

How to Pray:

Understand Jesus' Model Prayer

Matthew 6:7–15

Central Truth: **Jesus gives us this model prayer to teach us how to pray.**

ENGAGE: **President Franklin Roosevelt**, our nation's 32nd president, was weary of the mindless small talk of White House receptions. Wondering if anyone was engaging in any real conversation, he conducted an experiment at a White House gathering. As he shook a hand and flashed that big smile he would say, **"I murdered my grandmother this morning."** With but **one exception**, the people would smile back and say something like, "You're doing a great job" or "How lovely." The exception was a foreign diplomat who responded quietly, "I'm sure she had it coming to her." If we are not shocked from time to time by the things God says and does, we have not been listening. **How many of our prayers are like White House reception small talk?** Does God feel about them as President Roosevelt did about the reception chatter? (cf. Ben Patterson, *Deepening Your Conversation w. God*).

In prayer you and I have the privilege of coming before the God who created the heavens & earth, the God who came near in the person of Jesus, the God who knows the very hairs of our head, the God who hears and cares for us. Yet too often we get so caught up in all of the daily details & agendas of our lives that we fail to lay hold of this privilege God has given us.

FOCUS: This morning let's grow in our understanding of **How to Pray.** We are going to do this by explaining the model prayer Jesus' gives us in His Sermon on the Mount.

Set the Stage: Last week we saw Jesus' gave us a lesson on real righteousness, the kind that is not done for show (6:1-18). Jesus teaches us **only a righteousness exercised toward God has an eternal reward.**

PREVIEW: This morning we are going to zero in on Christ's instruction to us about how to pray. Every one of us feels like our Lord's disciples at times, when they cried, "Lord, Teach Us to Pray." **Today, I want to show you how the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to pray.** Our Lord, knowing we do not know what to pray for as we ought, helps us in our weakness. **We are going to see this morning that Jesus gives us a model prayer to teach us how to pray.** Rather than praying like some religious people do to impress people (6:5–6) or following the thoughtless prayers of pagans (6:7–8), in a few short statements, our Lord teaches us all the vital aspects of prayer.

Remember though **this prayer is only a model.** Jesus did not say, "This is what you should pray." He said, "This is **how** you should pray." **Scripture Reading:** Turn with me in your Bibles to Matthew 6:7-15. I'll read vv. 7-8; then we'll read together this model prayer Jesus gives us in vv. 9-13. (Read together responsively vv. 9-13) **SLIDE:** Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. **10** Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. **11** Give us this day our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. **13** And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. [BLANK SLIDE]

Before we look at the model prayer Jesus gives in vv. 9-13, Jesus' instructs us of the importance that we be sincere in our prayers. How should we pray?

Pray sincerely [or Pray trustingly] (Matthew 6:7-8).

Talk to God with simplicity, directness, and sincerity. While other Scripture teaches us to pray with persistence (Matt 7:7-8), here Jesus teaches us we do not need to badger God with our requests. God wants to give us good gifts. Jesus instructs us here in Matthew 6:7-8 not to babble on and on as people of other religions do. Note Jesus instruction in vv. 7-8: *“And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 “Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him”* (Matt 6:7-8 NKJV). Jesus’ concern is that we **consciously think about what we pray**. We are not to be like those who babble on and on, imagining they are being heard because of all their words. **Jesus looks here at our motivation for our prayers not simply the length of our prayers.** Lengthy prayers are not wrong. Jesus spent all night in prayer (cf. Luke 6:12). Lengthy prayers are found in the Bible (2 Chron 6:14–42; Neh 9; and Pss 18, 89, and 119). **The key is our motive. Pray sincerely. Talk to God with simplicity, directness, and sincerity.**

God cannot be forced into action merely because we pile up words to try to get God to do what we want.. Is not **the rosary**, used for example to keep count of five decades of “Hail Mary’s [Ave Marias], each preceded by a “Lord’s prayer” [paternoster (“Our Father)] and concluded with a Glory Be, another illustration? As if the acceptability of our prayers depends, at least in part, upon the number of words we use or the number of prayers we rattle off! (cf. Hendriksen). APPL: So as you pray for your food, as you pray before you go to sleep, anytime you pray, Jesus teaches us **“Pray sincerely.” Talk to God with simplicity, directness, and sincerity.**

