



## Unleashing the Power of the Lord's Prayer

The sixth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew contains what is commonly referred to as *The Lord's Prayer*. While on earth, Jesus gave His disciples this prayer as a model for communicating with God, the Father. To this day, *The Lord's Prayer* remains one of the most recognized and recited passages of scripture in the Bible; even crossing denominational boundaries. As is true of every passage of God's Word, *The Lord's Prayer* is much more than just a simple set of ideas strung together in happenstance. A careful line-by-line dissection of this prayer reveals eight essential elements of a praying disciple of Christ: *Presence, Praise Priorities, Perseverance, Perspective, Provision, Pardon, and Protection*. Perhaps more than any other passage of the Bible, these elements—combined with prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit—will reshape the hearts and minds of today's believers as it did on that very day when Jesus said,

*"This then, is how you should pray...*

*'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'*"

Matthew 6:9-13 NIV

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### HOW TO USE THIS PRAYER/STUDY GUIDE

What is written on the following pages is to be read/studied in small portions, perhaps taking each line of *The Lord's Prayer* as a focal point for at least one week during your daily devotional time. We also recommend reading *The Lord's Prayer* in several different translations of the Bible and consulting an [on-line Bible commentary](#) to deepen your time of study. *The Lord's Prayer* is recorded in [Matthew 6](#) and [Luke 11](#). Note any similarities and differences between the two. Use your journal to respond to the *Questions to Consider* for each section in the pages that follow. Be diligent to carry out the *Application* suggestion for each section. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you unpack this model prayer and apply it to every aspect of your life (spiritual, relationships, finances, ministry, home, career, etc.).

#### OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN – PRESENCE

Jesus begins His model prayer by acknowledging the presence of God in Heaven. Acknowledging God in Heaven reveres His holiness and transcendence. Referring to God as *Father* acknowledges His personal, intimate nearness. God is both reigning in Heaven and ever-near as our Abba, Father. In this opening line of *The Lord's Prayer*, the word, *our*, represents that fact that God's presence is not exclusive, but is extended and available to both the collective Body of Christ and each individual member.

**Questions to Consider:** How are you aware of God's presence within each of your present-day moments? What are the tangible ways in which You seek God's presence in your life as both the God of Heaven, and your Abba, Father? Read [Romans 8:14-16](#) and respond to it in your journal.

**Application:** For one week, set your watch, iPod, cell phone, or other handheld device to go off at the same time each day. When the alarm sounds, step away from whatever you are doing at the time and spend at least one minute in prayer and one minute in praise as a tangible way to train yourself to practice God's presence. Practice this until it becomes more of an ingrained habit of intention and purpose.

**A Prayer for God's Presence:** Abba Father, I acknowledge that You are both in Heaven and within the hearts of Your people on earth. Make me more aware of Your presence in both places. I do not want to miss You in the midst of my moments. Show me how I can practice Your presence in my life within each day. May I convey Your presence to those people with whom I come into contact so that they see You in my speech, choices, attitudes, and actions.



## **HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME – PRAISE**

The word, *hallowed*, means *holy*. The nature of God is holy. Holiness refers to being set apart and consecrated to God for His purposes. The name of God is to be praised for only He is holy, pure, and without sin. Praising God's holiness automatically takes the focus off of yourself and your circumstances and places it on God, where it belongs. More importantly, revering God's holiness places honor and glory on the only One worthy of praise.

**Questions to Consider:** In what ways are you striving to be more holy; set apart for God in every aspect of your life (i.e. relationships, finances, work, health, emotions, leisure, etc.) What areas of your life are in need of a holy check-up? How can you go about starting this process? Read [2 Corinthians 7:1](#) and [1 Peter 1:13-25](#) and respond to these passages in your journal.

**Application:** Sketch out a basic layout of your house/condo/apartment (a view from above). Label each room/space accordingly. Then, invite God to take a walk with you physically, mentally, and spiritually through every room, space, and closet of your dwelling. Ask Him to show you anything that needs to be rooted out, in order to live a more holy lifestyle. Consider your choices of food, media, clothing, décor, books, computers, behaviors, speech, conduct, etc. Allow God to examine each place with His holy vision, showing you what needs to be discarded and/or changed.

**A Prayer of Praise:** Oh, most holy God, You alone are worthy to receive my praise. Only Your name deserves all glory and honor. May my life be poured out as an offering of praise and worship to You all day long. Thank You for your faithfulness in my trials and triumphs. You are worthy to receive glory, honor, and blessings. In Jesus' holy name, I pray. Amen.



