

The Lord's Prayer: Praying with Confidence

"This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

The model prayer given to us by Jesus mirrors the gospel in that it starts with God. Praying with the perspective of this prayer takes the focus off of me, myself and I. **Our Father.**

Main Point: You can and should see God as your Heavenly Father. God is not a vending machine and you hope to press the right buttons. God is your heavenly Father.

This term Father communicates several things.

1) God is **personal**. He is not a power but a person. God is not an impersonal active force like the wind. God has personality. He has a will. He has emotion. He can be pleased, and He can be grieved. God is capable of relationship. Intimate, personal relationship. That's your Father in heaven. **You pray to a God who is personal.**

2) God has given you **access** to Him. To be a child of God means you have access to God. For a Christian who is an average citizen of the United States, you don't have access to the President of the U.S., but you do have access to the Creator of the universe.

The only time when Jesus prayed and did not call God his Father was on the cross when Jesus cried out...

My God, my God why have you forsaken me.

This was a period of time when God was not acting as Father to Jesus but was acting as Judge. God placed our sins on Jesus and then God unleashed His wrath. God judged our sin while it was on Jesus. During that time, Jesus endured separation from God, which is the natural result of sin.

This is the gospel: Jesus paid for our sins. *The privilege of prayer has come to you at high cost.* Jesus paid the price so that you could call God your Father. Jesus did this so that you would never be forsaken but always welcomed into your Father's presence.

God will never NOT be your Father.

God will never NOT see you as His child.

God will never move toward you as Judge – because He has already judged your sin on Jesus.

3) God **delights** to hear from you.

God loves to hear you when you pray. Your Heavenly Father loves to year your voice when you talk to Him in prayer. You are the one who feels as if you don't say it right. If right words needed to be said, Jesus would have given us right words. Our Father. You are a child coming to God as your Father and He is delighted to hear from you.

Here's a piece of confidence that you can have when you pray. You don't have to get an "A" when you pray. Your prayers aren't graded because there are no grades in God's grace. When you say, "Our Father," that gives you access to the Creator of the Universe who is delighted to hear from you simply because you are His child.