Jesus bases effective prayer on a relationship of intimacy with God, not a business partnership model. Note v. 8 (NKJV): *“Therefore do not be like them [the pagans or Gentiles]. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.”* **God knows your needs**, but God also chooses to give some blessings only when you pray. James reminds us, SLIDE: “You desire and you do not have; you murder and envy and you cannot obtain; you quarrel and fight. **You do not have because you do not ask;** ^{4:3} you ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly, so you can spend it on your passions” (James 4:2-3 NET). BLANKSLIDE **Trans:** Now after Jesus reminds us to pray sincerely with simplicity and directness, because God cares for us, Jesus provides us with a model prayer to teach us how to pray. How should you pray? In Jesus’ model prayer he teaches us:

Pray with concern for God’s reputation. “Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.”

Approach God with intimacy and awe, focusing on His worthiness as you pray. **Remember who you are addressing when you approach God in prayer.** This will help you have the right frame of mind. Jesus’ teaches us to address God as “our Father.” The Jewish concept of father is of one who cares for you, loves you, one who can meet your needs. **God invites us to come to Him in prayer.** And He’s “Our Father.” You have a Father in heaven who knows your need for help to break out of a sinful habit patter, a Father who knows your physical needs, a Father who knows your need for a word of encouragement to hang on to.

We have a personal relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ. In this sense God is not the Father of all people indiscriminately. God is our Father **in heaven.** God is thus sovereign over all the earth.

APPL: God is in control over all the earth. God is aware of what you are presently going through. God see those tears, or inward grief you feel due to sorrow or loss or sin. God aware of what you are facing financially.

The Bible keeps a certain amount of tension between intimacy and awe in our thinking about God. The writer of Hebrews encourages you and me: SLIDE: “Let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help” (Hebrews 4:16 NET) [BLANK SLIDE]

The fact that in prayer we come to God’s throne should fill us with awe, yet because God’s rule is characterized by grace, God is approachable. We don’t have to parade like the Pharisees or babble like the pagans. God invites you and me to enjoy intimacy with Him. Jesus invites you and me to: Confidently talk with God as our Father in heaven.

Prayer expresses our relationship of trust and dependence on God. We come to God with awe, seeking intimacy with Him. Prayer is not primarily getting things from God but talking with Him, the God of the universe who knows us, who knows the very hairs of our head and who cares for us.

ILL: When my children were young, I would play a game with them. I would lay down on the floor and all five or six or seven of them would pile on top of me and try to hold me down for a certain number of seconds. What I enjoyed about that game was having my children close to me. The game itself didn’t matter, it was the family closeness that mattered; the opportunity to play together with them, and to laugh and interact with one another. In a similar way another father may play a game with his children of taking a few coins and putting them in his hand. He shows them the coins and then closes his hand over them. His youngsters then crawl up in his lap and try to pry open his fingers one at a time. **Once they capture the coins they scream with delight and jump down to treasure their prize.** What this father treasures, as I did, was the family closeness with his children.

APPL: **Now often when we pray we concentrate on the gifts in God’s hand and ignore the hand of God Himself.** We pray fervently for new jobs or for the return of health. When we gain the prizes we are delighted. And then too often our passion for intimacy with God lessens. If you are only after the coins, God’s hand serves only as a way to make the house payment, buy clothes for the kids, or pay for the groceries. After the need has been met, the hand itself means little to us.

Although God in His grace does give good gifts to us, God offers us more than just good gifts to you and me. **God offers Himself.** If you are satisfied with the trinkets in the Father’s hand you miss the best reward of prayer—the reward of communicating **and communing** with the God of the universe.

Appl: So let’s remember, approach God with intimacy. Be thankful for the privilege of addressing God as your Father. Be thankful you can talk with Him.