## **YOUR KINGDOM COME – PRIORITIES**

Jesus Christ will return to earth once again ([Revelation 22:12-13](#)). When Jesus comes back, He will restore God's kingdom. The kingdom of God is both a present-day experience and a future reality. God is now establishing His kingdom on earth and the ultimate triumph and consummation will occur when Jesus returns for His Bride. The Bible promises that when we seek God's kingdom first (above all our own comforts) He will take care of our needs ([Matthew 6:25-34](#)).

**Questions to Consider:** When Jesus returns, will your priorities be in *complete* alignment with God's eternal priorities? What needs to change? How are you regularly, actively, and tangibly, seeking God's kingdom on earth and in Heaven as a priority over your own comfort on earth? Read the Parable of the Ten Virgins in [Matthew 25:1-13](#) and respond to it in your journal.

**Application:** Make a list of your current priorities, but order them according to what you know is reflected in God's Word. Then, write a brief letter to God, expressing your desire to make His priorities your own. Seal the letter in an envelope that you will open thirty days from now. When you open it, assess your growth and ask God where you are still lacking.

**A Prayer for Godly Priorities:** God, teach me to rest all of my desires in Your hands and let You transform them. Be the Lord of what's left of my time here on earth. I relinquish my hours to Your control and glorification. Help me not to hoard my time to serve my personal agenda. Give purpose to my minutes and grace to my moments. My days are not mind to fill with activities of my choosing. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.



## **YOUR WILL BE DONE – PERSEVERANCE**

The single driving force behind the life, ministry, and death of Jesus Christ was to do God's will. This required godly perseverance and longsuffering through severe trials. Perseverance is the result of the testing of your faith and can *only* be achieved through trials. These trials are perfectly and divinely suited to the world God wants to do in your heart. Perseverance leads to maturity and completeness in Christ ([James 1:3-4](#)). In whatever circumstance you've been placed, let your prayer be to undergo that trial with the steadfast faith and perseverance of the saints that have gone before you and of Jesus

Christ Himself who endured all things that we might have life. "In this world, you will have trouble. But, take heart! I have overcome the world." ([John 16:33](#))

**Questions to Consider:** In what areas of your life do you find it most difficult to persevere? Why do you think this is so? How do your trials compare to the trials that Christ endured while He was on earth? Read [1 Peter 1:1-12](#) and respond to it in your journal.

**Application:** Locate a scripture verse about godly perseverance. Write the verse onto a 3 x 5" card for memorization. Each day, write out the verse down on a piece of paper to see if you are making progress on memorization. In addition, send a card or e-mail to someone in your life who could use some encouragement. Include your memory verse in your correspondence.

**A Prayer for Perseverance:** Lord Jesus, You persevered when you were mistreated, insulted, mocked, falsely accused, beaten, hated, and crucified. You endured all of those things so that I might have eternal life. You persevered for my sake and I desire to persevere for Yours. Help me learn from Your example and the example of godly men and women of the faith. I choose to obey Your will at all costs; for Your sake and for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.



## ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN – PERSPECTIVE

Worshiping God helps you gain a more heavenly perspective on your earthly circumstances. In the scope of God's perspective and vision, there are three key principles you must comprehend: 1. God's measuring stick is always *inverted*. For example, Jesus said in [Luke 9:48](#), "For he who is least among you all—he is the greatest." 2. God always has the bigger picture in full view ([Romans 8:28](#), [Isaiah 55:8-9](#)). 3. The eternal outcome is always His top priority ([2 Corinthians 4:18](#)).

**Questions to Consider:** What or who is front and center in your scope of vision right now? If it isn't God, everything else will leave you short-sighted. What are the challenging circumstances in which you have the hardest time keeping your eyes on God and gaining His perspective through worship? Why do you think this is so? Read [2 Corinthians 4:18](#) in the Amplified Bible and respond to it in your journal.

**Application:** If possible, take a prayer walk or hike on a path that will elevate your perspective. Take note of what happens to your perspective as you rise above the norm. Think about someone who is struggling with a difficulty that is harder than what you're facing at this time. Ask God to help you place yourself in his/her shoes. Write a letter or note of encouragement to that person, as if God were speaking to him/her from His perspective. Use scripture verses and/or one of the three key principles mentioned above to anchor your written note in God's Word.

**A Prayer for Godly Perspective:** Heavenly Father, from Your vantage point You see all things and all people. I need Your eyes, Lord. Help me see my life, my relationships, and my circumstances the way You see them. Focus my eyes, my mind, and my heart on the eternal things that really matter, instead of the temporary things that will pass away. When my vision becomes cloudy, shine the light of Your holiness upon me so that I may fix my gaze on You. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

## GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD – PROVISION

In this line from *The Lord's Prayer*, reference to *our daily bread* is both figurative (Jesus) and literal (food). Only in Christ, will we find true and lasting satisfaction for our hunger. In addition, the Bread of Life will also satisfy your needs for true intimacy. God is concerned with meeting *all* our needs (physical, spiritual, and emotional). However, often times, obedience and a step of faith must precede God's provision.



