

Adoration
By Scott Jewell
Matthew 6:9-13

I'd rather be able to pray than to be a great preacher; Jesus Christ never taught his disciples how to preach, but only how to pray. -- D. L. Moody

We're going to spend the next four weeks studying the prayer Jesus taught His disciples. To do so, we're going to learn the ACTS of prayer. ACTS is an acronym that stands for the four components of Jesus' prayer- Adoration Confession Thanksgiving Supplication
Before we pray this passage together, let me remind you of Jeff's message last week

But when God calls us to be still... He's NOT asking us to do nothing. He's NOT asking us to focus on nothing. You remember what God says we need to focus on???? -- Jeff Strite
(this space was left intentionally, please include the line below, stay on this slide until video)
"Be still... and know that I am God." -- Psalm 46:10

I want to give you the opportunity to put this into practice. Allow this video to help you to be still and know that He is God and then we can pray the Lord's prayer together.

Video- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJzUS_YPIIc (from :03 to 2:54 Francis Chan, How Big is the Universe?)

That is the view if we were to reach a star 100 million light years away, we've reached the outer limits of our telescopes, and to think, our God is even bigger. Be still and know that I am God. With that in mind, let's go to Him by praying the words Jesus taught His disciples together. I've got them on the screen so that we can speak in unison, I know some of us have learned it using different translations and that's okay. Let's 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. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

The disciples came to Jesus. I'm sure they saw Him praying many times before. Sometimes among the crowds, other times withdrawing to a private place. These men had seen enough to know that when Jesus prayed, things happened. When you're trying to figure out how to do something well, the quickest way is to go to someone who already has it mastered. If you haven't noticed yet, we have a new classroom where there used to be a stage. Now, trust me, when it was decided to build that room, no one came to me and asked how to design the room. That was probably a good thing- my initial idea was to take the pvc from the 9 square game

Justin built and hang some sheets where that back wall was to create a temporary classroom. Instead, they went to Mark, who with some help from family members and a few others here in the church, built this much nicer looking, very usable room that has plenty of space for a large class, doors that will allow wheelchairs easy access, and a sound buffer so that the NT class doesn't disrupt the teens during the Sunday school hour. Because they had seen the effectiveness of Jesus praying, the disciples asked Him to teach them.

As I mentioned earlier, we're going to break down this lesson on prayer into four parts. Today, I'm going to talk about adoration. If you look again at verse 9:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed by Your name. -- Matthew 6:9

I took an unscientific poll on FB this week in preparation for this morning, simply asking friends, "What do you adore about God?" I had a little Super Steve fun with the answers, as you can see from the slide: (I have a graphic word cloud using the words given in answer on FB).

The answers ranged from things like His unending, unconditional love, His patience, His grace and His magnificent power to things like His sense of humor and His foolishness.

I believe all the answers given could be sorted into one of two categories:

1. The magnificence of God- Our Father in HEAVEN!

We've already watched a video showing the enormity of the universe- God is even bigger
The Psalmist depicts it this way:

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.
There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.
Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.
In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun,
which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion,
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.
It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other;
nothing is hidden from its heat.

From cover to cover, the Bible describes God in all His magnificence:

In the Old Testament:

- In Genesis, He is the Creator God.
- In Exodus, He is the Redeemer.
- In Leviticus, He is your sanctification.
- In Numbers, He is your guide.
- In Deuteronomy, He is your teacher.
- In Joshua, He is the mighty conqueror.

- In Judges, He gives victory over enemies.
 - In Ruth, He is your kinsman redeemer.
 - In 1 Samuel, He is the root of Jesse.
 - In 2 Samuel, He is the Son of David.
 - In 1 Kings and 2 Kings, He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
 - In 1st and 2nd Chronicles, He is your intercessor and High Priest.
 - In Ezra, He is your temple, your house of worship.
 - In Nehemiah, He is your mighty wall, protecting you from your enemies.
 - In Esther, He stands in the gap to deliver you from your enemies.
 - In Job, He is the arbitrator who not only understands your struggles, but has the power to do something about them.
 - In Psalms, He is your song—and your reason to sing.
 - In Proverbs, He is your wisdom, helping you make sense of life and live it successfully.
 - In Ecclesiastes, He is your purpose, delivering you from vanity.
 - In the Song of Solomon, He is your Rose of Sharon.
 - In Isaiah, He is the mighty counselor, the prince of peace, the everlasting father, and more. He's everything you need.
 - In Jeremiah, He is your balm of Gilead, the soothing salve for your sin-sick soul.
 - In Lamentations, He is the ever-faithful one upon whom you can depend.
 - In Ezekiel, He is your wheel in the middle of a wheel—the one who assures that dry, dead bones will come alive again.
 - In Daniel, He is the ancient of days, the ever-lasting God who never runs out of time.
 - In Hosea, He is faithful, always beckoning you come back—even when you've abandoned Him.
 - In Joel, He is your refuge, keeping you safe in times of trouble.
 - In Amos, He is the husbandman, the one you can depend on to stay by your side.
 - In Obadiah, He is Lord of the Kingdom.
 - In Jonah, He is your salvation, bringing you back within His will.
 - In Micah, He is judge of the nation.
 - In Nahum, He is the jealous God.
 - In Habakkuk, He is the Holy One.
 - In Zephaniah, He is the witness.
 - In Haggai, He overthrows the enemies.
 - In Zechariah, He is Lord of Hosts.
 - In Malachi, He is the messenger of the covenant.
- In the New Testament:
- In Matthew, He is king of the Jews.
 - In Mark, He is the servant.
 - In Luke, He is the Son of Man, feeling what you feel.
 - In John, He is the Son of God.
 - In Acts, He is Savior of the world.
 - In Romans, He is the righteousness of God.

