

# A • S • K (Part 1)

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## Introduction

### The Text

<sup>1</sup> Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” <sup>2</sup> And he said to them, “When you pray, say: “Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. <sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread, <sup>4</sup> and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.” (Luke 11:1–4)

### Lord, Teach Us to Pray

- A. This is now our second week in this text. And here, we remember, the disciples are wanting to learn to pray like Jesus. There is something compelling in the way He prays and relates to God, and they are also admitting that there is something quite confusing about prayer. “We don’t know how to do it. We need help. ‘Lord, teach us to pray’ (v. 1).”
- B. Jesus’ help comes straightaway in v. 2. Last week, we simply camped out on this idea of God as Father: “When you pray, say: ‘Father . . .’” (v. 2a).
  - 1. It was my contention that knowing God as Father is the entry point of all prayer. If we are to learn how to pray, we must begin with this: “Father”. Everything else will key off of it. If we get it wrong here, we will be off at every other point. We shall see more on how this is so a bit later on.

### A Pattern And Its Priorities

- A. At this point, I want to widen our lens a bit and begin to consider this prayer Jesus gives us as a whole in vv. 2-4. As we begin now to approach these words, what we have here, it seems to me, is Jesus laying down a sort of pattern for our prayers: “When you pray say . . .” (v. 2a).
  - 1. We are not to think that such words are meant merely to be mindlessly recited (cf. [Matt 6:7](#)), though, of course, if your heart is honestly engaged, such recitation could indeed be worthwhile.
    - a. Nevertheless, I do think, more than anything, we are intended to learn from these words a sort of pattern after which we ourselves can also pray. It’s this pattern that I want to direct your attention to here at the outset.
- B. It seems to me this prayer Jesus gives us can be divided into three parts:
  - 1. We might say up front it begins with this idea of Adoring. I would see adoration in this idea, again, of calling God “Father” (v. 2a). We begin in prayer with an awareness of just Who it is that we are talking to. And we delight in that. We adore Him for it.

2. But this idea of Adoring in the first part of v. 2 moves towards what I would call Surrendering in the latter part of v. 2. Here is where, if we are following along with Jesus, we read: “[H]allowed be your name. Your kingdom come.” In other words, I surrender my own name and my own kingdom and want to be about Your name and Your kingdom.
  3. But, then, in a somewhat surprising turn, the Surrendering of v. 2b gives way to what I would call the Knocking of vv. 3-4. The second person (“Your”) transitions to the first person (“us”, “our”): “<sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread,<sup>4</sup> and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.”
    - a. Here, then, is where we do, in fact, come with our own requests, with our own needs, with our child-like dependencies. Though we surrender all to Him, this does not mean we are not to come and make our requests known. Indeed, we must do so, for He is our Father and we need His help. So we cast our cares upon Him and we trust He will do what is best with them.
- C. Critical to this pattern, I do believe, is the order of these things. There seems to be a sort of prioritization taking place in what Jesus gives us here.
1. The basic sense that we shall tease out in these sermons is that, first we must come to know God as loving, gracious, powerful, providing “Father” (Adore).
  2. And as we do so, we find that we will long for Him to be lifted up and seen in the world—we happily surrender our names and kingdoms that His name might be hallowed, and His kingdom might come (Surrender). We want others to enjoy what we do in Him.
  3. And, then, with these two priorities in place, we see our own requests (Knock) not as demands—as if from a master to a little errand boy—but as opportunities. With our requests, we are actually giving God ways in which He can hallow His name and bring His kingdom in and through our own lives. That’s the interesting thing.
    - a. As we shall see, God loves to glorify Himself by providing for the needs His people. He loves it when we come and look to Him. When He provides and pardons and protects, He is glorified. He is seen all the more as good, good Father.
      - i. Your requests and needs are not contrary to a concern for His glory, they become one of the main stages upon which His glory can be displayed!
- D. While we would never want to be so dogmatic as to say you must strictly follow this pattern point by point, as if you can’t begin your prayers simply by pouring out the burdens of your heart, we should at least say that these priorities ought to always, in some way, be present in the heart—whether they are spoken or not, whether we put them in this order or not.
- E. The final thing I would point out here is that you might be helped to see the acronym this pattern and its priorities form: Adore – A; Surrender – S; Knock – K. ASK. In my own prayer life, I have found it a helpful way of recollecting these things Jesus gives us here. Perhaps you will as well.