**Questions to Consider:** Have you been hoarding any of the provisions that belong to God, perhaps out of fear, an undetected stronghold, sin, or some other form of struggle? In what ways are you greedy for more than what He has generously given you at the present time? Perhaps you need to take a step of obedience and faith.

**Application:** Read [Philippians 4:10-13](#). The Apostle Paul discovered the secret of being truly content in all circumstances. What else do you notice about this passage? Each day this week, ask God for only what you need for that day and that day only. Nothing else. For example, "Give me this day, my daily patience." And/or, "Give me this day, my daily contentment." Each time your mind tries to race ahead with tomorrow's worries, stop and ask God for today's provision.

**A Prayer for God's Provision:** Jesus, I know that I often want more than what I have and that I hold too tightly to what I've been given. Instead, I come before You today to ask You to provide me with what I need for today and today only. Above

everything else, what I know I really need is more of You in my life, and less of me. When I long for more of the things of this world, remind me that only in You will I find true intimacy, satisfaction, contentment, and all that my heart truly desires. In Jesus' name. Amen.



## AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS – PARDON

Jesus Christ's sacrificial death on the Cross is the only way that our sins can be pardoned. Forgiveness cannot be earned ([Ephesians 2:8](#)). When asked how many times we should forgive those who have wronged us, Jesus answered, "Not seven times, but seventy-seven times." ([Matthew 18:21-22](#)) This indicates that forgiveness is on-going and not optional. It is our obligation to forgive as God forgave us. We are required, no matter the wound, to forgive others in the same manner we are forgiven: without condition.

**Questions to Consider:** Is there someone from whom you need to ask/seek forgiveness? Is there someone you need to forgive? If so, what are you waiting for? Read [Psalm 51](#) and respond to it in your journal.

**Application:** Read [Matthew 5:23-24](#) and [Colossians 3:12-14](#) in the Amplified Bible, the New International Version, and in one other version of your choice. Record the words and/or phrases that most resound in your heart. Ask God if there is any specific action you need to take, in relation to these passages of scripture.

**A Prayer for Pardon:** Oh, Jesus, have mercy on me. I confess to You that I have committed the following sins: \_\_\_\_\_ . I turn away from these things and ask for Your forgiveness. Thank You for pardoning me by Your death on the Cross. I receive Your forgiveness. Help me to truly understand the price You paid for all my sins. Guide me to pursue and extend forgiveness without condition and with the same degree of love and mercy You exhibited on the Cross. In Jesus' name. Amen.



## AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE – PROTECTION

Jesus was tempted by Satan at a point of physical weakness. When He was tempted, He quoted scripture and resisted all temptation to sin ([Matthew 4:1-11](#)). The word "us" indicates that we must partner with other believers in seeking God's protection. If you are tempted to sin, tell someone who will regularly hold you accountable. Give that person permission to ask you challenging questions about your temptations. The Bible says that we are tempted by our own evil desires, but that God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to withstand ([James 1:13-15](#), [1 Corinthians 10:13](#)).

**Questions to Consider:** Over what specific area, temptation, stronghold, or struggle are you going to claim Christ's victory today? Can you identify the true source of this struggle and explain the ways in which it manifests itself in your life.

**Application:** Read Psalm 91 aloud and with emphasis, as a prayer that you are claiming and proclaiming over your life. Tell a close friend or prayer partner (same gender) about your specific area of temptation and ask that person to hold you accountable to making changes in this area. Give him/her permission to check in with you weekly regarding your choices.

**A Prayer for Protection:** God Almighty, You are my defender and deliverer. Please give me Your strength to withstand the temptation to sin and grant me the ability to see the way out that You always provide for me. May my choices be wise ones that are made based on Your Word. In addition, I pray for the deliverance of all my brothers and sisters in Christ. Place Your powerful hand of protection over my family and friends. Thank You for winning the battle over the evil one and I claim and proclaim that victory in the precious name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### Recommended Resources:

*Experiencing God Through Prayer* – Jeanne Guyon  
*If You Will Ask* – Oswald Chambers  
*Unrelenting Prayer* – Bob Sorge

*The Practice of the Presence of God* – Brother Lawrence  
*Living in His Presence-Prayer Essentials* – Sylvia Gunter  
*With Open Hands* – Henri Nouwen