

PRAYER & FASTING

prayer devo

MONDAY - OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

PAUSE

Take a few minutes to pause in silence, to breathe deep, and to re-center your thoughts, your focus, and your affections on God.

“As I enter now into prayer, I ask, God, that you would free me from the distractions of the day so that I may be deeply present with You.”

REFLECT

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN... -MATTHEW 6:9A

There’s a famous picture of President John F. Kennedy working in the Oval Office while his son, John-John, is peeking out from underneath the Resolute desk. While powerful people from all over the world could only enter the office with an appointment or an invitation, President Kennedy’s son **ALWAYS** had access to his father. He could burst into the room at any moment, and JFK would hold out his arms to embrace his son.

SEE WHAT GREAT LOVE THE FATHER HAS LAVISHED ON US, THAT WE SHOULD BE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD! -1 JOHN 3:1A

We are God’s children! And just like John-John, as God’s children, we have access to God, **OUR FATHER**, at all times. Prayer is rooted in a relationship with God. And this is why Jesus models a prayer that begins with the acknowledgment that God is our father.

NOW IF WE ARE CHILDREN, THEN WE ARE HEIRS—HEIRS OF GOD AND CO-HEIRS WITH CHRIST... -ROMANS 8:17A

The word “our” is important. Jesus was saying that God isn’t just **HIS** father but **OUR FATHER**. It is both communal (*that we are a part of the body of Christ*) and positional (*that we are in Christ as Christ is in us*). What better reminders through which to enter into prayer, but that through Christ, and his work on the cross for us, we are adopted into the family of God?

“I rejoice today, knowing that I can call God ‘Father’.
I know, then, that I am loved (*JOHN 3:16*)
I am forgiven (*1 JOHN 1:9*)
I am a co-heir with Christ (*ROMANS 8:17*)
I have God’s Spirit living in me (*GALATIANS 4:6*)
and I am a member of the family of God (*EPHESIANS 2:19*).”

ASK

WHICH OF YOU, IF YOUR SON ASKS FOR BREAD, WILL GIVE HIM A STONE? OR IF HE ASKS FOR A FISH, WILL GIVE HIM A SNAKE? IF YOU, THEN, THOUGH YOU ARE EVIL, KNOW HOW TO GIVE GOOD GIFTS TO YOUR CHILDREN, HOW MUCH MORE WILL YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN GIVE GOOD GIFTS TO THOSE WHO ASK HIM! -MATTHEW 7:9-11

If you truly believed that God was your father, how would that change the way you prayed? What would you ask him for? Take time today to boldly approach God, your father, who loves you, and ask him to move on your behalf, on the behalf of others, and in our world.

YIELD

“All right-minded praying starts with a long look Godward and a deliberate lifting up of one’s heart to give thanks and adore, and it is just this to which our Father calls us.”
- J. I. Packer

“God, I thank you for the grace that is given to me so that I may call you “Father”. And as my father, I trust that you know what is best for me. So, I submit to your will today. I trust that you love me, that you are at work, and that you are leading me where you would want me to be.”

WEDNESDAY - YOUR KINGDOM COME

PAUSE

Take a few minutes to pause in silence, to breathe deep, and to re-center your thoughts, your focus, and your affections on God.

“As I enter now into prayer, I ask, God, that You would help me to lean into You as You guide and direct me into Your good, perfect, and pleasing will.”

REFLECT

...YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. - MATTHEW 6:10

When the wise men came to Jerusalem in Matthew 2, asking, “**where is the one who has been born king of the Jews**”, it actually makes sense, in that culture, why that the current king of the Jews, King Herod, responded by seeking to have Jesus killed. Another “**king**” would have been a threat to his crown. On top of that, he knew that Israel was awaiting a much-prophesied-about king who would come and overthrow Rome and set them free from the power of this evil empire. That really didn’t serve Herod’s self-interests.

The thing is, Jesus didn’t end up being the type of king that the Jewish people expected their Messiah to be. He wasn’t a warrior, He didn’t lead their nation in rebellion, and He didn’t overthrow Rome. However, that doesn’t mean that He didn’t come and establish a new kingdom -- it just wasn’t the type of kingdom that they anticipated it would be.

