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DATE: August 8, 2026
SERIES: The Shape of Prayer
MESSAGE: Experiencing the Lord's Prayer Together
PASSAGE: Matthew 6:9-13
SPEAKER: Mark Mathewson, Lane Groene, Caleb White, Matt Meyer

MARK MATHEWSON

I think many of us have used the vending machine. Insert your money, right? I push A6, and that small bag of Skittles falls out for me. Right? It's merely transactional. I use the machine to get what I want.

Too often, I'm afraid that we treat God just like that. If I give enough money to the church, if I read my Bible enough, if I obey enough, and especially, if I pray enough or pray in just the right way, then God should give me what I want. That mindset reveals that we've slipped into a transactional view of God. We think of him simply as a cosmic vending machine for me to get what I want rather than as a loving father.

I hope our reflections this summer on this prayer that Jesus gave us has taught us to not treat God like a vending machine, but rather like that loving Father that he is. Before there is any request, there is a relationship. Before there is a give us our daily bread, there's hallowed be your name. Before our agenda, there is your kingdom come. And before our want, there is your will be done.

I want us to take a few moments to review the first half of this prayer that we've been studying over the summer. Our reflection of that first line of this prayer, our Father in the heavens, showed us that God wants his children to approach him as a loving provider and protector of those who are in this family. Do you remember that concept of the Father's house? This place of protection and provision that the ancient people would have understood?

By the way, you get extra credit, and I'll be very impressed, if you remember the Hebrew phrase for that. Now, what that extra credit's good for, I don't know, but at least maybe you'll feel better about yourself. But we thought of him as this provider and protector, but also, we discovered that he is a God who is near us when we pray. He's not some distant, far removed being out there in space somewhere.

I want to remind us of the words that we looked at in Deuteronomy 4 and verse 4. When Moses is instructing his people about going into the promised land, and



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discussing about the other nations around them, he says this: "What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way Yahweh our God is near us whenever we pray to him?" And we discovered that is our God, a God who is near, a God who is that providing and protecting Father. So the Lord's prayer begins with relationship, a father-child relationship.

Well, that next line, the following week that we looked at, hallowed be your name, reminds us that the God we pray to is the only one who's worthy of worship and glory. Hallowed, a word we don't often use too much, is another way of saying holy. And holy means being set apart or removed from what is common. You know, perhaps you have some dinner wear in your house that you only use for those special occasions. You've designated those as being holy. They're set apart from all the other plates and eating utensils that you use.

And our God is set apart. He's radically distinct from anything or anyone else. And when we pray this line, we express our desire for him to be famous, for the world to stand in awe and wonder at his glorious being, a being like no other.

Line three that we considered, your kingdom come. That request that I, that we as a church, that all the nations of the earth, submit to his kingdom rule. We learn that God's kingdom is everlasting. He sits on the throne whether we notice it or not. The visions that we read about in Revelation chapter 4 and 5 expressed this. For those first century Christians who were living as persecuted people under the Roman Empire, it didn't look like God was on the throne.

But Revelation 4 and 5, written to those early Christians, pulled back the curtain of the heavens and gave them a glimpse into the throne room to see a king seated on the throne who was in charge of the universe. Make no mistake, God's reign is active today. But he doesn't force that reign on us. His kingdom can be ignored, at least for now. But our prayer is that the world increasingly chooses to submit to his rule.

The fourth line that we studied, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. This expresses the desire that what God wants is accomplished in my life. Again, in the life of the church and in the world, well, God's will for our particular lives can at times seem to be a bit mysterious. His revealed will in scripture is not. And we learn that. Many examples we could give, but I want us to consider perhaps a familiar verse to you in the prophet Micah. Micah chapter 6 and verse 8.

And I'm going to give my version of this that's hopefully faithful to the Hebrew. But Micah 6:8: "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does Yahweh require of you? To practice justice and loyal love, and to walk wisely with your God." Again, no mystery there what God wants for us, what his will is for our lives.



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It's perfectly clear what he wants from his people, and we need to submit to that will.

That last phrase of this line, on earth as it is in heaven, we learn does not merely refer to this request, but all the previous ones. Our prayer is that God be held in high esteem, that people submit to his reign, and that his will be done right now and right here, just as it is accomplished in the heavenlies, in God's sphere. And so, all these requests, that his name be hallowed, and his kingdom come, his will be done, is our prayer that those reflect just how they're pursued in the heavenlies.

