. Now there's nothing wrong with doing those things, as long as you understand that this is not diminishing the supernaturality of a miraculous, Holy God, who works very supernaturally. We should never lose sight of the fact that salvation is a supernatural event. Just never lose sight of that. When the church does, we begin to make the Gospel human. That's one of my gravest concerns about the preaching I hear today is we really try to humanize it.

There's nothing wrong with making applications at a human level. That's not what I'm saying. What I'm saying is when you begin to play around with a new methodology, you begin to destroy the supernatural, miraculous power of a Holy God who converts us through the proclamation of biblical truth. That's where you see the role of the Holy Spirit—what the Father ordains, the Son accomplishes, the Holy Spirit applies. It is the role of the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth and lead us to the person and work of Christ by convicting us of our sin, convincing us of our sin, converting us from our sin, and then comforting us in our new walk in Christ.

You begin to see all that in that very unique relationship that Jesus is teaching us when he says, “Not only do you have a unique relationship to the Father in the oneness of your position, but you have a unique relationship because of my relationship to Him and your relationship to Me.” That's a very, very intimate personal relationship to God the Father. There's a forgiveness, acceptance, inheritance, family and discipline in this relationship. In other words, there are all sorts of things that transpire as a result of our personal relationship to God the Father through God the Son.

The third thing I think the Father teaches us, not only of our oneness with him and our personal relationship with him, but when you say “Our Father who art in heaven,” signifies the transcendence and the great glory and the richness of his character and his nature. “Our Father who art in heaven.” It’s not our father who art at Heinz field. There’s a difference. We need to be careful how we dehumanize, or we de-deify God by trying to bring him down to our level. No, we take people up to his level. By contrast today, we view him as only warm and personal, when we really need to see him as transcendent, miraculous, powerful, glorious and supernatural. Never lose the supernatural of the work of God.

His majesty and sovereignty are sometimes lost in the choruses that we sing, such as—and I’m not picking on one, but it’s just one that came to my mind when I was writing this out—He’s a Great Big, Wonderful God. What does that do for you? He’s a great...what’s the thing that people do now? God is good...

*Audience Members: All the time.*

How does it go?

*Audience Members: All the time, God is good.*

Well no kidding he’s good! I mean, why don’t we say, “God is Holy”? Then what would you say? “Oh no, he’s good.” Now I’m not picking on those things, so understand churches, I’m not saying you’re wrong if you do it. Please understand that. All I’m saying is we have a tendency to get lost in the humanization of God, bringing him down to our level. We have a tendency to lose the transcendence, the glory and the majesty of his character and his nature. But you see that in that phrase, “Our Father who art in heaven.” He’s talking about the majestic glory of a miraculous, holy God when he uses that phrase. That’s wrapped in the word “Father.”

We should view him as Father in many, many ways. The oneness we have, the oneness with Christ and his majestic glory. That’s why you look at the first three petitions are His Name, His Glory and His Kingdom. That’s all wrapped up in that little phrase, “Our Father.”

These phrases, “Our Father,” constitute a pattern of reverence that we need to understand, as opposed to the shallow theology, experience oriented religious culture that we live in today. We’ve lost sight of the fact that Jesus and the Father are one and his transcendent glory is really wrapped up in our prayer life.

As you go into prayer, how do we look at God? Do we look at him as someone who is there to take over our wish list? Or do we see him as the transcendent, glorious God who is in heaven. His bigness is something we should never forget nor his supernatural.

So then, to pray, “Our Father,” we would be humbled and hushed by the tremendous privilege of addressing God in such a personal way. So you see, when we start off by saying, “Our Father,” we’re really humbling ourselves by realizing I’m in a oneness position with God because I’ve been justified by faith alone. I’m in a personal relationship with God because God the Father is Jesus’ Father and he’s also mine. He’s Jesus’ God and he’s also mine, the very personal side. The third phase of this is his transcendent glory and majesty and honor. That ought to bespeak to us to put us in a tremendous sense of being humbled in our prayer life and humiliation in the sense of I have such a wonderful privilege of coming to a personal relationship to God the Father through God the Son because of God the Holy Spirit.

