

**Intro:**

This afternoon, I would like to take a look at the first few phrases in the Lord's Prayer which you will find in Matthew 6.

In so doing, we are *beginning* to answer the question, "How do we pray?"

Read Mt 6.5ff

**Proposition:** Prayer begins because of a personal relationship; prayer is practiced by a personal conversation.

**I. The basis of prayer: our relationship with God**

A. Plural: public relationship

B. Historical: constant relationship with God's people

1. Isaiah 63.16
2. Psalm 103.13
3. Deuteronomy 32.6

C. Cultural

Even pagan religions had a glimmering of this idea

- ♦ Pagan names of God (Dyaus – piter [Vedic], Zeu pater [Gk], Jupiter [Latin]) mean literally 'heaven Father'

Plutarch: "superstitious man recognizes only that which is sovereign in God, and not the fatherly."<sup>1</sup>

Seneca: "God has a fatherly mind towards good men"<sup>2</sup>

D. Clearly revealed by Jesus: see Mt 7.11

1. 1 John 3.1
2. John 8.42

**II. The act of prayer: our conversation with God**

Illustration: the prayers of Jesus

<sup>1</sup> Broadus, *Matthew*, p. 134

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

### III. The place of prayer: our God in heaven

- A. Heaven, according to the Bible, is the place where God dwells.
- B. Prayer, on a spiritual level, engages us in heavenly conversation.

~~~

Hallowed be thy name...

**Proposition2:** Prayer involves pleading for the magnification and increase of the glory and holiness of God.

### IV. Nature of the petition

#### A. Meaning of the terms

- 1. Hallowed: “to sanctify, or to revere, or to make and keep holy” L-J, 59
- 2. the Name: “all 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.” L-J, 59

#### B. Revealed names of God:

- 1. El or Elohim: strength — gives “a sense of His might, His dominion, and His power.” L-J, 59
- 2. Yahweh: self existent, I AM THAT I AM
- 3. Jehovah-jireh: the Lord will provide
- 4. Jehovah-rapha: the Lord that heals
- 5. Jehovah-nissi: the Lord our Banner
- 6. Jehovah-shalom: the Lord our peace
- 7. Jehovah-ra’ah: the Lord our shepherd
- 8. Jehovah-tsidkenu: the Lord our Righteousness
- 9. Jehovah-shammah: the Lord is present

“Our Lord is here teaching us to pray that the whole world may come to know God in this way, that the whole world may come to honour God like that. It is the expression of a burning and deep desire for the honour and glory of God.” L-J, 60

C. Illustrations

1. Passion of our Lord (John 17.4a, 6a)
2. Illustration: Moses taking off his shoes before I AM THAT I AM
3. Praise of the Psalmist:
  - a. God our rock
  - b. God our peace
  - c. God our shepherd
  - d. God our righteousness
  - e. God our ever present One

**V. Practice of the petition**

- A. How? — by magnifying the greatness and goodness of God by our words, lives, actions, thoughts. Make God big in your own life.
- B. When? — “When you come to God, says our Lord, in effect, even though you may be in desperate conditions and circumstances, it may be with some great concern on your mind and in your heart; even then, he says, stop for a moment and just recollect and realize this, that your greatest desire of all should be that this wonderful God, who has become your Father in and through Me, should be honoured, should be worshipped, should be magnified amongst the people.” L-J, 61

**Conclusion:**

In concluding these thoughts on prayer, it follows that we should pay heed to certain ideas.

1. We should remember *to whom* we are praying.
2. We should remember *whence* we are praying.
3. We should remember to pray, that is, carry on a reverential conversation with God.
4. We should remember our first object in prayer: the sanctification of our Father’s name.

Prayer that does not remember these things falls short of the pattern of God’s Word.