Now, finally, these are not mere requests to be prayed, but they're truths for us, to be lived out. My life, our lives together, should exemplify these requests daily. I don't believe Jesus intended that we pray the first half of this prayer and then just hope that these happen. I believe he intended for us to make these requests an integral part of our lives.

Imagine how different our world would be if we seriously lived out the request of the first half of this prayer, that God's name be held holy, that his kingdom come, that his will be done. How different would our schools be? The universities? Your workplace? Your home, our community, this church?

Our God, the glorious king of the universe is not a vending machine for us to use to get what we want, he's a loving father who wants a relationship with us that begins with our worship of him. Because he knows that is what is best for us. That's what we've been created for.

Now, to help us focus on our God, Taryn is going to come and lead us in a song that proclaims his fame and glory. And I want you to please focus and reflect on the words of this song and their connection with the first half of this prayer, the Lord's Prayer.

[BREAK]

LANE GROENE

As we come to verse 11 here in the Lord's Prayer, there's an important shift that takes place in the prayer. Up to this point, the focus has been totally upward, on God's name, God's kingdom, God's will. But now Jesus turns the attention to our needs.

And the order of the prayer matters so much, because as Mark just shared, when our hearts are first anchored in who God is, his holiness, his goodness, his rule, and when we have surrendered to his will, it completely reshapes how we make requests. You see, we don't come as anxious consumers begging of a reluctant



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supplier. No, we come as children. Children who are loved. Children who are secure. Children who trust in the goodness of our heavenly Father.

You know, right before the Lord's Prayer, I'll remind you of what Jesus said in verse 8. He said, your father knows what you need before you even ask. And you know, when we hear that, it brings an important question to our mind, and that is the question of, well, then why should I even ask?

Well, you see, when Jesus teaches us to pray, give us this day our daily bread, he is inviting us to so much more than just a request for provision. He is inviting us into a daily dependence on God. Not just belief in God, not just knowledge about God, but true lived everyday dependence on him.

We understand that that doesn't come naturally to us. Naturally, we like control. We like to plan ahead, to know what's coming. We like to have enough so that we don't have to worry about tomorrow. And while those things aren't wrong in themselves, they can quietly and quickly train our hearts to rely more and more on ourselves, and therefore less and less on God.

And that is why Jesus teaches us to pray for our daily bread. Not our weekly bread, not our monthly bread, not all the bread we would ever need. Because God is not just interested in meeting our needs forever. What God is really doing through the entirety of this prayer is forming our hearts. He is drawing us into a relationship where we wake up each and every morning with a simple awareness: God, I need you today. Not just in crisis, not just when things feel unsteady or when things are falling apart in our lives, but also in the ordinary rhythms of life.

I love what Luke says in Acts 17, verse 28. He says, in him, we live and move and exist and breathe. You know, this simple line in the Lord's Prayer brings that reality to surface. It moves us from functional independence, to intentional dependence on God. It teaches us to come to God with open arms in total surrender. I love it when I see some of you worshiping, and you have open arms totally surrendered to God in what he wants in your life.

And I recognize for some of you who are here this evening, that posture is very real in your life right now. There are areas in your life where you are saying, if God doesn't show up today, I don't know what I'm gonna do. I don't know how I'm going to make it. I know those moments are so uncomfortable. They can feel like weakness, but I want to remind you that that is exactly where trust is formed. That is exactly where our faith in God is strengthened. That is where God becomes not just a deity that we believe in, that is where God becomes my personal provider. Just as he did for the Israelites in the wilderness, one day at a time, raining down manna from heaven. For forty years, he was teaching them to trust him one day at a time.



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I also recognize that there's others here this evening, that life feels pretty stable right now. Things are predictable, manageable, in control. And I want to remind you that in those seasons, the danger for us is not desperation, rather, the danger is drift. We begin to rely less on God, not because we're choosing to reject him, but just because we feel like we can be our own provider. Well, once again, this line in the Lord's Prayer calls us back, back to trust, back to dependence, back to the kind of relationship that God desires with each one of us.

So here's the invitation in this phrase: Remember that you have a heavenly Father who is outrageously generous, and delights to supply for your needs. Remember that every good and perfect gift comes from above. Start each day grounded in who God is, surrendered to his will, and come with the simple, honest prayer. God, I need you today. I need you for my daily bread today.

You know, one of the best ways that we learn to trust God for today is by remembering how he has been faithful to us in the past. By noticing the ways that he has already provided. And so we're going to take a moment now in the service to do just that. I want to invite you into a brief time of silent prayer and reflection, just you and the Lord.