Trans: One of the joys as your children grow older, is having them express appreciation to you, not merely for what you give them, **but for who you are.** As you pray that God’s name would be honored what you express to God is that **you are concerned about His reputation.** When we pray “Hallowed be your name” or “May your name be honored,” what we are saying is: **“God I want your reputation to be honored through my life.** Jesus teaches you and me then in this first petition: **Be concerned for God’s reputation as you pray.**

To pray that God's name would be honored means you tell God you want your life to bring Him honor and glory. It tells God you are most concerned with His reputation, not your own. **“God help me to enhance your reputation today as I do my work, as I serve my spouse and family, as I represent you to the community around me.” In hallowing God's name we set it apart, acknowledging the supreme worth of God.** We are praying that God may be God to us, that He will be set apart in our lives in such a way that it will be clear that we are seeking to honor God.

Reit/Trans: So Jesus' first instruction to us in prayer is this: Pray with concern for God's reputation. Now the second request focuses on God's program; God's rule over the earth. The second petition is *“Your kingdom come.”* By teaching us to pray: “Your kingdom come” Jesus instructs us:

Pray with concern for God's rule over the earth and its people. *“Your kingdom come.”*

Jesus teaches us to pray **God's kingdom** would come, **the full manifestation of God's promised rule. Jesus speaks here about His future messianic reign upon the earth.** All through Scripture, the story of the Bible looks forward to the return of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who will rule in righteousness, when the kingdom of this world will become His kingdom. What are we saying then when we pray, “Your kingdom come”? By our praying, “May your kingdom come,” we assert: **“I submit to your reign myself, God, and I desire that others would do so also.”** God, I desire for your saving, royal rule to be extended now as people bow in submission to Him. I want to live my life in anticipation of your coming kingdom. I want your value system to direct me in what I do.

When we pray, “Your kingdom come,” we are praying for Christ to return to establish His kingdom on earth. Jesus teaches us in this request to pray for the consummation of the kingdom when God's messianic kingdom prophesied throughout the Old Testament will be established by Jesus' return to earth (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:22; Revelation 11:17; 22:20).

APPL: So when you ask for God's kingdom to come, by implication you also pray that the small bit of earth you occupy now will be subject to Him. **If you & I truly want God's rule to be established on earth by Christ, we also must yield the kingdom of our own heart and life to Him!** Unless we are truly concerned about making our heart His throne and bringing others into glad submission to Him, we cannot pray with integrity for His kingdom to come. [Cf. Robinson]

Trans: How should we pray? **Pray with concern that God's name be honored. Pray for the program of God** (i.e., Pray that God's kingdom will come). **And third** Pray for the purpose of God. Pray that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Pray for the purpose of God, that His will would be done on earth as it is in heaven. *Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (v. 10b).*

What are we praying for as we pray: “May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven? **How is God's will done in heaven? In heaven the angels instantly carry out God's commands.** When we pray, “May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” we are telling God, “God I want to display that same instant obedience to your will that the angels in heaven display.” In David's hymn of praise in Psalm 103 God gives this command to the good angels in heaven:

SLIDE: “Praise the Lord, you angels of his, you powerful warriors who carry out his decrees and obey his orders! ^{103:21} Praise the Lord, all you warriors of his, you servants of his who carry out his desires!” (Psalm 103:20-21 NET). [BLANK SLIDE]

Praying for **God’s will** to be done provides a foundation for our prayers. As we pray, Jesus says, **ask for God’s will to be done in your life and in the world.** Instead what do we tend to do? Too often we pray as if we expect God to change the way He runs the universe because we have given Him our petitions. We treat Him like a genie in a lamp. When we rub the lamp and make a wish, we expect to be granted what we want. **APPL: In prayer, Jesus says, conform your will to God’s.** Jesus set the ultimate example. The night he was betrayed he prayed: “My Father, if possible, let this cup pass from me! **Yet not what I will, but what you will**” (Matt 26:39 NET).

APPL: What about you this morning? Some of you are trying to stay afloat financially. Perhaps you or your spouse have undertaken a new business venture that you hope will provide some needed extra income for the family. As you pray about your financial situation Jesus teaches us come with an attitude of acknowledgement that most of all we want God’s will to be done and that we are dependent on God.