You find so much in those first two words, “Our Father.” Any questions on that? Do you understand the

difference between God being the Father of all mankind from a creative sense but not in a relational sense? Do you understand the difference? Just be careful how you use that phrase because you're going to hear it frequently in the church, "He's just the Father of mankind." He is in one sense, but not in a relational sense.

Let's take a look at the petitions. That was our invocation into the introduction of the prayer, to this matter of this prayer and what we should pray about. Now we come to the first petition, and that is "hallowed be your name." A person's name is closely related to what he is in all of his being. In other words, his attributes, his glory, his nature, his characteristics. In the Old Testament, God uses names of himself to reveal himself, such as God the Most High, God the Almighty, The I Am. Whenever you use his name, you're basically saying, "Hallowed be thy Name," you're basically saying, "I want to bring honor, reverence and dignity to all that you are in all of your attributes, all of your glory and all of your characteristics because I'm using the word "Name."

As we've talked before, many times you've heard me say that when we pray in Jesus' name, you're basically saying that the prayer that I'm praying is consistent with all the attributes, the nature and the character of the person whose name I'm evoking. I just evoked the name of Jesus, so that means that my prayer is consistent with his character. My prayer is consistent with his nature. My prayer is consistent with his glory. That's why I say, "In Jesus' name." We have to be very, very careful how we use this understanding of the word "name."

That's why one of the Ten Commandments is "You shall not take the Lord's Name in vain," because what are you doing? You are decreasing, you're damaging the characteristics, the nature and the attributes of God and his character. That commandment means much more than just using profanity. It goes as far as this—thoughts that are unworthy of God. You see a thought that is unworthy of God is damaging his name. You're thinking a thought that's not consistent with his character. You're not having a thought that's consistent with his name, with his attributes, with his glory. Having a thought that is unworthy of God is really a way of defaming his character, and it's a violation of the Ten Commandments, because you're taking his name in vain.

May I give you an example? "That's not fair." Is fairness one of his attributes?

*Audience Members: No.*

You see, you just damaged his name. You just defamed his glory. You just destroyed his character and his nature because you've added something to his name that is not consistent with the biblical revelation. That's why it's so important that several years ago, we studied the 28 attributes of God. Sometimes, for me, what is very helpful to me is to have a list of those 28 attributes of God before I pray. I go down and I just read those, just kind of quickly let my eyes go down all 28 of those, and say, "Lord, I want my prayer to be consistent with what I just saw about who you are, because I'm going to pray in your Name, and I don't see fairness as one of those attributes. So Lord, help me be consistent when I say 'Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.' Let my prayer be something that's going to hallow your name, it's going to bring reverence to your kingdom, it's going to bring glory to your person and work of Christ." That means my prayer needs to be consistent in the way that I'm thinking about the nature of who God is. That's why the 28 attributes of God is such a very, very important study for us. I have found it personally to be very, very helpful. Just to take a look at those before I've started a serious prayer. That doesn't mean that when I'm driving through the Ft. Pitt Tunnel, I whip out the list and have a car wreck and read the 28 attributes. I'm not saying that.

*Audience Member: But at least you'll go to heaven.*

At least I'll go to heaven. {LAUGHTER} If I do wreck.

**Tom:** *Being here at that time, that was a tremendous study for us to really focus on who God is. But for those that weren't here at that time, could you reprint that outline?*

Sure.

**Tom:** *It's life-changing.*

Sig, if I send you the list of the 28 attributes...

**Sig:** *I have them.*

Could you send that out to everybody?

**Sig:** *I can.*

That would just be helpful. We also did a CD version of that, which was a summary statement of that. I don't know if we could get Ian to make some more of those for us, but Sig, if you could send that out.