- F. The plan, now that we have seen the prayer at a more macro-level, is to get back down into the details and take these parts one at a time. This morning we shall have time only for (1) Adore; and (2) Surrender.

## (1) Adore

- A. With Adore, we return to this opening word in Jesus' prayer: "Father" (v. 2a). Obviously, last week I spent much time on this idea, but here now I want to come at it from yet another angle.

### "My Father Didn't Help"

- A. About a week ago, I was scrolling through my Google News feed and an article caught my attention. I'm always interested in news related to Silicon Valley because that's where we are, that's the city we're called to reach for the gospel. This article concerned Steve Jobs and his troubled relationship with one of his daughters. I actually just want to read it to you now if that's okay: "Apple became the first-ever U.S. company to reach \$1 trillion in value on Thursday, reported CNN. . . . The momentous achievement closely follows a shockingly candid new peek at late Apple co-founder Steve Jobs' daughter Lisa Brennan-Jobs' upcoming memoir, *Small Fry*."

In an excerpt of the memoir published in *Vanity Fair* Lisa — Steve's eldest daughter, now 40 — details a harrowing account of her childhood spent in the shadow of her famous, absentee father.

Steve famously denied paternity of Lisa, whose mother was Chrisann Brennan, for years, even saying in court papers that he was 'sterile and infertile, and as result thereof, did not have the physical capacity to procreate a child.' Steve would later marry Laurene Powell in 1991 and have three more children.

Born in 1978 when Steve and Brennan were only 23, Lisa writes in the excerpt that her father arrived a few days late, claiming, 'It's not my kid.' She says her mother was forced to hold several jobs, and relied on welfare payments to make ends meet during the first two years of her life, writing, 'My father didn't help.'

It wasn't until after 1980 that a DNA test proved Steve's paternity, with the court requiring minimal child-support payments and medical insurance coverage for Lisa until age 18 — finalized just four days before Apple went public, making the tech giant a millionaire, according to the memoir.

From that point forward, Lisa chronicles a complicated and distant relationship with her dad — from the 13 temporary homes she lived in with her single mother to the conversations that transpired after the father-daughter pair began spending more time together.

'For a long time I hoped that if I played one role, my father would take the corresponding role,' Lisa writes in the *Vanity Fair* excerpt. 'I would be the beloved daughter; he would be the indulgent father.' Yet, she says, 'If I had observed him as he was, or admitted to myself what I saw, I would have known that he would not do this.'

Lisa also details in *Small Fry* an exchange with her father when she asked to have his Porsche when he was 'done' with the car, claiming her father ultimately retorted, 'You're not getting anything. You understand? Nothing. You're getting nothing.'

Lisa says there was never a 'grand reconciliation' before Steve's death at age 56 in 2011 after a long battle with pancreatic cancer, writing in the *Vanity Fair* excerpt, 'For him, I was a blot on a spectacular ascent, as our story did not fit with the narrative of greatness and virtue he might have wanted for himself. My existence ruined his streak.'"

- B. Now, why do I read this to you?

1. Well, I suppose it's because, though I know none of us would probably ever say it, I suspect many of us have felt one time or another—maybe even right now this morning—that God is a Father for us somewhat like Steve Jobs here.
  - a. He has everything. He could give anything. And yet He doesn't. He's a little embarrassed by us. He's a little annoyed with us. He'll send us some child-support here and there, but we ought not to ask for nor expect anything more.
- C. Now I realize there are plenty of ways a person might start to come to this feeling of God as Father, but no doubt one of the more significant is that we have prayed and prayed, we have asked and asked, we have hoped and hoped, and heaven seems by all accounts to have remained silent.
  1. The cancer is still here. The spouse still hasn't come, I'm still single and lonely. The child is still rejecting Jesus. The hurt of this life still abides.
    - a. Does our Father hear us? We don't doubt it. Does He care? If we're honest, we're not always so sure. Slowly, over time, we've grown suspicious of God as Father.
      - i. And this suspicion, this cynicism, will wreak havoc on our prayer lives.
- D. Let me ask you are you praying? Think back to this past week? Were you engaged with God in conversation, pouring your heart out to whom, not just in the morning but throughout the day?
  1. I cannot put it more pointedly than this: If we are not praying, it is usually because either: (1) We don't think ourselves desperate enough; or (2) We don't think our God good enough. We don't pray because either we think we can handle it (not desperate enough), or we think God will not help (not good enough).
    - a. Perhaps it's always a mix of both. But here this morning, of course, I'm focusing us in on that second point. We don't think God is really all that interested in helping. We don't think of Him as a good, as the perfect, Dad.
- E. Now, next week I anticipate that we shall deal more with the question and apparent problem of unanswered prayers, but this morning I simply want to read you one of my favorite verses in all the Bible. Hear it from Jesus' own mouth, hear Him say it to you, even in the midst of your suspicion and cynicism: "[Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom](#)" ([Luke 12:32](#)).
  1. He is not withholding, even when He says, "No."
- F. So the place to start in prayer is with this: Adoration—an awareness of and delight in all that God is for you—that He loves you, that He is "[Father](#)".

