“Life in the Kingdom: Prayer’s Protocol”

Matthew 6:9-13

(Notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 1/29/23)

 God the Son has come from Heaven and stepped into humanity as God’s perfect, holy, image-bearer. He lives for the Father’s glory. He went to the cross to bear the wrath of the Father for our sins. He became our substitute, bridging the infinite gap between a holy God and fallen humanity. You cross that bridge only by surrendering to Jesus and following Him. But clearly, not everyone who calls God “Father” is His child. Study John 1:12, John 14:6, and John 8:41-44 as we prepare to pray, “Our Father, who art in Heaven…” (Q1) (Q2)

 In today’s scripture, Jesus was teaching how to pray the kind of prayer that God delights in. Prayer is coming into the welcoming presence of God. It is not a mantra or a recitation. To pray rightly is to approach God personally, as welcomed children approaching their loving father.

 In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is instructing His people how to live. He warns against using words to impress others or to build up ourselves. REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE PRAYING TO! We can use the term “Father” because we have been adopted into the family of the living God. To belong to the Kingdom of Heaven is to belong to the family of the living God (Rom. 8:15-16).

 We come to God as His children, KNOWING HE IS GOOD. (Q3) We don’t come hesitantly, flippantly, timidly, or casually; we come confidently and reverently. The phrase “in Heaven” reminds us that we are pilgrims and ambassadors. We desire to be with Him, and He desires to be with us… and He has made this possible!!! There need be no pretending, no mindless incantations, no big words we don’t understand, no sentimental phrases, no religious-sounding words. Just come to your loving Father.

 Jesus’ model prayer has 6 requests. This week we will look at the first 3 that have to do with God. After all, His priorities come first. My priorities are to come into alignment with His. In Matt. 6:9, “hallowed” means “to bring honor to”, “to set apart”, “to sanctify as sacred”. His “name” represents all He is and does. It reflects His character and His attributes (Prov. 18:10, Phil. 2:9-11, Acts 4:12). It doesn’t make any sense to pray “hallowed be Thy name” if we are knowingly living in sin. (Q4) Here are some examples of praying “hallowed be Thy name” using different words:

* “God, work so that YOUR perfect nature is seen wherever I go this week.”
* “God, may YOU be cherished for what You are doing this week.”
* “God, may Your name be magnified as I talk to my neighbor about eternal life.”

“The Lord’s Prayer” isn’t just an outline of how to pray; it’s an outline of how to LIVE!

 The second request of God comes in Matt. 6:10: “Your Kingdom come.” His Kingdom is coming right now (through His children) AND His Kingdom will come in finality when Jesus returns. Prayer calls for God’s children to have a Kingdom mindset: “God, bring your Kingdom’s righteousness to my workplace, to my neighborhood, to my country.” We want God’s kingdom extended in the hearts of our friends as they accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Finally, when we pray for His Kingdom to come, we are asking for grace to kick our “self” off the throne, and surrender to only King Jesus on His throne. (Q5)

 The third request of God is “Your will be done.” We’re not talking about His providential will (like the sun coming up every day). We’re talking about His revealed will, as it is revealed in the Bible. Our desire is for His will to be done in our lives and the lives of our friends and neighbors. Prayer calls God’s children to a servant mindset with a desire and commitment of glad obedience.

 This protocol, this model prayer, is a heart disposition, not magic words. God gives not just this model, but He extends the fantastic privilege of coming into His presence and making requests. How great is that!!!

**QUESTIONS**:

1. What is the difference between a child of God and a human created in God’s image?
2. In your own words, state how one becomes a child of God.
3. My friend Virgil said that all sin begins when we doubt the goodness of God. Discuss.
4. Why?
5. Paul David Tripp said, “We are either living in allegiance to the King of Kings, celebrating our welcome into His Kingdom of glory and grace, or we are anointing ourselves as kings and working to set up our own little kingdom of one.” (New Morning Mercies, Jan. 24) Discuss.
6. In Matt. 3:2 Jesus has already announced the arrival of the Kingdom of Heaven. Why, then, does He instruct His disciples to pray “Your Kingdom come”?

“Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing” (Charles Wesley)

Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing

My great Redeemer’s praise,

The glories of my God and king,

The triumphs of His grace!

My gracious Master and my God,

Assist me to proclaim,

To spread through all the earth abroad,

The honors of Thy name.

Jesus! the name that charms our fears,

That bids our sorrows cease—

’Tis music in the sinner’s ears,

’Tis life, and health, and peace.