FROM THAT TIME ON JESUS BEGAN TO PREACH, “REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN HAS COME NEAR.” - MATTHEW 4:17

Praying that God’s kingdom would come is a declaration that Jesus is our king; it means we surrender control of our lives completely over to Him. Take a few moments and ask yourself, “**What does God not have complete control over in my life?**” Then submit those things to him.

ASK

While Jesus is now King, we also understand that His kingdom has not yet fully come.

DEAR FRIENDS, NOW WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD, AND WHAT WE WILL BE HAS NOT YET BEEN MADE KNOWN. BUT WE KNOW THAT WHEN CHRIST APPEARS, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM, FOR WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS. - 1 JOHN 3:2

As Christians, we are called to know God and make Him known. We are His agents that have been called to advance His kingdom “**on earth as it is in heaven.**” That is why we pray, “**Your kingdom come.**” We ache for the day that His kingdom will be fully realized.

Looking forward to that day, Christian hip-hop artist Andy Mineo said in his song, “Death Has Died”:

One day my God gon’ crack the sky
He gon’ bottle up every tear that we ever cried
Bring truth to every lie, justice for every crime
All our shame will be gone and we’ll never have to hide
No more broken hearts, no more broken homes
No more lockin’ doors, no more cops patrollin’
No abusive words, or abusive touches
No more cancerous cells that’ll take our loved ones
No more hungry kids, no more natural disaster
No child will ever have to ask where his dad is
No funerals where we wear all black
And death will be dead and we’ll lock the casket
Yes!

And until that day, we pray, “Your kingdom come...
“God, I thank you for your son, Jesus. I surrender to Him, fully, as my King. And I ask that Your kingdom would advance on this Earth. Bring justice to those who need justice, and peace to those who need peace. May Your name be made known all around the world, as people come to the saving knowledge of who You are.”

ASK

THEN PETER CAME TO JESUS AND ASKED, "LORD, HOW MANY TIMES SHALL I FORGIVE MY BROTHER OR SISTER WHO SINS AGAINST ME? UP TO SEVEN TIMES?" JESUS ANSWERED, "I TELL YOU, NOT SEVEN TIMES, BUT SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN."
- MATTHEW 18:21-22

Even though we may feel that holding onto unforgiveness repays those who have wronged us, it is actually **WE** who are negatively affected by unforgiveness.

Unforgiveness makes us stuck in our past. When we refuse to forgive, we find ourselves unable to move on from our past hurts. Unforgiveness makes us bitter in our present, and hinders us from experiencing joy in what God is doing right now. Unforgiveness robs us of our future, making it impossible for us to move forward into all that God has planned to do in and through our lives. Let's choose today that unforgiveness will not hold power over us.

**'Forgive our sins as we forgive,
you taught us, Lord, to pray,
but you alone can grant us grace
to live the words we say.**

**How can your pardon reach and bless
the unforgiving heart,
that broods on wrongs and will not let
old bitterness depart?**

**In blazing light your cross reveals
the truth we dimly knew:
what trivial debts are owed to us,
how great our debt to you!**

**Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls,
and bid resentment cease;
then, bound to all in bonds of love,
our lives will spread your peace.**

- Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive, by Rosamond Eleanor Herklots

YIELD

IT IS BECAUSE OF HIM THAT YOU ARE IN CHRIST JESUS, WHO HAS BECOME FOR US WISDOM FROM GOD—THAT IS, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, HOLINESS AND REDEMPTION. - 1 CORINTHIANS 1:30

If this is a prayer that is to be prayed by those who are followers of Jesus—those who have already been made right before God through Jesus—then why do we need to pray **"forgive us"**?

Imagine you're a teenager, and you decide to take your dad's brand new car out for a 1:00am drive. On your way to pick up your friends, you crash into a ditch. At that moment, you can have 1 of 2 reactions:

"My dad is going to kill me."

"I need to call my dad."

For those who are in Christ, we can rest in the security of his righteousness. But that doesn't mean that we will always live perfectly. We are still in the process of being made perfect in Him; so we will still sin. And when we do, may we remember that we serve a God who loves us, who is our Father, and who always calls us home.

NOTES



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