

International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones

September 2025

GENERAL SUBJECT: CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF MATTHEW 5 THROUGH 7 (Thursday—Evening Session)

Message Three The Prayer That Is Critical to the Kingdom Life

SC Hymns: 785

Scripture Reading: Matt. 6:6, 9-13; Luke 11:1-13; 19:46

Matt 6:6 But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Matt 6:9 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified;

Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

Matt 6:11 Give us today our daily bread.

Matt 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Matt 6:13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Luke 11:1 And while He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, a certain one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples.

Luke 11:2 And He said to them, When you pray, say, Father, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come.

Luke 11:3 Give us each day our daily bread.

Luke 11:4 And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us into temptation.

Luke 11:5 And He said to them, Who among you will have a friend and will go to him at midnight and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves,

Luke 11:6 Since a friend of mine has come to me from a journey and I have nothing to set before him;

Luke 11:7 And that one, from inside, will answer and say, Do not trouble me; the door is already shut and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise up and give you anything?

Luke 11:8 I say to you, Even though he will not rise up and give him anything because he is his friend, surely because of his shameless persistence he will rise and give him what he needs.

Luke 11:9 And I say to you, Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you.

Luke 11:10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.

Luke 11:11 But what father among you whose son shall ask for a fish will instead of a fish hand him a snake?

Luke 11:12 Or if he shall also ask for an egg will hand him a scorpion?

Luke 11:13 If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!

Luke 19:46 Saying to them, It is written, "And My house shall be a house of prayer," but you have made it a den of robbers.

I. The King-Savior was a man of prayer (Luke 3:21-22; 5:16; 6:12; 9:16, 23-24, 28-29; 22:31-32, 39-41, 44; 23:34, 46-47; Psa. 102:7; 109:4), who taught His disciples concerning prayer for the church as the Father's house to be a house of prayer (Luke 19:46; cf. 2:49); when the disciples saw the Lord praying, they asked Him to teach them to pray (11:1):

Luke 3:21 Now when all the people were baptized and as Jesus was baptized and was praying, heaven was opened,

Luke 3:22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form as a dove upon Him. And a voice came out of heaven: You are My Son, the Beloved; in You I have found My delight.

Luke 5:16 But He Himself often withdrew in the wilderness and prayed.

Luke 6:12 And in these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.

Luke 9:16 And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke them and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.

Luke 9:23 And He said to them all, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

Luke 9:24 For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake, this one shall save it.

Luke 9:28 And about eight days after these words, He took with Him Peter and John and James, and went up into the mountain to pray.

Luke 9:29 And as He prayed, the appearance of His face became different, and His garment dazzling white.

Luke 22:31 Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has asked to have you all to sift you as wheat.

Luke 22:32 But I have made petition concerning you that your faith would not fail; and you, once you have turned again, establish your brothers.

Luke 22:39 And He came out and went according to His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him.

Luke 22:40 And when He came to the place, He said to them, Pray that you do not enter into temptation.

Luke 22:41 And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed,

Luke 22:44 And being in agony He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.

Luke 23:34 And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. And dividing His garments, they cast lots.

Luke 23:46 And crying with a loud voice, Jesus said, Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit. And saying this, He expired.

Luke 23:47 Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this man was righteous.

Psa 102:7 I watch, and I am like / A lone sparrow on a housetop.

Psa 109:4 In return for my love they have become my adversaries, / But I am all prayer.

Luke 19:46 Saying to them, It is written, "And My house shall be a house of prayer," but you have made it a den of robbers.

Luke 2:49 And He said to them, Why is it that you were seeking Me? Did you not know that I must be in the things of My Father?

Luke 11:1 And while He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, a certain one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples.

- A. As a man of prayer, the Lord Jesus was always one with God—John 10:30.
John 10:30 I and the Father are one.
- B. As a man of prayer, the Lord Jesus lived in the presence of God without ceasing; He told us that He was never alone, but the Father was with Him; every moment He saw His Father's face—Acts 10:38c; John 8:29; 16:32b; cf. Exo. 33:14; 2 Cor. 2:10.
Acts 10:38c ...for God was with Him.
John 8:29 And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.
John 16:32b ... yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.
Exo 33:14 And He said, My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.
2 Cor 2:10 But whom you forgive anything, I also forgive; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ;
- C. As a man of prayer, the Lord Jesus trusted in God and not in Himself, under any kind of suffering and persecution—1 Pet. 2:23b; Luke 23:46.
1 Pet 2:23b ... but kept committing all to Him who judges righteously;
Luke 23:46 And crying with a loud voice, Jesus said, Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit. And saying this, He expired.
- D. As a man of prayer, the Lord Jesus was a man in whom Satan, the ruler of the world, had nothing (no ground, no chance, no hope, no possibility in anything)—John 14:30b.

