

# COR@9: THE LORD'S PRAYER

Week 1 ♦ 3.5.17

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Goals

1. Learn
2. Connect -- with one another, with God
3. Grow -- not just hear about God, but encounter God

### B. Values

1. Honor one another and our community
2. Honor Scripture
3. Participation / ownership

## II. OUR BAGGAGE

### A. What has been our experience/connotations with this prayer?

### B. What clouds our view of this prayer?

1. Sentiment
2. Individualism
3. Familiarity

## III. WHY DO WE PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER?

### A. Two questions/objections

1. Is the prayer for us or just for Jesus' first disciples?
2. Is the prayer meant to be used as a pattern or said exactly?

### B. Some history

1. The Gospels (Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4)
  - a) Teaching the first Christians how to be Christian
  - B) Jewish context: expected to say "set prayers"
  - C) Jesus' words imply giving a similar "set" prayer
2. The Didache (late 1st century book of instruction on Christianity)

*"But let not your fasts be with the hypocrites (Matthew 6:16) for they fast on the second and fifth day of the week; but fast on the fourth day and the Preparation (Friday). Neither pray as the hypocrites; but as the Lord commanded in His Gospel, thus pray: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us today our daily (needful) bread, and forgive us our debt as we also forgive our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one (or, evil); for Yours is the power and the glory for ever. Thrice in the day thus pray."*

3. Tertullian & Cyprian (2nd century church fathers, Carthage)
  - A) Tertullian: Lord's prayer as Jesus' "Rule of prayer," can add personal prayers to fill out the "customary prayers". (*On Prayer*, Chapter 10)
  - B) Cyprian: "Let us therefore, brethren beloved, pray as God our Teacher has taught us. It is a loving and friendly prayer to beseech God with His own word, to come up to His ears in the prayer of Christ." (Treatise 4)
4. Augustine (3rd-4th centuries A.D.)
  - A) Lord's prayer as preparation for baptism, possibly even the first prayer said after emerging from the waters of baptism
  - B) Lord's prayer as part of the Eucharist celebration: " 'almost the whole world now concludes' the eucharistic prayer with this." (Dom Gregory Dix, *Shape of the Liturgy*, 131)
5. Pope Gregory I (end of 6th century)
  - A) Lord's Prayer solidified in liturgy of the church in Rome
  - B) From this time on, the big question is where the prayer goes in the liturgy, not whether it is included.
6. The Reformers
  - A) Martin Luther, John Calvin, Thomas Cranmer: all upheld the value of the prayer for life and worship.
  - B) Anabaptist tradition largely discarded the prayer as with other "set" forms of worship.

C. How do we use the prayer?

1. Both as-is AND as a template (historical precedence)
2. Nothing "magical" about these words apart from power of the Spirit
3. When the disciples ask Jesus to teach them to pray, this is what he gave them. It can teach us too.
4. As we will see in following weeks, this prayer helps reorient our imaginations and priorities.

D. In sum, we pray this prayer because:

1. Jesus told us to.
2. Christians across the centuries and around the world have and do.
3. It can reorient and reshape our prayers, priorities, and hearts through the power of the Spirit.

IV. we are **BOLD** TO Pray

A. Why might it require boldness to pray this prayer?

B. Some thoughts from other pilgrims...

1. N.T. Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*, 3
2. Frederick Buechner, *Whistling in the Dark* (see introduction to Willimon/Hauerwas, *Lord, Teach Us*)

V. HOW TO Pray: SUGGESTIONS FOR LENT

- A. Framework for daily praying
- B. Repetition (breath prayer)
- C. Phrase per day
- D. Others?

VI. FOR FURTHER reading

Packer, J.I. *Praying the Lord's Prayer*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2007.  
Willimon, William H., and Stanley Hauerwas. *Lord, Teach Us: The Lord's Prayer & the Christian Life*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.  
Wright, N.T. *The Lord and His Prayer*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996.

NEXT week: THE LORD'S PRAYER IN CONTEXT OF SCRIPTURE