And as you sit with the Lord, what I want you to reflect on is all of the ways that God has faithfully provided for your daily bread needs in the past. Where have you seen his provision, his guidance, his strength at just the right time? And as you reflect on those past moments, my prayer is that that would build your faith in his daily bread provision going forward. Let's take just a short time to reflect and pray now, and then I will close this section in prayer.

[BREAK]

Heavenly Father, I thank you so much. That you are a generous God. You are a God who loves to provide for your children. God, I thank you that as we look back, even in the Bible, we see how you were faithful to provide for your children, the Israelites. God we see in the gospels how you were faithful to provide through your son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have forgiveness of sins.

God, we see in the New Testament how you were faithful to provide for the early church. God, we recognize in each and every one of our lives you have been faithful to provide, not always in the way we want, or with the timing we want, but you are such a faithful God. God, I pray that as we remember the ways that you have given us our daily bread in the past, that that would grow in us a faith and a confidence that you will do that, and that we will continue to trust in your provision one day at a time—that we will continue to trust you to give us this day our daily bread. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



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CALEB WHITE

So Jesus continues his teaching in verse 12 with forgive us our debts. Now, it's helpful to remember back to what Ryan said a couple of weeks ago on this. Jesus is not instructing us in this section to pray over and over for salvation as if we've lost it, and we regain it, and we've lost it, and we've regained it. If you have made the decision to place Jesus as the Lord and Savior of your life, you are once and for all time saved by grace through the blood of Jesus. God makes you a new creation and adopts you as his child. Your debt of sin is paid once and for all.

Now, the way that we tend to understand debt on our world today might lead us to imagine that our sins or our debts against God, that they could be something that we could pay back—similar to a car loan or something like that. But scripture is very clear on this: We can never work hard enough to save ourselves. Our sins cannot be paid for by good living or good deeds. It's only by the grace of God, through Jesus' blood, shed for us on the cross, that we receive payment in forgiveness of our sins. Ephesians 2, verses 8 and 9, says it like this. It says, for by grace, you have been saved, through faith. And that, not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

So if the debt has been paid in full, why would Jesus instruct us then to ask for forgiveness of debts? Now, Jesus is not talking about salvation here, but instead about our relationship and fellowship with our heavenly Father. He's talking about relational forgiveness.

Now, here's a brief example that I hope helps us understand this. When I wrong my parents, when I sin against them, my status as their child doesn't change. I don't stop belonging in the family. In fact, I really can't do anything to change the fact that I am their son. But I can damage my relationship, or my closeness, my intimacy, with them by sinning against them or wronging them.

Now I have great parents. Many of you may know Jim and Zoe White. They serve coffee, usually the first weekend of every month. But when I have wronged them, it's not them that pull away from me or create distance, but it's me through my wrongdoing and sinning against them that I choose to turn and move away from them.

Sin against God is often very much the same. It results in us moving away from him, us choosing to love something else more than we love him and moving away from him. Sin is disordered or misdirected love. Now, admitting my sin and asking for forgiveness involves me turning back and moving closer to God, returning my heart back into the correct place of love.



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Now Jesus, he knows how prone to wander we are. And he knows that we will regularly need to course correct and return our hearts back in love to God. So he teaches us to pray with regular rhythms, forgive us our debts, with regular rhythms of seeking forgiveness from our Father.

But Jesus didn't just lead us only to pray for our forgiveness of our sins between us and our heavenly Father. The full phrase is forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. So wait a minute. Does this mean that God will only forgive you as much as you forgive God? Or sorry, does this mean that God will only forgive you as much as you forgive others? No, because we'll never be able to out forgive God. You see, God doesn't follow our example in forgiveness, we follow his. This is much more about participating in the forgiveness that we've received from God.

Now, Colossians 3, verse 13. And I love the way the NLT phrases this. It says it like this, it tells us to make allowance for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you. Then it says, remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Now, as I pray this line in the Lord's Prayer, it serves for me as a reminder to ask myself, do I have some forgiving to do? Because as I ask for my own forgiveness, it reminds me that, you know, I really don't have any moral superiority over other people because I have wronged God as well. I have my own sins that I need to ask forgiveness for.

And so it comes as a reminder to go—maybe I need to forgive others as well? And it makes me ask this question, it says—who am I to receive the wonderful, complete forgiveness of God and then withhold forgiveness from others? Honestly, sometimes we need to ask forgiveness for not forgiving.

Now, as Jesus teaches us to pray, he knows we're going to commit sin against God relationally and we will need to turn around and ask for forgiveness for those things. And he also knows that we will commit sin against one another, and that we will need to forgive one another. So he teaches us to pray both to receive forgiveness and to give it.