John 14:30b ... for the ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing;

II. The pattern of prayer that the Lord taught the disciples in Matthew 6 is the prayer that expresses God's will:

Matt 6 be omitted.

A. Matthew 6:9-13 is the Lord's instruction to us to "pray in this way" to "our Father who is in the heavens" (v. 9a); this pattern of prayer can be divided into three sections:

Matt 6:9 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified;

Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

Matt 6:11 Give us today our daily bread.

Matt 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Matt 6:13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

1. The three basic prayers concerning God are related to the Divine Trinity; "Your name be sanctified" is related mainly to the Father; "Your kingdom come," to the Son; and "Your will be done," to the Spirit—vv. 9b-10a:

a. This is being fulfilled in this age, and it will be ultimately fulfilled in the kingdom age when the name of God will be excellent in all the earth, the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of Christ, and the will of God will be accomplished—Psa. 8:1; Rev. 11:15.

Psa 8:1 O Jehovah our Lord, / How excellent is Your name / In all the earth, / You who have set Your glory over the heavens!

Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

b. After the rebellion of Satan and the fall of man, Christ came to bring the heavenly rule to earth so that the earth could be recovered for God's interest so that the will of God could be done on earth as in heaven (Matt. 6:10b); the kingdom people must pray for this until the earth is fully recovered for God's will in the coming kingdom age.

Matt 6:10b ... Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

2. The three requests concerning our need are protective prayers: "Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"—vv. 11-13a:

a. *Daily bread* indicates a living that is by faith; we should live, by faith, on the Father's daily supply.

b. The kingdom people should ask the Father to forgive their debts, their failures, their trespasses, as they forgive their debtors to maintain peace (by the arbitrating peace of Christ); we have to clear up any separating factors between us and God and between us and others—vv. 14-15; Col. 3:15.

Matt 6:14 For if you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you also;

Matt 6:15 But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive your offenses.

Col 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.

c. Because we know our weakness, we should ask the Father not to bring us into temptation but to deliver us from the evil one, the devil, and from the evil that is out of him (by being filled with the Spirit)—John 17:15; Eph. 5:16-18; 6:13.

John 17:15 I do not ask that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them out of the hands of the evil one.

Eph 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Eph 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Eph 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,

Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

3. The prayer to the Father concludes with three reverent praises as extolling prayers: “For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen”—the kingdom is of the Son, which is the realm in which God exercises His power, and the power is of the Spirit, which carries out God’s intention so that the Father may have His corporate expression in glory—Matt. 6:13b:

- Thus, the pattern of the Lord’s prayer begins with the Divine Trinity and ends with the Divine Trinity.
- It also begins with God the Father and ends with God the Father; God the Father is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega.

B. Such a critical prayer increases our seeking of the kingdom of the heavens as the Father’s heart’s desire and affords us our need of the divine supply of grace to fulfill all the supreme and strict requirements of the kingdom of the heavens for God’s good pleasure.

III. If we pray according to the Lord’s instructions in Luke 11:1-13, the result will be that we pray ourselves into God:

Luke 11:1 And while He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, a certain one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples.

Luke 11:2 And He said to them, When you pray, say, Father, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come.

Luke 11:3 Give us each day our daily bread.

Luke 11:4 And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us into temptation.

Luke 11:5 And He said to them, Who among you will have a friend and will go to him at midnight and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves,

Luke 11:6 Since a friend of mine has come to me from a journey and I have nothing to set before him;

Luke 11:7 And that one, from inside, will answer and say, Do not trouble me; the door is already shut and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise up and give you anything?

Luke 11:8 I say to you, Even though he will not rise up and give him anything because he is his friend, surely because of his shameless persistence he will rise and give him what he needs.

Luke 11:9 And I say to you, Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you.

Luke 11:10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.

Luke 11:11 But what father among you whose son shall ask for a fish will instead of a fish hand him a snake?

Luke 11:12 Or if he shall also ask for an egg will hand him a scorpion?

Luke 11:13 If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!

A. Often in our experience we are distracted from God; we do not stay in God—we do not remain in Him; this is why we need to pray ourselves into God.

B. Because we are easily distracted from God, we should spend time every morning with Him, praying ourselves into Him—Psa. 5:3; Isa. 50:4.

Psa 5:3 O Jehovah, in the morning / You will hear my voice; / In the morning I will set forth my words in order to You, / And I will watch.