**Sig:** *We have a PowerPoint of it.*

It's on the web page, isn't it?

**Sig:** *Yes, it is on the website.*

Called that 28 Attributes of God, for those of you who were not part of that, you could go on the web page, BraveMen.org, scroll down and you would see it there. That's a good idea. Thanks, Tom.

We need to take seriously this word "hallowed," what it means to, "Hallowed be thy Name." See, we're to reverence, we are to honor, we are to consider holy and acknowledge the name of God and therefore God, himself. When we talk about the name of God, we're honoring God himself. We are asking our Heavenly Father to act in such a way that we will reverence God, glorify him, consider him holy, acknowledge him. That's what we're saying when we say, "Hallowed be thy name."

Many use God and Jesus as an oath or as an expression of disgust or anger. You see how that is defaming of his character and his name because it's taking his name out of context? We should regard God's name as so holy that it will be sufficient to create a spirit of reverence and holy fear, and that's when we pray. At the same time, go back to the word "Our Father." You see the balance there? Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. You see, the very, very personal "Our Father," but you see the very, very holy "Hallowed be thy name." There's a wonderful balance. That's the manner of our prayer that we need to be looking at. There's a balance there. It's not one or the other; it's a both/and. That's why Jesus is saying, "This is not a prayer that you recite just thoughtlessly; this is a pattern of prayer," because he's teaching us how to think before we even go to prayer.

I want you to think about the personal relationship you have with the holy God and how intimate that is because over your oneness, and how glorified and how majestic he is in all of his glory and his nature. At the same time, when you come to your prayer, make sure that your prayer is consistent with who he is. Consistent with who he is in all of his glory.

**Audience Member:** *You said a word that has been in my mind [UNCLEAR] reverence and whatnot, and*



*that's fear, because it says fear the Lord and [UNCLEAR]. Are those two tied together [UNCLEAR]?*

The word “fear”...one of the best sermons I ever read when I was studying in England was a sermon by one of the Puritans called “God is Awful.” Now what that meant there, God was full of awe. The word awful now means for us harmful or bad. What he meant was God is so full of awe that you have this holy reverential fear for him. This fear that we have is a fear, not of being afraid, because we're in Christ, you see. Prior to being in Christ, when I was in Adam, I hope I was fearful, because I ought to be, of the holy vengeful, wrathful God, because we're under his wrath. At that point, if you're under his wrath, you ought to be frightfully fearful. Absolutely be terrified, if you're not in Christ.

But when you're in Christ, that fear goes from being terrorized; it now goes to sense of awe and sense of reverence, respect. We call it a holy fear, a holy reverence. The fear that we have is a tremendous motivation because it's a fear of holiness and reverence for who he is. It's a holy fear as opposed to a terrorized being afraid. Understand the difference?

**Audience Member:** *[UNCLEAR] tells us to pray to the Father not to the Son [UNCLEAR]...only the Father that we pray to. But then what does it mean to be, to say “In Jesus name” when you're praying? Is there an inconsistency there?*

No, not at all, because Jesus is God. Jesus is saying here's the matter of your prayer. This is the manner in which you pray. Now most often, I pray to God the Father. It's not inappropriate for me to say, “Dear Jesus,” or “Lord Jesus,” or however I do that, because Jesus is God. Right? Jesus is God. When you're praying to Jesus, you're praying to God. If you pray to the Holy Spirit...now I...that's a point of emphasis. {LAUGHTER} In my personal application of the Lord's Prayer and the Disciple's Prayer, the majority of my time, I address it to the Father. There are times when I'm very, very intimate and personal, I might say, “Lord Jesus.” I will do that.

