



# 21 DAYS OF PRAYER

# 11

DAY 11

JANUARY 19, 2023

## Les Markham

KEY SCRIPTURES **Matthew 6: 9–13; Luke 11: 1–4**

As followers of Jesus, we know that we should pray. Most of us feel that we should pray more. Surveys reveal that regular, persistent, and prevailing prayer is the exception rather than the rule for most Christians.

Often, behind the lack of this spiritual discipline is a dearth of spiritual desire; so maybe our first prayer should be “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11: 1). Notice that the disciples’ request was NOT “Teach us HOW to pray”. We need the performance of prayer more than just a pattern for prayer; but Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount does give us a model for prayer that is simple but sublime, concise but complete. We notice in Matthew 6:5 that Jesus says “WHEN you pray” not “IF you pray”. He assumes that we will pray, and then He gives us a pattern to follow. It’s fine to say this prayer by rote, but we should also think of the relationships and the principles the prayer teaches us.

“**Our**” | The first word of this model prayer reminds us that we are a spiritual family. God is not just “my” Father or “your” Father, He is “our” Father. Prayer should draw God’s family closer together. In fact family tensions or quarrels drain

prayer of its effectiveness. (See I Peter 3:7). There is power in agreement. (Matthew 18:19).

“**Father**” | Prayer begins, not with a focus on our needs, but on God’s Person. “Father” should remind us to respect God, but it also tells us that God loves and cares for us. We are not God’s slaves, although we delight in serving Him, we are His children, and we reverently can call Him “Daddy” (Romans 8:15).

“**In Heaven**” | We appreciate intimacy with God, but we don’t forget that He is Almighty God, that He is Lord, and His ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:9).

“**Hallowed be your name**” | We approach God on the avenue of praise. We begin our prayer by extolling, and magnifying His holy name – the name above every other name. Worship is a primary part of prayer.

“**Your Kingdom come**” | After honouring God’s Person, we pray for God’s Program. We invite God to be the King of our lives, and we pray that our world will accept His rule. We also pray for the return of Jesus when His Kingship will be fully realized.

**“Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven”** | Heaven’s obedience, which is total and complete, is our standard. May God’s will be fulfilled in our world, in our Church, in our homes and in our lives (where we do have most control). Submission to a higher will and power, is a key component of prayer.

**“Give us daily bread”** | We ask for God’s provision. Bread represents our basic needs, and God provides on a daily basis.

**“Forgive us”** | It is God’s greatest desire, and it should be ours too, is that we keep a clean slate in our relationship to Him. Like the Psalmist, we pray for a “pure heart (Psalm 51:10), therefore, we repent and we confess our sins.

**“Lead us not - and deliver us”** | God is more concerned about our spiritual victory than anything else, and that is our concern too. We pray because we want to be overcomers who walk in victory, maintaining spiritual and moral purity; and for this, we realize that we need God’s Spirit and help.

## REFLECTIONS

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- ▶ Do you truly believe that prayer makes a difference?
- ▶ What do you find to be your greatest obstacle that keeps you from praying?
- ▶ Has God answered some of your prayers? Take some time right now to thank Him.
- ▶ What part of "The Lord's Prayer" do you find to be the most challenging to believe and to practice?

## PRAYER

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Our Father in heaven, may your name be honoured today. Please be the king of every area of my life so that your will for my life will be accomplished in and through me. Please provide the basic needs of me and my loved ones, and make us truly grateful. Forgive me for any wrongs that I have done, and give me a spirit of forgiveness towards anyone who has wronged me. Lord, please keep me on the right path, the path of righteousness, for your holy name's sake. Amen.

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