

Sermon Title: **Our Father Who art in Heaven**

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Scripture Reference: **Matthew 6:9**

Thesis: **Jesus began His example of Prayer with acknowledging the Father God;**

Purpose: **We will learn the important role that acknowledging God plays in our prayers.**

Key Word: "Our Father"

Key Points: #1 Networking
 #2 Networking
 #3 Networking

I) Introduction:

Scripture Reading is: **Matthew 6:9**

A) The Setting:

1) **Illustration: GOD IS EVERY WHERE¹**

(a) A fifth grade teacher in a Christian school asked her class to look at TV commercials and see if they could use them in some way to communicate ideas about God. **Here are some of the results:**

- GOD is like a FORD ... He's got a better idea.
- GOD is like COKE ... He's the real thing.
- GOD is like HALLMARK CARDS ... He cares enough to send His very best.
- GOD is like TIDE ... He gets the stains out that others leave behind.
- GOD is like GENERAL ELECTRIC ... He brings good things to life.
- GOD is like SEARS ... He has everything.
- GOD is like ALKA-SELTZER ... Try Him, you'll like him.
- GOD is like SCOTCH TAPE ... You can't see him, but you know He's there.
- GOD is like DELTA He's ready when you are.
- GOD is like ALLSTATE ... You're in good hands with Him.
- GOD is like VO-5 HAIR SPRAY ... He holds through all kinds of weather.

(b) God is all of these things and this is why we should want to be close to Him.

2) **Last week we began a study on prayer beginning with the disciples request that Jesus Teach them to pray.**

- (a) We talked about what prayer is and the different kinds of prayers.
- (b) We looked at the importance and priority of prayer.
- (c) We learned that praying is drawing near to and communicating with God.

3) **This week we will begin to examine in detail the example of prayer that Jesus gave to His disciples.**

- (a) A prayer we commonly refer to as "*The Lord's Prayer*."
- (b) I would argue that it would be more accurately described as "*The Disciples Prayer*."
- (c) For this prayer was given to the disciples as an example, a teaching tool.
- (d) If you want to see the real "Lord 's Prayer" read John Chapter 17 where we have the longest recorded prayer of Jesus.

4) **So, the very first thing I want us to see is that I don't believe the intent of this prayer model for the disciples was intended to be a prayer to recite over and over.**

- (a) When we recite in rote the same words over and over they become a chant; a sort of white noise in the background where the meaning of the words are lost.
- (b) It is easy to say them without feeling the meaning of the words.
- (c) After a while we may not even think about what we are saying; just the litany we have memorized.
- (d) I believe this is why Jesus warned the disciples in **Matthew 6:7** about "**vain repetitions**"

- 5) **Instead this is a model of what a prayer should be about;**
 - (a) What our prayers should include may vary in form; however,
 - (b) What in essence we should have in our prayers are the elements of this model prayer given to the disciples by Jesus.
- 6) **And so it is that we begin with the first line of this model prayer**
 - (a) It is from the prayer that we say here most every week . . .
 - (b) And it is my prayer that we will come away with a deeper understanding of why we are focusing on God the Father.
- 7) **So, that brings us to our scripture reading for today in Matthew 6:9.**

B) *Sermon Prayer*

C) (The Hook)

1) **What is a Father?**

- (a) **The dictionary² says that a Father is defined as one of the following:**
 - A man who has engendered a child.
 - A man as he is related to a child or children.
 - The male parent of a child.
 - A person regarded as a male parent; protector
 - **God or God the first person of the Trinity.**
 - A forefather,
 - An originator, founder, or inventor.
 - Any man deserving respect or reverence because of age, position, etc.
 - A senator of ancient Rome
 - Any of the leaders of a city.
 - Any of the early Christian religious writers considered reliable.
 - A Christian priest
- 2) **So while we use the term rather loosely in our language; this morning we are specifically talking about God the first person of the Trinity.**
 - (a) While the Trinity is a hard concept to understand . . . it simply means three.
 - (b) Perhaps it would be easier to understand if we used the word Tri-unity; the three parts of God are unified.
 - (c) They also unify us when we are joined together as His children.
- 3) D. L. Moody once said, **"I'd rather be able to pray than to be a great preacher; Jesus Christ never taught his disciples how to preach, but only how to pray."¹³**
- 4) **Jesus began this teaching model prayer by acknowledging God the Father.**
 - (a) And as we pointed out last week just as any good earthly father desires quality time with his children . . .
 - (b) Our Heavenly Father wants to have quality time with His children.
- 5) **According to the Communicator's Commentary⁴, the Lord's prayer can be broken into three parts:**
 - (a) The Honor that worship accords to God;
 - (b) The Humility that recognizes our dependence of God;
 - (c) The Hope which the rule of God creates.