James, the half-brother of Christ, warns us against having an arrogant and independent spirit against God when he counsels us in James 4:13-16: SLIDE(S): “Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into this or that town and spend a year there and do business and make a profit.” ^{4:14} You do not know about tomorrow. What is your life like? For you are a puff of smoke that appears for a short time and then vanishes. ^{4:15} You ought to say instead, **“If the Lord is willing, then we will live and do this or that.”** ^{4:16} But as it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil” (James 4:13-16 NET). [Blank SLIDE]

Trans: So as you pray focus on our Father in heaven. Be concerned about God’s reputation. Be concerned about God’s agenda, His kingdom, and be concerned that God’s will be done. The purpose of prayer then is for you and me to glorify God’s name. The purpose of prayer is for us to ask God for help to accomplish His will on earth. **In this model prayer Jesus teaches us to start our prayer with God’s interests, not ours:** God’s name, God’s kingdom, and God’s will. Robert Law said, **“Prayer is a mighty instrument, not for getting man’s will done in heaven, but for getting God’s will done in earth.”**

You & I do not have the right to ask God for anything that will dishonor His name. We do not have the right to ask God for anything that will delay His kingdom. We do not have the right to pray for anything knowingly that would be against God’s will on earth.

As Jesus instructs us in how to pray it is significant to note that He doesn’t use any singular pronouns in this model prayer. All of the pronouns are plural. “Give **us this day our daily bread.... Forgive **us**....” **Jesus begins the prayer with “Our Father.”** When you pray remember you are part of God’s worldwide family of believers. You and I have no right to ask for ourselves anything that would harm another member of the family. If we pray in the will of God, the answer will be a blessing to all of God’s people in one way or another. (Cf Wiersbe)

Now, if we put God’s concerns first, then we can bring our own needs. God is concerned about our needs and knows them even before we mention them (Matt. 6:8). In the last three requests Jesus gives us in this model prayer, **Jesus teaches us to bring our daily needs before God. How are we to pray?**

Pray to God about what you need. “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt 6:11).

Because God understands our needs and can truly meet them, Jesus instructs us: “Talk to your Father in heaven about what you need.” When Jesus teaches us to pray: “Give us bread today for the coming day,” or “Give us today the bread we need for today” He teaches: Come to God in prayer about all you need in the physical realm.

ILL: I’ve been reminded (more like a slap of a 2”x4” up side of the head), that as I seek to demonstrate prudence and make plans for future retirement I need to remember to consciously be seeking the Lord’s wisdom in what we do. It’s not enough to simply run the various financial scenarios on programs such as Quicken or other financial software, or the advice of a financial consultant, above all we must say, “God help me to honor you with the resources you entrust to me, and be a good steward of what you provide, and also demonstrate wisdom in planning for the future, not just trying to secure financial security here on earth for retirement, but most importantly to keep laying up treasure in heaven as well.

The word “bread” Jesus uses here in v. 11 covers all food (cf. Prov. 30:8-9; Mark 3:20; Acts 6:1; 2 Thess. 3:12; James 2:15). Jesus does not limit our requests to food; by implication **Jesus teaches, Pray about all you need in the physical realm.** We show our dependency upon God by daily coming to God in prayer about all we need in the physical, spiritual, and moral realm.

Several times in the OT Scriptures God warns His people to be careful they don’t forget God in their prosperity. How easy for us to fail to live a life of daily dependency upon God. After all, in our affluent society we are not usually worried about where our next meal is coming from. (One of the blessings of our present financial downturn is that we are reminded that our ultimate hope is in God not in what we possess.)

Now Jesus teaches us here to pray for our needs, NOT our greeds. “Give us today our bread for the coming day.” **ILL:** A few years ago I took a class that included a man named **Augustine** from the **Central Republic of Africa**. During the week of the class, one day we went to a *Ponderosa Restaurant* for a meal. As we were standing at the food bar, waiting in line to fill our plates, I asked Augustine, “**What would your people think, if they saw all this food?**” Augustine responded, “Let me tell you what I thought when I came here for the first time last year. **I cried. We often go ALL DAY not knowing where our next meal is going to come from.**”

APPL: What needs, pressures are you facing? Mortgage payments, concerns about your children, desire for a Christian spouse, whatever burdens press down upon you, Jesus lovingly instructs, “Give those burdens to Him.” God cares about every detail of your life. **Talk to God about what you need. Bring your requests to the Lord.**

Now your request for God to meet your physical needs in no way diminishes your responsibility. Rather it takes for granted your responsibility to live one day at a time.

