The Lord’s Prayers

The Lord’s Prayer recorded in Matt 6:9-13 is one of the three foundational documents of the Christian faith, namely the Apostle’s Creed (our belief), the Ten Commandments (our behaviour) and The Lord’s Prayer (our prayer).

The Lord’s Prayer as it is popularly known should more accurately be called ‘The Disciples’ Prayer” as Jesus taught it as a model prayer for the disciples.

Some observations that we can make about the prayer is that the prayer can be divided into two parts, with the first few verses referring to God (your name, your kingdom and your will) and the last few verses referring to us (give us, forgive us and lead us). It also encompasses the present (provides our daily bread), the past (forgive our sins) and the future (deliver us). In other word, it is a comprehensive prayer albeit short and simple.

1. Our Father

* Our Father speaks of community

“Our Father” instead of “my father”.

* Our Father speaks of family

The term for Father is Abba, a name used by children for their earthly fathers that expresses warmth and intimacy in the security of a loving father’s care, kind of like our word Daddy. Jesus used the phrase my Father to address his heavenly Father because He is the unique Son but he also called his disciples to enter into a relationship with his Father as well. Through Jesus we have been adopted into God’s family and we are privileged to be the children of God (see John 1:11-13. Rom.8:14-17. 1 John 3:1-2).

* Our Father in heaven speaks of authority

He is a God in heaven which means he is sovereign overall and has great authority. He is able and nothing is impossible with Him. Don’t put God in a box.

When we pray, learn to meditate on his glory.

1. Hallowed be Your Name

The purpose of hallowing the name is that God might be set apart as holy among all people and in all actions, that he will be treated with the highest honor. To hallow God’s name means to hold it in reverence.

* Jehovah Jireh—Gen 22:2 The Lord who provides
* Jehovah Rophi—Ex 15:22-27 The Lord who heals
* Jehovah Nissi—Ex 17:16 The Lord who is the victory
* Jehovah Shalom—Jud 6:24 The Lord who is our peace
* Jehovah Rohi—Ps 23 The Lord My Shepherd
* Jehovah Shammah—Ez 48:35 The Lord who is there
* Jehovah Tsidkenu—Jer 23:6 The Lord our righteousness
* Lord Yahweh—Lord Jehovah
* El Shaddai—Lord God Alimighty

1. Your Kingdom come, your will be done

We pray for the manifestation of God’s kingdom into every corner of the earth. Wherever the kingdom of heaven is revealed, God’s will is experienced.

1. Give us today our daily bread

This refers to our daily needs—spiritually, physically and emotionally. Disciples are to rely on God for all of their needs every day, just as the Israelites had to trust God for the manna daily in the desert (Exodus 16). God is our provider.

1. Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who forgive those who sin against us

Through repentance we experience forgiveness. Forgiveness of others’ sin is essential. There is no forgiveness for those who are unforgiving (Matt 6:14-15). Reconciliation take precedence over worship. In the parable of the unmerciful servant, Jesus warned of the torment that comes upon those who don’t continue to forgive from the heart.

1. Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil

This is a prayer against temptation and testings. The second part of the prayers is a reminder that the believers must be aware that they are in spiritual warfare. The devil is like a roaring lion roaming about seeking whom he can devour. We must be awake and alert. We must be ignorant of his devices, strategies and plan. We must put on the whole armour of God according to Eph 6 individually and corporately as the Body of Christ (Eph 6:10-17). We must resist the devil and be confident that he will flee from us. (James 4:7)