**Audience Member:** *Would you ever pray to the Holy Spirit?*

One can do that because the Holy Spirit is also God, so one can do that. Now I try to be sensitive to that, because the Holy Spirit's job is not to call attention to himself. The Holy Spirit's job is to lead us into all truth and call attention to the person and work of Christ and all of his glory. I do not pray to the Holy Spirit, per se, very often. There are times where I'll say, “Holy Spirit, give me your grace,” or whatever. Sometimes I do that. But that is not the normal pattern that I have because I'm trying to be sensitive to the realization that the Holy Spirit's job is not to call attention to himself. That doesn't mean it's inappropriate. One can certainly do that because God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are the Triune God. When you're praying to one, you're praying to the other.

**Ted:** *I agree with you theologically. I just, I'm always reminded because when they had the charismatic movement, there was great emphasis on the work of the spirit. I think that's great, but I think Scripture says we're to pray to Father, and it also references praying to Jesus. But I don't think it ever references praying to the Holy Spirit.*

I'm not aware...

**Ted:** *I may be wrong. I may be wrong on that. I'm not saying it's wrong to do it, but the Scripture doesn't reference it.*

I would agree with that. That would be my position. That's why I'm less likely to do that than I am to God the Father or God the Son. Sometimes I will just pray to the Triune God—God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. I'm praying to the Triune God. Bishop Rogers, can you help us with that in

anything?

**Bishop Rogers:** *No, I agree with that emphasis; I think that's right. The Spirit is making an application in your life in such a way that he speaks to you directly in some fashion through the Scripture that we may be wanting to speak to the Spirit back.*

That's good. Remember how does the Holy Spirit...remember his job description is not to call attention to himself. That's the important thing to remember. Ted brings up a good point. Several years ago, during the charismatic infusion in Christianity, there was such tremendous emphasis on the Holy Spirit, so you had [UNCLEAR] on the work of the Holy Spirit. Now there's nothing wrong with that, but as long as you understand the work of the Holy Spirit is what? To call attention to Christ. If you're going to have a seminar on the work of the Holy Spirit, you're going to talk about Jesus. You're not going to talk about the Holy Spirit. You're going to talk about what he does, and that is he is going to introduce you to Christ so you understand his sinless perfection and perfect obedience. We just have to be cautious with that. The Holy Spirit's job is not to generate excitement, although I hope that when you come across truth, you do get excited. I would hope that would be the response. His mission is not to cause generally just excitement among the people. We just have to be understanding about the role of the Holy Spirit.

**Bishop Rogers:** *I think [UNCLEAR] Spirit glorifies the Son who glorifies the Father, and that's the...*

Amen. That's the sequence. So in your prayer life, that's what you want to do. If you're going to pray to the Holy Spirit, then realize he's going to glorify the Son who's going to glorify the Father. Here again, we have to understand that we are praying to a Triune God. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are all one. All one. Does that clarify that for you?

**Audience Member:** *I think so.*

**Audience Member:** I think, also, saying, "In Jesus' name" is that we're part of the body of Christ.

Oh amen.

**Audience Member:** *That we don't want to come with a [UNCLEAR] that says we do not want to come to the naked God. We could only come to God covered by the righteousness of Jesus Christ, so that when we're praying, we speak about the awesomeness of God. When we have a relationship with him as our Father, only because of the work of Jesus Christ.*

Amen.

**Audience Member:** *And so other people praying can use that creator sense of God, but they don't really have a relationship and right to approach his throne of grace with confidence as we do in power of the spirit.*

Very good. Thank you.

**Bishop Rogers:** *Can I just make one comment, and that is this. Since the time of, just the 19<sup>th</sup> century, liberal theology has really used the fatherhood of God for mankind to attack the particular emphasis, the biblical emphasis, on the Son. You hear it a lot in the churches because the actually has been taught to a lot of pastors. It's really contrary to the Gospel.*

Amen to that.

**Bishop Rogers:** *It's been used that way. It's not just you have to be careful; it really has been used negatively in terms of the Gospel.*

That's correct. Amen to that. We just have...that's why I was trying to make the distinction between the fatherhood of God in the creative sense and in the relational sense. It's critical for us to understand. It is a refutation of the Gospel of Christ when you do that. It's very dangerous. It's just an incipient thing that's crept into the church.