APPL: How dependent upon God are you? How’s your prayer life? Our prayer life reveals how dependant we are upon God. When you or I spend little time with God; the indication is we probably are not depending very much upon God. **Trans:** God wants you to come to him with your physical needs; but having your physical needs met is not enough. These last three petitions are linked together with “ands”, as if to say, life sustained by food is not enough. **We also need forgiveness of sin and God’s protection from sin.**

Pray to God for forgiveness of sin.

“And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.... “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matt. 6:12, 14-15).

Do you want to be forgiven for your sins? If we want God’s forgiveness, we must forgive others. Jesus teaches us to pray to God: *“Forgive us our debts, as we ourselves have forgiven our debtors.”* **Jesus is not teaching that we earn God’s forgiveness by forgiving others.** However, if you and I have truly experienced God’s forgiveness ourselves, and recognize our own sinfulness, then by God’s grace, we can extend that same mercy and forgiveness to those who have sinned against us (cf. Eph 4:32; Col 3:13).

Sin puts you and me in debt to God. Our sin piles up our indebtedness to God. Sin is likened to a debt because sin deserves to be punished. When God forgives our sin, he cancels the penalty and drops the charges against us. **Sins are debts you owe God** (whether sins of evil committed; or good deeds you fail to do [sins of commission or omission]). So Jesus teaches us to pray to our Father in heaven: *“Forgive us our debts, as we ourselves have forgiven our debtors.”*

APPL: Are you carrying any debt to God this morning? Are you carrying the guilt of sin? Jesus teaches, **“Ask God to forgive you.”** You can be forgiven for all your sin by recognizing you are guilty before God and trusting in Jesus Christ alone as your Savior, who died for you and rose again the third day.

*****God only forgives those who are repentant, those who truly recognize they have fallen short of God’s standards and turn to God for forgiveness. And one of the chief evidences of true repentance is a forgiving spirit.** *“And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.”* Jesus emphasizes this truth again **after** His model prayer. Note vv. 14-15 (of Matthew 6): *“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses”* (Matt. 6:14–15 NKJV).

*****Your forgiveness of others can never earn you the right to be forgiven.** But your forgiveness of others is a major evidence you are truly repentant of your sins. As a believer to not forgive others results in loss of fellowship with God.

Once our eyes are opened to how great our offense against God is, the injuries others have done to us appear by comparison extremely trivial. **Jesus is not discounting the pain you feel over what has been done to you.** Some of you here this morning have experienced incredible hurt and pain from one or more people. But Jesus says, “Let it go.” Recognize how much you need God’s forgiveness yourself for all of the times in your life you have gone your own way, rather than God’s way. Jesus promises, *“If you forgive others their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.”* Jesus warns however: *“If you do not forgive others, your Father will not forgive you your sins”* (Matt 6:15).

If we do not forgive others for what they have done against us, it proves we have minimized our own sin against God. In Matthew 18 Jesus gives a parable in which the main point is the disparity between the size of the debts between what others have done to us and all that we have done against God. The parable concludes with this statement by the king (who represents God in the story) to his slave who did not forgive:

SLIDE(S): ““Evil slave! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me!”^{18:33} Should you not have shown mercy to your fellow slave, just as I showed it to you?”^{18:34} And in anger his lord turned him over to the prison guards to torture him until he repaid all he owed.^{18:35} So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if each of you does not forgive your brother from your heart” (Matt 18:32-35 NET). [BLANK SLIDE]

Forgiveness may be in God’s nature, but it does not come naturally to us.

