Making the Lord's Prayer Personal

I first learned the Lord's Prayer in Sunday school as a five-year-old. I distinctly remember my sweet teacher, Mrs. Juanita, reading Matthew 6 and asking several of us to recite it with her afterwards.* We did this for several weeks until one day near Christmas time, I remember because we had a decorated Christmas tree in our classroom, she asked us each to recite it on our own without help from her.

Several other 5-year-olds breezed right through the prayer without even pausing for a breath. I, however, anxiously waited for her to call on me. Finally, it is my turn. I stand up on our colorful rug that had listed on it each of the 66 books of the Bible chronologically. My hands sweating in my pockets, my eyes fixed on the bright tree, I begin to speak. Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive others who trespass against us. Lead us from temptation and deliver us from evil for you are the power, the kingdom and the glory forever and ever amen. I spoke so very slowly I bet it took me a full five minutes at least to say recite, but I did it!!! The very patient Mrs. Juanita was pleased and that is all that mattered to me. Since that day, nearly 13 years ago at Arbor Baptist Church I have easily recited this prayer dozens and dozens of times. Some days aloud but most times quietly in my heart. I have had this prayer memorized but now I can honestly say I believe and understand it. I have dissected verse by verse and meditated on it throughout the last several weeks. Although I knew how to recite it correctly it has become more real to me than ever before as I have focused in on the depths of goodness in this simple prayer I have known for years.

First, "our father" rightly at the beginning of the prayer because that is who we, our addressing. I think of the privilege it is we have as Christians to call the creator and sustainer of

*Holy Bible

the universe such a term of endearment. To be adopted into the family of God by faith in Jesus as my personal Savior is nothing short of miraculous.

Second, "hallowed be thy name" the holy name of God is not to be spoken of lightly or without reverence. Set apart and without sin is one definition I have learned for the word holy. The true and singular fact is that this word can only describe God's name and none other. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This causes me to speak slowly and thoughtfully so I will not use his name in an unholy way or even to use his name flippantly.

Third, "thy kingdom come". I believe Gods' kingdom has come in part when Jesus fulfilled the work on the cross and at his resurrection. He proclaimed he was the kingdom. I also believe the kingdom will come in fullness at the end of this age when all the saved dead and alive will be gathered to be with him for eternity.

Fourth, "they will be done". God's will is being done today, just as it was done yesterday and as it will be done tomorrow. He is always in total control of all things. I read a book back in middle school and this one part stuck with me, if you want a prayer that never fails pray this "Thy Will Be Done ". *

Fifth, "give us this day our daily bread " we come to the part in our prayer where we make our requests. After we call God father, after we remember he is holy, after we ask him to bring his kingdom to completion, and after we ask for his will to be done. The order we pray should be intentional just as Jesus taught the original disciples back in 30 AD. It is also important for me to remember that God knows my needs before I tell him. I can easily forget that sadly. This verse always comes to mind, Psalm 37:4, “Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.

*Karon, *Out To Canaan*

Sixth, "Forgive us our trespasses" how wonderful it is that we can ask for forgiveness, and he is faithful to forgive. The hard part is for me to easily forgive others when they do wrong. This part of the prayer reminds me that I must not hold on to any hard or hurtful feelings towards anyone regardless of how I feel because I am forgiven, so I must forgive.

Seventh, "Lead me from temptation and evil " is important to me because I know that the Devil is a roaring lion seeking to devour and lead me astray such as the pitfalls that entrap Christian, Faithful and Hopeful on their journey to the celestial city. In John Bunyon's book, Pilgrims Progress, I have learned through reading that book that my three enemies are SELF, WORLD, SATAN. Just as God told Cain in Genesis 4:7 “If you do well, will you not be accepted? * And if you do not do well sin is crouching at the door, its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.” *

Lastly, "you are the power, kingdom and glory" this part is actually not in Matthew 6, but it is the way I was taught, and I am thankful for this. I believe we need to keep in our minds and hearts at all times when we pray that God is all things good. And when we end our prayer with this thought we will remember that he does all things first for his glory and second for our good.

I have genuinely enjoyed the topic of this essay. This prayer has been personal to me for years and I loved diving deeper into Gods word for explanation and instruction on how to pray. My prayer going into college is that God will keep me faithful in prayer and make me into a man that pleases him and is able to help guide others to the wonderful truths in his holy word.

*Holy Bible *Bunyon, *Pilgrims Progress*

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*Karon, *Out To Canaan*

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*Holy Bible *Bunyon, *Pilgrims Progress*