



## **Luke 11:1–4**

11 One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.’ 2 He said to them, ‘When you pray, say:

“Father,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come.

3 Give us each day our daily bread.

4 Forgive us our sins,

for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.  
And lead us not into temptation.””

## **Reflection**

Jesus taught his disciples to pray, healed people with prayers, insisted that some demons could only be cast out through prayer, and in righteous anger exposed the corruption of the temple in Jerusalem which he said should be a ‘house of prayer.’ Jesus prayed often and regularly with fervent cries and tears (Heb 5:7), sometimes all night. The Holy Spirit came upon him and anointed him while he was praying (Luke 3:21–22), and he was transfigured with the divine glory as he prayed (Luke 9:29). When he faced his greatest crisis, he did so with prayer. We hear him

praying for his disciples and the church on the night before he died (John 17:1–26) and then petitioning God in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Finally, Jesus died praying.

It should come as no surprise to us then that the Lord's Prayer, the model for prayer Jesus first taught his disciples, has been and remains, the greatest prayer of the church. Millions of hours of intense study have been devoted to these verses by centuries of successive geniuses. Some of the greatest minds in the history of the church like Origen, Tertullian, Augustine wrote extensively about it. The last nine questions of the famous Westminster Catechism of the Presbyterian churches are based exclusively on the Lord's prayer. And the Lord's prayer was a crucial part

of Martin Luther's daily devotional life. Using it as a model for his prayers, he would pray its lines each day being led by the Holy Spirit to new applications and insight from these ancient words. No two prayers were ever the same. He found it inexhaustible in its application and reach.

Today we are looking briefly at Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer, from Luke 11:1–4, let me read it now,

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Tim Keller has recently written an excellent book on prayer. In it he defines prayer as,

‘continuing a conversation that God has started through his Word and his grace, which eventually becomes a full encounter with him ... Prayer turns theology into experience. Through it we sense his presence and receive his joy, his love, his peace and confidence, and thereby we are changed

in attitude, behaviour, and character.’

We have all this and more in the Lord’s Prayer. Through it Jesus provides us with a wonderful entry-point each day into a conversation with our Father. Jesus’ disciples ask him to teach them to pray. In Matthew’s lead-in, Jesus responds,

‘This, then, is how you should pray:’

Matt 6:9

And so what Jesus has given us is a model or a template for our prayer life. In the Lord’s Prayer Jesus isn’t prescribing fixed words to set in stone forever (although it’s fine to use it like this now and again). He’s showing us ‘how’ to pray. He’s offering us a model to use, a framework, a method, an outline for our prayer life. Jesus is giv-

ing us an example of how to shape our prayers.

## **Think & Pray**

I thought the best way perhaps to model what I mean would be to pray the Lord's prayer for you in the manner I think that Martin Luther would have used it. Like this, but with variations every single day. In doing this I'm hoping that the sense and power of some of Jesus' lines will be revealed and that you might model your prayer that follows mine this morning off Jesus' prayer. Here's me praying for one of our congregations using the Lord's Prayer as I believe it was intended to be prayed,

*Our Father ... We praise you that we can address you so intimately, as our Father,*

as our Dad. Not my Father but our Father, brothers and sisters together adopted into your family, calling out to you together, and on behalf of each other. Our Father we thank you for loving and caring for us, and we thank you for encouraging us to pray to you together in one voice as we are doing now.

*Our Father in Heaven ...* You dwell in unapproachable light, transcendent and utterly holy yet so intimately knowable through the Lord Jesus. And through him also we too are called citizens of heaven, right now seated in Christ in the heavenly realms, one foot in this world, one foot in glory during this overlap of the ages.

*Hallowed be your name ...* We pray that your name would be worshipped, es-



teemed, revered by all nations and that your glory would fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. May it begin in our hearts by the work of your Spirit and may those around us be drawn to worship you too, through the reverence and joy that they see in us.

*Your kingdom come ...* Finish Father what you began on the cross. Renew the whole created order. Bring on your new Creation. Show us the part you would have us play. Put right what is wrong with our world and send your Son back to us to reign forever in glory.

*Your will be done ...* Your good, pleasingly and perfect will be done. May your word be the light in our eyes, the delight of our hearts, and the lamp of our feet so that

your will might be done.

*On earth as in Heaven ...* We pray Father that your will might be done in our land. We pray, in particular, for our State and Federal Governments, for those that you have placed in power over us and entrusted our country to. We pray that they might act justly and wisely, that they might govern and lead our nation in accordance with your will. And we pray particularly for Christians in parliament – strengthen them in their faith, and enable them to excel in their work as they seek the best interests of our nation, consistent with your will for this land.

*Give us today our daily bread ...* We pray Father that you would supply our needs today. Give us not too much that we might be

distracted from our dependence on you, and not too little that we might be tempted to dishonour you. And as we prayed earlier in this service again, Father please,

*Forgive us our sins ...*

As we forgive those who sin against us ... You have forgiven us so much; please help us to be rich in our forgiveness towards those around us. Please by your Spirit convict us of any unforgiveness that we are harbouring in our hearts and refine us by that same Spirit to be able to forgive as you forgave us. And Father please,

*Lead us not into temptation ...* Save us from ourselves, deliver us from those situations in which we are weak, and tempted to succumb to sins that belong in our past. We

list these sins right now in our hearts Lord. Make these sins our past. Please lead us not into temptation,

*But deliver us from evil ...* Deliver us, your church, from evil. And in particular Father we commit to you the hundreds of thousands of refugees resettling in Europe and around the world who've come from the Middle East in recent years. We pray for all of them Father, and especially for our Christian brothers and sisters in their midst. Please deliver them from evil in all its forms. We also pray for those grieving the loss of loved ones and those who have been injured or maimed in recent terrorism related atrocities. Comfort and heal them Father and please keep them safe as they come to terms with what has happened to them. And please deliver us from any evil

that may be around the corner, whether individually, as a church family, or as a nation.

*For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours ...* This day and every day we pray that we would remember that the battle against Satan, sin and death has been won on the cross. The kingdom is yours – Christ is reigning on high. The power is yours – you are sovereign over all things. And the glory is yours – not ours, but yours.

*Now and for ever. Amen.*

Why not try praying like this yourself this morning? If you have a Bible handy, use Matthew 6:9–13 for the fuller version of the Lord's Prayer.