

"The Perfect Prayer"

(Taken from Jon Courson's Application Commentary)

The following is a summary of the best short study on prayer that I have discovered. It comes from Jon Courson's Application Commentary based on Matthew 6:9-13. The focus is on Jesus' teaching during the sermon on the mount (really starting at verse 5). This is also repeated in part in Luke 11:2-4.

This is more than a "model" of prayer but a "sacrament" (something that comes from the outside and works its way to the inside). It is an external expression that leads to internal transformation. This is not intended to be a meaningless repetition that profits no one. It is meant to be something to repeat with meaning, contemplation and meditation. It is only sixty-five words long and takes thirty seconds to pray. The power of prayer is not proportional to the number of words in a prayer.

Jon Courson separates this prayer into six important elements:

- 1) Verse 9 concerns God's **Person**.
- 2) Verse 10 concerns God's **purpose**.
- 3) Verse 11 reflects God's **provision**
- 4) Verse 12 reflects God's **pardon**
- 5) Verse 13 expresses God's **protection**
- 6) and also God's **preeminence** (state of Superiority)

To break it down further:

- 1) **God's Person** - ***Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*** The word for father in the Greek is "Abba" which means "Papa" or "Daddy." If we receive Him, He gives us the right to be called His children (John 1:12). Also, He is in heaven and is to be revered. His name is Holy (Hollowed) which means separate and "transcendent" (beyond limits and comprehension).
- 2) **God's purpose** - ***Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven.*** There are two kinds of people: those who say "thy will be done," OR, "my will be done." One can't have it both ways. Either God is on the throne of our lives or we are.
- 3) **God's provision** - ***Give us this day our daily bread.*** Notice that we ask for "our" bread, not "my" bread. The focus is on not self, but on community. Also, we don't ask for our weekly, monthly or yearly bread but for God's provisions daily. This encourages our daily communion with God and not just when we *think* we need Him.
- 4) **God's pardon** - ***Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.*** What is found in the Christian faith that is not found in any other? Forgiveness: God's forgiveness of our sin, and our forgiveness towards others who have wronged us.
- 5) **God's protection** - ***And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:*** God may test us for our own good. But God never tempts us nor can He be tempted (James 1:13). He provides a way out (1 Corinthians 10:13). Whether we take it or not is up to us. Satan is real and God is the only One Who can protect us from him.
- 6) **God's preeminence** - ***For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*** We acknowledge that God is King, and all power is from Him. The Kingdom is His and all glory is His. When we understand and believe this, we have no choice but to worship Him.

A final comment: *He does not need our worship. But we need to worship Him as we place Him in His proper position. It is with open hearts and raised hands that we look outside of ourselves to the only Source of hope, meaning, purpose, power and joy. It is only then that we are free of the worries and cares of this world and look to Him for all that we need and hope for.*