Now forgiveness is challenging. It's painful. And if you've gone through a process of having to forgive somebody who deeply wounded you, you know this very well. But I like to think, especially in those hard moments, I like to think of the cross and the agony and pain that Jesus endured in order to forgive us of our debts and pay the price for our sin.

Now, I think it's important to notice and recognize that this sacrifice of Jesus was not begrudging or reluctant, not at all. Jesus didn't go to the cross with a bad attitude. He didn't carry the cross up the hill muttering to himself about how terrible it is that we have put him in this position.



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No, listen to the words of Hebrews 12 verses 2 or just verse 2. It says, it encourages us to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Jesus set his eyes on joy. The joy of redemption, of reconciliation, and the joy of forgiveness and obedience to the Father.

So when we look at the cross, we remind ourselves of the love of Christ and his sacrifice for us and how complete his forgiveness is. May we be people who go and forgive likewise.

So tonight, as a response for this section, we want to remember the sacrifice of Jesus by partaking in communion together. So hopefully as you walked in, you grabbed one of these little communion cups. If you didn't, that's okay—just raise your hand, and we have ushers at the ready to hand you one. So just raise your hand high and one will make it your way.

If you've placed your faith in Jesus, then we'd encourage you to participate in this with us during this time. Now, if you haven't made that decision yet, that's okay, but I would encourage you to take these next moments to consider the cross, your need for the Savior, and to begin a relationship with Jesus tonight.

Now Jesus gave us the practice of communion to serve as a reminder of the cross where our salvation was accomplished. And as we take communion together today, I encourage you to reflect on the love of Christ. So we hear that, we pick up, in Matthew in chapter 26, where Jesus walks his disciples through the first communion. It says while they were eating, Jesus took bread. And after a blessing, he broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat. This is my body. Let's take the bread together.

[BREAK]

And when he had taken a cup and given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many, for forgiveness of sins. Let's take and drink together.

[BREAK]

Jesus, we are grateful for the forgiveness that you have accomplished for us on the cross. And I pray that you would be working in our hearts, to share and pass on, to practice the same kind of forgiveness that you have given us, that we would extend that forgiveness to others as well. Amen.



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MATT MEYER

Well, we've reached the verse of the Lord's Prayer that we've covered most recently in the last couple of weeks, verse 13, and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. And so this is probably most recent in our minds in the last two weeks. I'm just going to give us a quick reminder of a few of the themes and the ideas.

And we'll start with this idea of temptation, the word temptation in that verse, is the word peirasmos in the Greek. And we talked about the idea that it has multiple meanings. It can mean a trial, like adversity or struggle that comes your way. Or it can mean temptation, the very way it's translated, like temptation towards sin, or temptation away from God. And sometimes the word can mean both things at the same time.

And so we looked at several passages where this word is used to try to understand, how's Jesus using it? And we looked at the letter from James, right? And James tells us in his letter, using this word, that God does not tempt anyone. So we concluded that most likely what Jesus means with this phrase was, do not lead us into testing or do not lead us into trial.

And so when we're praying this, we're not just asking God to make life easy, to pave the way. We're asking him to not let the trials that come our way in life become too much for us, or overwhelm us. Because we live in a fallen, broken world and trials and struggle and adversity, they are going to come our way. So we don't need to ask for them necessarily. And God uses trial and adversity to grow our character, but often, a trial can also become a temptation. A temptation to trust in our own strength, a temptation to trust in something other than God, other than our heavenly Father.

So how do we know the difference then when something is a trial versus a temptation? And how do we decide what to do in a trial or a temptation? And remember, I talked about this idea of look at the direction that the trial or temptation is pointing you towards or the decision that maybe you're thinking about making in a particular situation.

What direction is it taking you? Is it leading you towards trust in God? Is it leading you towards becoming more like Jesus? Or is it leading away from God? Is it leading to a shortcut? Off the path of trusting in God? Is it leading you to trust in your own strength? Because this phrase is a vote of no confidence in our own strength.

And Ryan mentioned last week that he thinks this phrase, and do not lead us into temptation or do not lead us into trial, is one of the hardest phrases for us to pray honestly. Because our human tendency is to be overconfident in our own abilities.



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When trials or temptation come our way, We often think maybe you say to yourself or to someone else, I've got this. I can handle it. I'm strong enough now. So this prayer is an acknowledgment. It's an acknowledgment that we can't handle very severe trials, and so we're begging God to keep us from walking into things that we can't handle. Or it's asking him to help us understand our own frame, to know that we're weak, that we're fragile, that we are not as strong as we think we are.