## A Word about Thanksgiving

- A. Now if I could say a quick word about thanksgiving here, because I do think it fits with this idea of Adoration.

- B. Thanksgiving is given quite a prominent part to play in the prayer life of a believer. At least this is certainly what it would seem from the various injunctions we see throughout the Scriptures. There are a handful of texts that immediately come to mind here:
1. We might think of [Psa 100:4](#), where those coming before God are exhorted to: “[Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!](#)” As you enter in, let thanksgiving be what’s on your lips.
  2. Or then we have the encouragements of Paul. In [Col 4:2](#), he writes: “[Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.](#)” We are to have this watchful eye as we pray. O how we see all that we want changed, all that we want different, all that we want God to do. But Paul is saying make sure you don’t miss all that God has already done, all that God is doing even now! Thank Him for these things.
  3. And then in [Eph 5:20](#), similarly, Paul calls the church to “[\[Give\] thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .](#)” His clear assumption is that there is always grace, there is always evidence of your Father’s loving care. There is always something to thank Him for. There is always good reason for adoration.
- C. If we’re not careful, prayer can become just an ongoing litany of requests. We unwittingly develop a liturgy of despair. We move from one need to the next with little thought given to the grace God has shown us previously. We are not concerned about that issue anymore. Sure, He took care of that, but now we have something else pressing. We transition from emergency to emergency, without pausing to remember how He has been faithful to us through them all.
- D. So with this idea of “[When you pray say, ‘Father . . .’](#)” ([v. 2a](#)), we again set our minds on who God is and what He has done for us. We adore Him for the things He’s revealed to us of His glory. We thank Him for the ways He’s answered yesterday’s requests. We go on a hunt for His presence in our lives—we identify it, and rejoice with Him over it. Certainly such a thing begins to warm our hearts towards God.
1. Now we are ready to talk about Surrender.

## (2) Surrender

### The Rest Follows

- A. Recall again what I’ve been saying, that I think Jesus begins with this idea of Father, because everything else in our prayer lives keys off of it. If we get it right, the rest follows. If we get it wrong, the rest falls apart. And here, I think, is where this really starts to make sense.
1. If we are suspicious of Him, the last thing we want to do is move into part 2 here and surrender to Him—the last thing we will be praying for is for His name and kingdom. We’re still not sure of Him.

2. But, if instead, we are growing increasingly aware of the goodness of our Father, of His gracious intentions for us, from our hearts will erupt these sorts of prayers: “Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come” (v. 2). Let’s take these one at a time.

## Hallowed Be Your Name

- A. To begin with, we need to understand what is meant by God’s “name” here. Martyn Lloyd-Jones puts it simply for us: “The ‘name’ . . . means all that that is true of God, and all that has been revealed concerning God. It means God in all His attributes, God in all that He is in and of Himself, and God in all that He has done and all that He is doing” (Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, p. 334).
  1. In other words, the name of God is shorthand for everything that God is. That’s why when Moses boldly asks God: “Please show me your glory”, God responds by saying: “I will make all my goodness pass before you and I will proclaim before you my name . . .” (Exo 33:18-19a). To see God’s glory is to learn God’s name.
- B. So to pray for God’s name to be hallowed is to pray that all that He is would be seen and revered in the world.
  1. To be clear, the idea here is not that God somehow needs us to make His name holy. His name is already and always holy (cf. Isa 57:15). The problem is that so much of the world doesn’t see it, doesn’t care, doesn’t honor His name as such.
    - a. For us, having tasted and seen the goodness of our Father, such a thing breaks our hearts. So we pray: “Father, hallowed be your name.”
- C. If you look carefully through the Scriptures, you cannot miss the fact that it is concern for God’s name that grounds and guides everything that He does. He wants the cosmos to see who He is, for His name to be hallowed.
  1. It’s for the sake of His name that He brings Israel out from Egypt (Psa 106:7-8).
  2. It’s for the sake of His name that He doesn’t make an end of them after their rebellion in the wilderness (Eze 20:13-14).
  3. It’s for the sake of His name that He continues to have mercy on them even after centuries more of rebellion in the land (Isa 48:9-11).
  4. It’s for the sake of His name that He makes promise of a New Covenant (Ezek 36:22-28).
  5. And it’s for the sake of His name that Jesus goes to the cross. Let me at least read this to you: John 12:27-28. The hour of Jesus’ death is quickly approaching. And He is beginning to feel the weight of it. So what does He do? As we well now should expect, He prays: “<sup>27</sup> ‘Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? “Father, save me from this hour”? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.<sup>28</sup> Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven: ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’”
    - a. Why the cross? Why the resurrection? Why the gospel? For the glory of God’s name. That His name would be hallowed. That every promise He ever made of forgiveness and freedom and new creation might not fall flat but be fulfilled,