**Brian:** *[UNCLEAR] catch that whole reference. Can you give us an example of how that's manifest [UNCLEAR]?*

**Bishop Rogers:** *Sure. Harnack [SPELLING] there's only...he said, "There's only the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. There is no Christology in the Gospel." He was the greatest theologian of his day. That's just characteristic of liberal theology. There's just not Christological...they don't center it in Jesus.*

**Ted:** *What do you find, Bishop Rogers is talking about, in liturgical changes, changes in the liturgical churches? I really don't know what the non-liturgical churches are doing, but liturgically, you begin to find Jesus and the Son are dropping out of the references that are part of the prayers.*

Interesting.

**Ted:** *It's no longer Savior, it's kind of like God the redeemer—you can help me out Bishop—I mean there are new words. When you go into some of these services, the reference to the son is dropping out.*

**Bishop Rogers:** *Particularly the feminist movement.*

**Ted:** *That's correct.*

Yes.

**Bishop Rogers:** *[UNCLEAR] the blessings God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit [UNCLEAR] the Creator, the Redeemer and the Sanctifier. They just didn't want to use the word "Son." Or Father.*

Or Father.

**Bishop Rogers:** *All masculine images.*

Excellent.

**Bishop Rogers:** *You just have to stick with the Bible. {LAUGHTER}*

When all else fails, read the directions. {LAUGHTER} When my car doesn't work, I read the directions. When my life doesn't work, I read the directions. The same thing. When all else fails, read the directions.

**Audience Member:** *As I've looked through the petitions, I think I understand and I've seen people pray through all these petitions, we really expounded on our daily needs and daily bread, our temptations, our sins and the glory of God and the kingdom of God. Other than us hallowing God ourselves, which*

*we've been talking about, but how ought we to pray that God's name be hallowed, like in our nation, in our community? How do we pray that?*

One of the things...you're relatively new here, correct? One of the questions you can't ask is how. {LAUGHTER}

**Audience Member:** *Now you tell him. {LAUGHTER}*

Because I can't be your Holy Spirit. All I can do is teach you what the Scripture's teaching you, allow the Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth, personally, and as you're trusting the person and work of Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life, you are trusting him to help you know how to hallow God's name in your own life personally. That may be different than how I would do that verbally, but that doesn't mean that the verbs that I use, or the phrases that I use, are the ones you should use. I can't be your Holy Spirit. I don't mean to be flippant when I say don't ask me how, but I'm trying to help you understand the Holy Spirit, you see, if you're really in Christ and you're no longer in Adam, the Holy Spirit's going to do that.

Let me take you to Romans 8 to help you understand. That's a great question and I do appreciate it. I hope I'm not copping out on you, but I just copped out on you. {LAUGHTER} Go down to the latter part of Romans 8, down around 28, 27. We always emphasize Romans 8:28, but we should look at verses 26 and 27. Look at 26, "<sup>26</sup>Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought." Right there is your question. I don't know what to pray, so don't ask Bruce. "<sup>26</sup>but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. <sup>27</sup>And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

That's basically saying this—when you don't know what to pray, allow the Holy Spirit...I would say, my counsel would be, go read the Scripture a little bit, let the Scripture set your mind on things above, and allow the Holy Spirit to take that and just begin to move you into how you should pray and how you should use the words that you will use, uniquely you, because of your personal relationship to Christ and how you will hallow his name. It may be different than the words I would use or somebody else, but that's not the point. The point is the Holy Spirit will teach us how to pray.

Sometimes I would have to say, and I don't mean to make flippant light of this...you know, it says that the Holy Spirit will intercede with groans that we don't understand. Sometimes my best prayer is this, "Ahhhh!" I just don't know what to say. I'm just saying, "Lord, I'm trusting that you know my heart, deceitful as it is. You know my heart and what my intention is as a person who's now in Christ and no longer in Adam. I'm just trusting that you're going to take those groans that I don't understand what I should pray about, and take them to the Father and be my intercessor." You see, we don't rely upon the Holy Spirit as the means of our prayer as much as we should. That is his role to do that, is to guide us into prayer. I don't mean to be flippant when I say I can't answer that for you, but really, that's the key, is the Holy Spirit will guide you in that.