Isa 50:4 The Lord Jehovah has given me / The tongue of the instructed, / That I should know how to sustain the weary with a word. / He awakens me morning by morning; / He awakens my ear / To hear as an instructed one.

C. If our way of praying distracts us from the Lord and does not bring us into Him, we should change our way of praying so that we pray ourselves into Him.

D. When we pray ourselves into God, we receive His riches (represented by the loaves, the fish, and the egg) into our being for our supply—Luke 11:5-13:

Luke 11:5 And He said to them, Who among you will have a friend and will go to him at midnight

Luke 11:6 and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves,
 Since a friend of mine has come to me from a journey and I have nothing to set before him;

Luke 11:7 And that one, from inside, will answer and say, Do not trouble me; the door is already shut and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise up and give you anything?

Luke 11:8 I say to you, Even though he will not rise up and give him anything because he is his friend, surely because of his shameless persistence he will rise and give him what he needs.

Luke 11:9 And I say to you, Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you.

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Luke 11:11 But what father among you whose son shall ask for a fish will instead of a fish hand him a snake?

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Luke 11:13 If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!

1. Loaves represent the riches of the land; fish, the riches of the sea; and eggs, the riches of something both in the air and on the earth; the Holy Spirit is the totality of these riches.
2. When we have prayed ourselves into God to remain in Him, we receive the Holy Spirit as our life supply (signified by the loaves, the fish, and the egg) so that we can feed ourselves and all those under our care—1 John 5:16a; 2 Cor. 3:6; Acts 6:4.

1 John 5:16a If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him, to those sinning not unto death. ...

2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Acts 6:4 But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.

E. When we pray ourselves into God and receive His rich supply, which is the bountiful supply of the all-inclusive Spirit as the reality of the unsearchable riches of Christ, we are filled and occupied with this supply so that there is no room in us for demons, evil spirits, or darkness—Luke 11:14.

Luke 11:14 And once He was casting out a demon, and it was dumb. And when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke, and the crowds marveled.

F. Because we are filled with the riches of the divine supply, we become persons whose hearts are full of light, not having any dark part, and we can illumine others—vv. 33-36; Matt. 5:8.

Luke 11:33 No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it in the cellar or under the bushel, but on the lampstand, in order that those who enter in may see the light.

Luke 11:34 The lamp of the body is your eye. When your eye is single, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is evil, your body also is dark.

Luke 11:35 Watch out therefore that the light which is in you is not darkness.

Luke 11:36 If therefore your whole body is full of light and does not have any dark part, the whole will be full of light as when the lamp with its rays illuminates you.

Matt 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

G. To pray means that we realize that we are nothing and that we can do nothing; this implies that prayer is the real denial of the self—Mark 8:34; 9:29; Col. 4:2; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:3; 4:6-7, 11-13.

Mark 8:34 And He called the crowd to Him with His disciples and said to them, If anyone wants to follow after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.

Mark 9:29 And He said to them, This kind cannot come out by any means except prayer.

Col 4:2 Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Phil 3:3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh,

Phil 4:6 In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Phil 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Phil 4:11 Not that I speak according to lack, for I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be content.

Phil 4:12 I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack.

Phil 4:13 I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

H. To pray is actually to declare, "Not I, but Christ"; our prayer testifies that we do not exercise our self-effort to deal with any situation—Gal. 2:20.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

I. Even such a short prayer of calling upon the name of the Lord—"O Lord Jesus!"—indicates "no longer I, but Christ"—Rom. 10:12-13.

Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all and rich to all who call upon Him;

Rom 10:13 For "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

IV. In order for God to listen to our prayers, we need to pray toward God's interests, signified by the Holy Land, the holy city, and the holy temple—1 Kings 8:48:

1 Kings 8:48 And if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who have carried them captive, and they pray to You toward their land that You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen, and the house that I have built for Your name;

A. The Holy Land typifies Christ as the portion allotted by God to the believers (Col. 1:12; 2:6-7; Deut. 8:7); the holy city signifies the kingdom of God in Christ (Psa. 48:1-2); and the holy temple signifies God's house, the church, on the earth (Eph. 2:21; 1 Tim. 3:15).

Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

Col 2:6 As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him,

Col 2:7 Having been rooted and being built up in Him, and being established in the faith even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

Deut 8:7 For Jehovah your God is bringing you to a good land, a land of waterbrooks, of springs and of fountains, flowing forth in valleys and in mountains;

Psa 48:1 Great is Jehovah, / And much to be praised / In the city of our God, / In His holy mountain.

Psa 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, / The joy of the whole earth, / Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, / The city of the great King.

Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

B. During the Babylonian captivity Daniel prayed three times a day by opening his windows toward Jerusalem; this indicates that God will listen to our prayer when our prayer to God is toward Christ, the kingdom of God, and the house of God as the goal in God's eternal economy—Dan. 6:10.

Dan 6:10 Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously.

C. This means that no matter for whom we are praying, our prayers should be aimed at the interests of God, that is, at Christ and the church as God's interests on earth, for the

fulfilling of God's economy.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE DIVINE FACTS IN THE MYSTICAL HUMAN LIFE OF THE FIRST GOD-MAN

In His Supreme Teaching on the Mount, the First God-man Teaching His Disciples Twice concerning Prayer

Matthew's record is concerning the first God-man as the King-Savior in the kingdom of the heavens. We have seen the divine fact of His fasting in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights. Now we want to see His supreme teaching on the mount concerning prayer. Many Bible scholars call this the Sermon on the Mount, but I do not like the word *sermon*. Instead, I use the term *supreme teaching*. No teaching in human history is higher than this one. In His supreme teaching on the mount, the first God-man as the King-Savior in the kingdom of the heavens taught His disciples twice concerning prayer. The first time was in the middle of the supreme teaching, and the second time concluded His supreme teaching.

The First Time Unveiling the Heavenly Vision concerning the Prayer That Is Critical to the Kingdom Life

Many so-called churches today recite the prayer that the Lord taught us to pray in Matthew 6 (vv. 5-18), but most do not understand the real significance of what they are reciting. This prayer is critical to the kingdom life, a life that lives in the kingdom of the heavens. This one prayer also is accompanied by four negative charges as warnings.

The Prayer

The prayer is as follows: "Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen" (vv. 9-13). The praying ones must be children of God, born of God, so they have the authority, the right, to call God their Father. We cannot call a person our father if we are not born of him. We have a Father in the heavens who has begotten us. This brief but critical prayer covers a number of crucial items.

The Father's Holy Name to Be Sanctified

To be sanctified means to be separated and distinct from all that is common. On the fallen earth there are many false gods. The worldly people consider our God as being in common with those gods. If we pray for our Father's name to be sanctified, we should not just utter this with our words. For His name to be sanctified, we should express Him in our living. We must live a sanctified life, a daily life separated from being common. To pray such a prayer requires us to be sanctified persons, those who are separated from being common. We should be distinct, separate, from all the people around us. In other words, we should be holy. As sanctified people, we should pray, "Our Father, Your name be sanctified."

The Father's Heavenly Kingdom to Come

Today the world is not God's kingdom but His enemy's kingdom. This is why the Bible says that Satan is the ruler of today's world (John 12:31). In Satan's kingdom, the world, there is no righteousness, no peace, and no joy. Romans 14:17 says that the reality of the kingdom life is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. In Satan's kingdom today, there is no joy, because there is no peace. In the United Nations, peace is talked about all the time, but there is no peace, because there is no righteousness. Peace is the issue of righteousness. In his second Epistle, Peter says that the unique thing that dwells in the new heavens and new earth is righteousness (3:13). In the

coming kingdom, the millennium, the primary thing will be righteousness. There is no righteousness in today's world, because this is the kingdom of Satan, the evil ruler.

The Father's Divine Will to Be Done on Earth as in Heaven

Today Satan's will is being done on the earth through evil men. Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin tried to carry out his will along with most of the rulers on this earth today. Thank the Lord that Satan's will is not fully carried out. Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin were destroyed. Napoleon wanted his will to be done, but he did not succeed. We need to pray for the Father's divine will to be done on earth as in heaven. This is to bring the heavenly ruling, the kingdom of the heavens, to the earth. Then the Father's will surely will be done on the earth.

These three things—the name, the kingdom, and the will—are the attributes of the one Triune God. The name is of the Father, because the Father is the source; the kingdom is of the Son, and the will is of the Spirit. To pray in this way is to pray that the Triune God will be prevailing on the earth as He is prevailing in the heavens.

The Care of the Supply of Our Necessity, Our Daily Bread

In His prayer the Lord covered our daily necessity. He taught us to pray for our bread only for one day. We are to ask our Father to give us today, not tomorrow or next month, our daily bread. He does not want His people to worry about tomorrow. He wants them to pray only for today's needs. When I was younger, we co-workers in China sometimes came to the end of our material supply, and we did not know how we would live the next day. Something always came to meet our need for that day. The Lord is faithful to take care of the supply of our daily necessity.