vindicated, upheld—that His own glory and grace might be put on clearest display for all the world to see!

- D. So now, having tasted and seen something of this amazing grace ourselves we pray: “Father, hallowed be your name.’ Let more people see it, whatever that might mean for my life, let it be!”

## Your Kingdom Come

- A. But there is more that Jesus is teaching us to pray here, and it’s a related idea: “Your kingdom come.”
- B. Regarding this idea of the kingdom, there is so much that we could say. Indeed, many scholars think the theme of the kingdom is one of, if not the, fundamental piece that holds the entirety of Scripture together, from Genesis to Revelation, from Eden to the new heavens and new earth.
1. If hallowing His name is God’s chief passion, bringing in His kingdom is God’s chief purpose. It is what He has been after since the beginning, it’s what He will bring to fruition in the end. And here we are invited to partner with God in it through prayer.
    - a. It is a most astounding thing. As Erik Raymond has said: “It’s as humbling as it is fascinating to consider that God advances his kingdom agenda through the prayers of his people.”
- C. But still we are left asking: What exactly does it mean to pray for His kingdom to come? A quick survey through Luke should give us at least a basic sense.
1. The first thing we need to understand is that talking about the kingdom of God is really the same thing as talking about the gospel itself: “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God . . .” (Luke 4:43).
    - a. Because God is a good King, when He comes with His power and His authority, it’s good news for the humble and the broken and the sinner. This starts to become clearer as we continue.
  2. In Luke 9:11 and other places we see that the preaching of this kingdom is often accompanied by miraculous healings: “[Jesus] welcomed [the crowds] and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing.” This is what the King and His kingdom is like. He’s going to make all things new.
    - a. Therefore, praying for the Father’s kingdom to come could look praying for a person’s healing.
  3. In Luke 11:20 we see that the coming of this kingdom means the overthrow of Satan and demons: “[I]f it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.” The kingdom of God puts the kingdom of Satan on the run.

- a. Therefore, praying for the Father’s kingdom to come could look like praying against the devil—asking God to open blinded eyes and transfer people from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Christ (cf. [Col 1:13](#))
4. In [Luke 13:28](#), we see that the coming of this kingdom means judgment, not just on the devil and his crew, but on all those among men that have followed in their rebellion: [“In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out.”](#) It would not be a good kingdom, a happy kingdom, if injustice, oppression, evil is still permitted there.
  - a. Therefore, praying for the Father’s kingdom to come could look like praying for Jesus to return to vindicate His saints and do away with evil once and for all.
5. And, finally, in [Luke 23:42-43](#), we see that the coming of this kingdom means salvation for broken, repentant sinners. Do you remember the words of the thief dying on the cross next to Jesus? [“Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom” \(v. 42\)](#). And how does Jesus respond? [“Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise” \(v. 43\)](#). The kingdom of God is a kingdom of salvation and grace.
  - a. Therefore, praying for the Father’s kingdom to come could look like getting down on your knees before bed and begging Him to save your child, or your parent, or your friend, or your neighbor. [“Your kingdom come!”](#)
- D. So prayer, then, as Jesus teaches us, begins with Adoring the Father for all that He is for us in Christ. And, in turn, it continues on to the Surrendering of all that we are for Him—for the sake of His name, and for the advancing of His kingdom in the world.
  1. [“When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come’” \(v. 2\)](#).