And trials can be big or small. And it doesn't take much to trip us up, steer us off track, tempt us to doubt God and trust in things other than him. So we pray, do not lead us into temptation. Spare us from the trials that are too much for us. Because nearly every trial we face brings a temptation with it and on the other side of the door of temptation is sin. And evil. And destruction.

Which is why Jesus goes on to say in the next phrase, but deliver us from evil. Ryan mentioned when he talked about this phrase last week that that word *deliver* would be better translated *rescue*. It'll give us a better picture of what Jesus is trying to get across. It means to grab something or someone, to snatch them up out of danger and hold them close in order to keep them safe.

He also defined evil last week in a general sense and in a specific sense. Generally, evil is anything that is contrary to or opposed to God and his ways. The opposite of good. So in a general sense, when we pray, deliver us from evil we are coming to our father and asking him to prevent us from falling into sin and evil when we pass through great difficulties or trials or temptations. We're saying, Lord, if I start to give in, snatch me up. Draw me into your arms, protect me from that which is seeking to destroy me.

But in a more specific sense, when Jesus taught his disciples to pray to be delivered from evil, he meant keep us from being caught up, snatched up, by the evil one. Deliver us from the evil one. In fact, your Bible might even have a footnote and say evil one instead of just evil, meaning the devil, Satan, the enemy of God. Jesus is directing his disciples to pray that God rescue them from the attack and the activity of the evil one.

And the evil one is dimetrically opposed to God and his ways, and he is seeking to use every trial or temptation to cause us to stumble. He seeks to deceive us, to accuse us, and most of the time, he does this by telling us lies. And it might sound a little bit like this: When you're walking through a trial, when maybe a really challenging circumstance is happening in your life, you might just hear this voice, this thought in your head.

*You know, maybe God isn't as good as you think he is.
Maybe he's not really in control.*



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*He doesn't actually really care about you.
There's an easier way.*

Or often it's more directed at us and about us. Often when you're in a struggle, you might hear this, you might have this thought.

*Actually, maybe you deserve this.
You've sinned too much to receive the grace and protection of God.
Maybe God's punishing you.
You know, God's not really for you.*

And we often, I think, hear those things in our own heads, and we think they are our own thoughts. And they're not. I just want to tell you tonight, they are lies from the evil one. And that is when we need to pray, deliver us from evil. Deliver us from the evil one, Lord. And even though Satan may appear to be right in that moment, he appears to be strong, he is not. Ultimately, he is already defeated. Jesus defeated him in his own temptation in Matthew chapter 4 in the wilderness, and then ultimately and completely on the cross.

So Jesus told his disciples, in this world, you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world. So Satan can stir up trouble in this world, but because Jesus overcame Satan at the cross, his demise is guaranteed. Which means we can walk in confidence, not because we're strong—we're not as strong as we think we are, we're weak—but Jesus is strong, and he has overcome, and he is with us. His very Spirit lives inside of us, which is cause for praise and honor and glory to be given to him, which is where the prayer goes next.

We have this kind of benediction, for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen. And Ryan mentioned that this sentence is not in the original prayer, like it may not be in your translation, in Matthew, or in Luke. It was not included in the earliest manuscripts of those two gospels, but most likely what happened is that the early church was using this prayer in their own worship. Because Jesus had said, hey, pray in this way.

So as a group, when they got together, they would pray that prayer together. And as they were praying that prayer together, they determined it might be good to end this with shouts of praise and honor and glory to God. And that's probably how that came to be added onto the end.

So here's how we're going to respond tonight together to this part of the prayer. I'm gonna invite the worship team to come out on stage with me. And we've created a responsive reading from the first part of Psalm 116. I think it's the first 13 verses. And this responsive reading connects with some of the ideas that are present in the Lord's Prayer. And the words are going to be up on the screens.



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And I'm going to read the leader sections that are in green, and Lisa, my friend Lisa here, is going to lead you in responding to the congregation, reading the congregation sections that are in black, and then the last slide will flow right into the Lord's Prayer, the way we've prayed it all the time. I will say, pray then in this way, it'll be in green. But then when we get to the Lord's Prayer portion, we're going to pray that in unison, the way we've done every week this summer. And it'll just flow right in. Make sense?

Okay, so and then we're going to finish worshiping God in song tonight. But I'm going to invite you to stand as we read this scripture together and respond to God.

[BREAK]

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