The Father's Forgiving of Our Debts as We Have Done with Our Debtors

In the Lord's prayer we see that we need to take care of our relationship with others. As we ask the Father to forgive us our debts, we should forgive our debtors. We are in debt with God, and we also have debtors who owe us something. To maintain a peaceful relationship with others, we have to forgive them. Thus, we have to clear up any separating factors between us and God and between us and others.

Not Bringing Us into Temptation but Delivering Us from the Devil, the Evil One

Sometimes our God, who is faithful and who takes care of us, brings us into a situation of temptation to test us as the Spirit of God did the Lord Jesus (Matt. 4:1). But because we know our weakness, we should pray, "Do not bring us into temptation." This indicates our knowledge of our weakness. To pray for deliverance from the evil one is to deal with Satan. The Lord's prayer takes care of the Triune God, of our daily necessity, of our relationship with God and with others, and also of Satan.

Recognizing and Praising Reverently That the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory Belong to the Father Forever

The prayer to the Father concludes in this way: "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen" (6:13). Here is the realization and praise of God's kingdom, power, and glory. This also refers to the Triune God. The kingdom is of the Son, which is the realm in which God exercises His power. The power is of the Spirit, which carries out God's intention so that the Father can express His glory. This indicates that the prayer that the Lord taught us to pray begins with the Triune God, in the sequence of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and ends also with the Triune God, but in the sequence of the Son, the Spirit, and the Father. Thus, the prayer taught by the Lord in His supreme teaching begins with God the Father and ends also with God the Father. God the Father is both the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega.

Such a critical prayer surely increases our seeking of the kingdom of the heavens as the Father's heart's desire and affords us our need of the divine supply of grace to fulfill all the supreme and strict requirements of the kingdom of the heavens for the Father's good pleasure. On the one hand, we are

seeking for something according to the Father's heart's desire. On the other hand, we have the supply to fulfill something for the Father's good pleasure.

The Four Negative Charges as Warnings

Not Praying as the Hypocrites Do

The Lord warned His disciples not to pray as the hypocrites do with a mask. They love to make a show publicly that they may be seen by men and receive glory from them according to the lust of their fleshly desire. Instead, the disciples should enter into their private room, shutting their door and praying to the Father in the heavens to be seen by Him in secret and repaid by Him (vv. 5-6). We have to learn to be secret persons. We should pray in our private place to be seen by the Father in secret, not by others for an outward public display. If we pray properly, God will repay us as a reward. The hypocrites have received their reward already, but we want to receive our God's repayment.

Not Praying as the Gentiles Do

The disciples should not pray as the Gentiles do, babbling empty words, supposing that in their multiplicity of words they will be heard. This is because the Father of the disciples knows the things that they need before they ask Him (vv. 7-8). Some have accused us by saying that our pray-reading of the Word is repetitious, but pray-reading is spiritual breathing. Breathing is always repetitious. If we do not repeat our breathing, we will die.

Forgiving Men's Offenses

If His disciples forgive men's offenses, their heavenly Father will forgive the disciples also; otherwise, their Father will not forgive their offenses. This annuls their prayer to their heavenly Father (vv. 14-15).

Not Fasting like the Sullen-faced Hypocrites

His disciples should not fast like the sullen-faced hypocrites, disfiguring their faces so that their fast may appear to men. The disciples should fast by anointing their head and washing their face so that their fast may not appear to men but to their Father who is in secret and who sees it and will repay them (vv. 16-18).

The Second Time Being in the Conclusion of His Supreme Teaching concerning the Kingdom of the Heavens

Now we want to consider the second time the Lord taught the disciples concerning prayer in His supreme teaching on the mount. The second time is in the conclusion of His supreme teaching concerning the kingdom of the heavens, when He made a promise to the seekers of the kingdom of the heavens in Matthew 7:7-8. The Lord said, "Ask [indicating the prayer at a distance] and it shall be given to you; seek [indicating the pursuit of what is prayed for] and you shall find; knock [indicating the reaching of the goal of what is sought] and it shall be opened to you." Such a promise assures the seekers of the kingdom of the heavens that they will be given an open door to enter into all the blessings in the kingdom of the heavens.

When we read the supreme teaching of the Lord on the mount recorded in Matthew 5—7, we may be disappointed and think that we cannot make it because of the supreme, strict requirements. So at the conclusion, there is a prayer that is actually a promise. The Lord promised us that if we ask, we will receive; if we seek, we will find; and if we knock, it will be opened to us. If we ask, seek, and knock, we will enter into all the blessings in the kingdom of the heavens for our supreme and strict kingdom life. This promise affords us the grace that we need to fulfill the supreme and strict requirements. The door will be opened wide for us to enter into all the blessings of the kingdom of the heavens. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 3, "The God-man Living," pp. 536-541)