The important thing is understanding his role is to guide you into all truth. That's why I think the greatest preparation we can have for a time of prayer is to study the Scripture. Read the Scripture. Just go and read a book, read a chapter, read a couple of chapters, something like that. Allow the Holy Spirit just to settle your mind from the disruptions of this world's system and to focus upon those things that are pure and heavenly, and allow that to happen. When that happens, then your mind is now being set more to be able to pray in a way that will hallow God more effectively. Okay? Good question.

The highest goal of our prayer is not that we are made holy, but God's name be hallowed, that he's held

in reverence. In other words, the real issue here is not my prayer makes me more holy. That's a consequence of our prayer. That's not the goal. The goal of my prayer is that God's name is hallowed. His name is uplifted. His name is held in reverence. His name is held in glory. As a result of that, what's going to happen to me? I'm going to be made more holy, just through the spirit's work as he works in your life. We're dealing here with motive. Remember the whole issue of Matthew 6 is hypocrisy. What's the purpose of your prayer? What's the purpose of your giving? You see, he's dealing, "Don't be like the hypocrites who do this for show, to get a good reputation, to be well thought of." Even in your prayer life, you have to ask yourself, "What is my motive for my prayer?" It really can be crystalized and centralized for us if we understand the concept of "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be they name." The goal of prayer is to hallow the name of God.

We are not center of the universe, as we think we are. When we hallow God's name in our prayer, it gives God that position alone in the universe; that he is the center of the universe and not us. So you see that just in the whole mindset. That's why this prayer is not something that is just to be repeated thoughtlessly or flippantly. It is something to teach us a pattern of how we are to think and how we are to pray. It's a pattern of prayer. It's not a prescription for prayer. It's a pattern. You begin to think like this and you begin to pray like this.

We'll pick up next week. We'll take a look at the second petition, which is "Thy kingdom come."

***Audience Member:** Bruce, if I may, I had a friend drop me a few words throughout the week [UNCLEAR], and I'm wondering if the prayer and what to pray for and all [UNCLEAR] so important, but to give thanks for the good that's been brought upon you through the week or an any instance [UNCLEAR] that is something [UNCLEAR] you're blessed with something, you just [UNCLEAR] and be grateful. [UNCLEAR]...*

That's a great, great insight. Just look at this, guys. A holy God has chosen to reveal himself to us through his Word, through teaching and preaching. Do you understand the significance of that? That is just not a flippant...this is not knowledge. Learning doesn't lead to knowledge; learning leads to living. Sometimes, you know, I would be hopeful that when the Holy Spirit guides you into all truth, you just sort of stand back and you're just blown away, and just say, "Why me? How come you were pleased to reveal that truth to me at this moment?" The response to that is, "Thank you." As the Scripture says, "In all things give thanks, in your prayers through supplication." That's a great point. You see, the whole response of our learning is we ought to have a tremendous sense of gratitude that a holy God has descended, condescended, to expose himself to us through his Word. As you study the Scripture and you hear something that Holy Spirit applies to you very personally, be sure that your first response is gratitude, because that's just a sovereign expression of God's love and grace to us as his redeemed children. Thanks very much for that reminder.

Let's pray. Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be they name. Father, we just pray that the motive of our prayer would be consistent with all of your glory, that the intent of our prayer would be consistent with all of your nature, that the results of our prayer would be to honor you, that your name would be hallowed in this world, and that when people would see the holiness of who you are just through the act of our effectiveness in prayer. So Father, deal with us internally, that we might deal with you explicitly in a way that would glorify you. And all of God's children and the Brave Men said...Amen!!!