TS: **So let us begin by acknowledging that . . .**

II) Body: (Key Points)

A) Key Point #1: **The Bible refers to God as our Heavenly Father**

- 1) In (**John 6:27**) reads **"Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal."** (NRSV)

- 2) And in (Ephesians 4:6) we see that there is **"one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all."**
- 3) **Paul Fritz⁵ of Trinity College wrote, "Our Father" - Our focus in prayer is on our Father."**

"It is an intimate time of developing our relationship with our loving heavenly Father. Prayer is best done in concert with other believers. Prayer is not an exercise in isolation. **We must regard other Christians as our sisters and brothers that also call God their Father.** Together we acknowledge He is our creator, sustainer, guide, provider, protector and authority. Without good communications to our Father we are without hope. One's prayer life is dependent on the quality of our individual and corporate relationship with the Father."

TS: **Next notice . . .**

B) Key Point #2: **The relationships of the Father:**

- 1) **God is the Father of all creation (Acts 17:29) "Since we are God's offspring . . ." (NRSV)**
- 2) **God is the Father of the nation of Israel (Exodus 4:22) "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord: Israel is my firstborn son.'" (NRSV)**
- 3) **God is the Father of Jesus Christ (Matthew 3:17) "And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'" (NRSV)**
- 4) **God is the Father of all believers ". . . (Galatians 3:26) for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith."** (NRSV)
- 5) **The use of "Our Father" means that we are members of a community.**
 - (a) We are to acknowledge **"Father God"** as a way of recognizing who God is . . .
 - (b) We come before Him as a member of the family.
 - (c) And in Christ we have many brothers and sisters.

TS: **Finally notice . . .**

C) Key Point #3: **The Particular Works of the Father**

- 1) **God is the Author of the decree (Psalm 2:7-8) "I will tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have begotten you.
⁸ Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession."** (NRSV)
- 2) **God the Father is the Author of Election "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."** (Ephesians 1:3-6) (NRSV)
- 3) **God the Father is the Begetter and sender of Christ "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."** (John 3:16) (NRSV)
- 4) **God the Father is the Disciplinarian of His Children "Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?"** (Hebrews 12:9) (NKJV)
- 5) God is responsible for choosing you, blessing you, redeeming you, and disciplining you so that you can be molded in the likeness of Christ.

6) Our Father which art in Heaven;

- (a) God is not a person in some remote place.
- (b) God the Father resides over all creation.
- (c) He is in ALL and through ALL
- (d) God is beyond and above it ALL.
- (e) This means that God is in the air spaces, the universe and everywhere.
- (f) This world is His doing and His stamp is on everything made.

TS: So, What are the lessons we can learn here?

III) Conclusion (Life Application)

A) **Jesus began His example of Prayer with acknowledging our Father God.**

- 1) Our Heavenly Father wants a relationship with His creation.
- 2) He is working to remake you and mold you into the likeness of Jesus.

B) God the Father sits on the throne with everything under His control.

C) We are to honor God the Father in humility where we will find our hope for a better future.

IV) Invitation: Let us Pray!

V) **Bibliography**

¹ Text Illustration shared by David Yarbrough, sermoncentral.com, February 2002

² Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, 2nd College Edition, William Collins Publishers, INC, 1980

³ <http://www.azquotes.com/quote/545410>

⁴ The Communicator's Commentary (Matthew), Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Word Books, Publisher, Waco, Texas, 1985, Pg.87

⁵ Paul Fritz, How to Use the Lord's Prayer as a Model, sermoncentral.com, December 2002