

Luke 11:1-4 The LORD's prayer  
It was a regular custom for a Rabbi to teach his disciples a simple prayer which they might habitually use. John had done that for his disciples, and now Jesus' disciples came asking him to do the same for them. This is Luke's version of the LORD's prayer. It teaches us all we need to know about how to pray and what to pray for.

It begins by calling GOD FATHER. That was the characteristic Christian address to GOD. The very first word tells us that in prayer we are not coming to someone out of whom gifts have to be unwillingly extracted, but to a FATHER who delights to supply his children's needs.

In Hebrew the name means much more than merely the name by which a person is called. The name means the whole character of the person as it is revealed and known to us. Psalm 9:10 says, "Those who know thy name put their trust in thee." That means far more than knowing that GOD's name is Jehovah. It means that those who know the whole character and mind and heart of GOD will gladly put their trust in Him.

We must note particularly the order of the LORD's prayer. Before anything is asked for ourselves, GOD and His glory,

And the reverence due to Him, comes first. Only when we give GOD His place will other things take their proper place.

Ex. 16:  
11-21

The prayer covers all life. It covers present need. It tells us to pray for our daily bread. This goes back to the old story of the manna in the wilderness. Only enough for the needs of the day might be gathered. We are not to worry about the unknown future, but to live a day at a time.

It covers past sins. When we pray we cannot do other than pray for forgiveness, for the best of us are sinful coming before the purity of GOD.

It covers future trials. Temptation means any testing situation. It covers every challenge of people's integrity and fidelity. We cannot escape it, but we can meet it with GOD.

Someone has said that the LORD'S Prayer has two great uses in our private prayer. IF we use it at the beginning of our devotions it awakens all kinds of holy desires which lead us on into the right pathways of prayer. IF we use it at the end of our devotions, it sums up all we ought to pray for in the presence of GOD.

We learn a good lesson by examining the prayers of the Apostle Paul. It seems that he never prayed for deliverance from things, but for the strength to endure them with joy and good temper. He also prayed that for the Church at Colossae, God is more interested in changing us than He is in changing our circumstances. He does not delight in watching us suffer or have a difficult time, but He does delight in our spiritual growth. If we are honest with ourselves we must admit that most of our spiritual maturity develops during the hard times in our lives, not during the easy times.

Opposition stretches us. It stretches our faith, teaches us not to trust in ourselves to solve our problems, and gives us compassion for other people who go through difficulties. The Apostle James said that our trials will eventually bring out patience and that when

(Jms. 1:4) patience is Fully developed in us, we will lack nothing. He even states that we should be exceedingly joyful in various trials and tribulations because of what they are working in us. I want to encourage you to pray the way Paul prayed in Colossians. Ask for strength to endure with joy rather than wanting to avoid everything that is difficult and remember that anything God allows will ultimately work out for your good if you trust Him and keep on praying.