

"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*

A pattern for the prayers of Jesus' disciples

## **Our Father**

The prayer begins with worship -- not with asking. The disciples, Jesus' followers, were "*sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus*" (Gal 3:26). These alone can truly worship Him. They worship him whose name is holy. Their first act in prayer is to recognise His holiness and praise him.

## **Your Kingdom come, your will be done**

Again God comes first: His will before ours, His kingdom before our needs, see verse 33. The kingdom of God is a divine political kingdom to come on earth. Daniel 2:44, Rev 11:15, Dan 7:13, 1 Corinthians 15:25.

## **Give us today our daily bread**

Now we may ask God to supply our needs; but Jesus does not suggest we look too far ahead. We should ask for "bread for the coming day". Verses 16 - 34 develop this idea.

## **Forgive us our debts**

Debts here are *duties* -- what we ought to do, but fail to do so. These are sins of omission. Tyndale translated the word as *trespasses*, also found in verses 14 and 15. These are sins by what we do or commit. Debts and trespasses -- sins of omission and commission -- cover all sins. Luke 11:4 has *forgive us our sins*: this covers everything.

## **As we have forgiven our debtors**

A very solemn warning: we will not be forgiven by God unless we do our part, and forgive others. See the Parable of the two debtors in Matthew 18:21-35.

## **Lead us not into temptation**

The true disciple, realizing the dangers of failure in the time of trial, prays for deliverance from it, and from the evil of the world, 2 Tim 4:18.

## **Deliver us from the evil one**

Compare this with Matthew 5:39, "*do not resist an evil person*". Jesus is probably quoting Psalm 140:1, "*Rescue me, O Lord, from evil men...*". We pray to God to do for us what we cannot or may not do for ourselves.

## **Yours is ... the power and the glory**

The prayer closes as it opens with praise to God and worship. This is a fitting conclusion to a petition to the Holy One, whose kingdom the righteous seek.