ILL: As many of you know firsthand, in divorce people usually struggle with forgiveness a lot. There is a story about a **genie** who came to a divorced woman and **granted her three wishes**, but with one condition: “whatever you wish for yourself, your ex-husband will get twice as much.” She thought carefully, and her first wish was for 10 billion dollars. The genie reminded her, “That means your ex will get 20 billion.” “That’s OK,” she said. “Your wish is granted,” the genie said. “What is your second wish?” Her second wish was for a beautiful mansion in Malibu. Once again, the genie reminded her, “That means your ex will get two mansions in Malibu.” “That’s OK,” she said. “**Your third wish?**” the genie asked. “**I would like you to scare me half to death.**”

When we have been betrayed and violated and treated unjustly, we want to get even! But everybody loses when we refuse to forgive. When you or I refuse to forgive we are kept stuck in the past, bound up in our hurt, a “prisoner to our own pain.” **Only forgiveness can set you free to start over again.** God knows the only way you are going to be whole is by learning to forgive. Jesus teaches us: Pray in this way... Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” But forgiveness is not something we know how to do—it flows from God’s heart alone. To help you forgive someone who has done terrible things to you, think about what your sins did to Jesus. All of our sins—your sins, my sins—helped nail Jesus Christ to the cross. There are a lot of misconceptions about forgiveness. Forgiveness does not mean you deny the wrong or the hurt and say, “That’s OK.” You feel the hurt. Take that hurt you feel and use it as a motivation to draw near in intimacy to God the Father. Jesus’ knows what it is to be treated wrongly, to be abused, and He invites you to draw near in intimacy to Him.

Forgiveness is not forgetting. Jesus still had the scars from the nails in his hands and his feet. And forgiveness does not happen quickly, but over a lifetime. Know what forgiveness is not. **Forgiveness does not mean you excuse a wrong or pretend that you could ever forget.** Forgiveness is not something that is processed rapidly. But ultimately forgiveness means we come to desire the well-being of our injurer. This can only come from God over a lifetime. In fact, **forgiveness is the hallmark of being a citizen of God’s kingdom.** “*Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.*”

Being forgiven much and loving much—this is life in the kingdom of God. “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” It does not come naturally to us, but it does to God. All forgiveness flows from the mystery of God’s loving heart beating in Jesus Christ, and now beating in us, His church.

Trans: Jesus’ model prayer ends with a petition that, while implicitly recognizing our own helplessness before the Devil whom Jesus alone could vanquish (Matt. 4:1–11), delights to trust the heavenly Father for deliverance from the Devil’s strength and wiles.

Pray to God for His protection from sin and deliverance from the devil.

“*And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one*” (Matt 6:13). “The request ‘do not lead us into temptation’ is not to suggest God causes temptation, but is a rhetorical way to ask for [God’s] protection from sin” [NET Bible notes]. Jesus teaches us here to **ask and trust God for His protection from sin**. As Christians we are in a spiritual battle. Our own flesh still wants to control us. The world system opposed to God tempts us to go our own way, and the devil, Satan, tries to keep us from doing what God desires. How can we have victory? Not in our own strength. Jesus here tells us to **ask God for His protection from sin, and depend on God’s help to keep the devil from destroying our lives**.

Trust God for deliverance from the Devil’s strength and wiles. We need our heavenly Father’s protection and help to steer clear of Satan’s cunning attacks. “Deliver us from the evil one.” **Satan is the prince of this world, and we must rely on God’s strength if we are to have victory over Satan’s schemes.**

Concl: Jesus gives us this prayer here as a model of *real* prayer, *Christian* prayer, in distinction to the prayers of the Pharisees and those who don’t know God. When we come to God in prayer, we do not come hypocritically like play actors seeking the applause of people, nor mechanically like pagan babblers, whose mind is not in their mutterings, **but thoughtfully, humbly and trustfully like little children to their father.** (Cf. Stott)

Remember God is your Father in heaven. He loves you, **His child**, with the most tender affection. God sees you, His child, even in the secret place. Your Father knows you, His child, and all that you need before you ask Him. God acts on behalf of us, His children, by His heavenly and kingly power. If you remember what God is like you will never pray with hypocrisy but always with integrity, never mechanically but always thoughtfully, like the child of God you are.

Concluding **prayer:**