- In I Corinthians, He is the rock that followed Israel.
- In II Corinthians, He is the triumphant one, giving victory.
- In Galatians, He is your liberty; He sets you free.
- In Ephesians, He is head of the Church.
- In Philippians, He is your joy.
- In Colossians, He is your completeness.
- In I Thessalonians, He is your hope.
- In II Thessalonians, He is your glory.
- In I Timothy, He is your faith.
- In II Timothy, He is your stability.
- In Titus He is your reason for serving.
- In Philemon, He is your benefactor.
- In Hebrews, He is your perfection.
- In James, He is the power behind your faith.
- In I Peter, He is your example.
- In II Peter, He is your purity.
- In I John, He is your life.
- In II John, He is your pattern.
- In III John, He is your motivation.
- In Jude, He is the foundation of your faith.
- In Revelation, He is your coming King.

THAT, is the God I adore. And because God is all of those things, He is worthy of your adoration. Now tell me, what is it you adore about your God?

2. An intimacy with God- Our FATHER in heaven

Today is Valentine's Day- Valentine was a priest who defied the orders of Roman Emperor Claudius II to stop conducting weddings so that young men would remain single and have no family to concern themselves with as they went off to war. While in prison, the jailer's daughter Julia, some versions maintain she was blind, tended to Valentine in exchange for an education. The story goes that through the power of prayer together, Julia was healed. Some say that Valentine, despite being a priest, fell in love with Julia. On the day of his execution, February 14, Valentine left a note for Julia, which he signed, "From your Valentine."

On the day we celebrate our love for significant others in our lives, it seems even more appropriate to celebrate our First Love. As Jesus told His disciples:

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. – John 15:13

Jesus spoke these words on the way to Jerusalem, knowing what would soon happen. Because God loves us, Jesus laid down His life. Why would He be willing to go through with this plan?

Think about it- 2000 years later and we're ALL still doing a good job of rebelling against the ways of God. Yet, He desired and desires a relationship with us- one where we can call Him Father.

Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. – Galatians 4:6-7

I especially like this passage for two reasons:

1. The use of Abba- carries the idea of daddy, small child who knows they are loved
First Service- Hannah when she was a baby, it's been my privilege to be daddy
Second Service- Eric's recent post on fb about Audrey's excitement when he gets home
2. The description of what it means to be a son- others have gone gender neutral- idea of inheritance that son carries

Now, I know that at times, there are some people who cringe at the idea of being told they can have God as Father. They look back on their own memories of disappointment and horror and think, why would I want a heavenly Father when all I know of a father is that? I promise you that God- our Father in heaven- is nothing like that. In fact, let me close with this story that Jesus tells about the kind of Father our God truly is.

There once was a man who had two sons. This man had done rather well in life and trained up his sons to be hardworking individuals as well. Unfortunately, the younger son got mixed up in the wrong crowd and eventually asked his father for his half of the inheritance so he could go along his merry way. Now, you've got to understand that in those days, making such a request was about like walking up to somebody and in their face saying, "I wish you were dead." The father, being the gracious man he was, granted the son's request and let him go of his own free will. The son traveled and lived it up, throwing parties and becoming popular because of all the money he was freely spending. However, the economy tanked and his money dried up. All his supposed friends abandoned him and he wound up taking a job for a pig farmer. Disgusting work, especially for a Jew who was supposed to have nothing to do with pigs. As he was out in the muck with the pigs, he finally came to his senses. After all, even the pigs were eating better than he had been. He began to get homesick and reminisced about the good ole days, how his father had been so generous, even providing plenty for the servants. He knew he didn't deserve to be welcomed home, but thought maybe he could become one of the servants- couldn't be any worse off than he was now. So he made up his mind and began the long journey home. What he didn't know, was that day after day, month after month, his father had sat on the front porch, scanning the horizon, watching for his little boy's return. The day finally arrived. The younger son reached the top of the last hill and could see home. His father spotted him at that very moment and leapt off the porch and ran to his son, grabbed him up in his arms and gave him a big squeeze. The son, barely able to breathe, launches into the speech

he'd practiced over and over the entire journey home, about how sorry he was to have deserted his father and if he'd only take him back as a servant, he'd be eternally grateful. But his father would hear none of it. "Hurry, bring the BEST robe and put it on my son. Put the family ring on his finger and new sandals on his feet. Barbecue the fattened calf so we can have a feast. My son who was dead is alive again, he was lost but now is found!"

That is the God we adore. That is the God to whom we pray. That is the God who patiently waits, holding off judgment, so He can welcome His children home.

Invitation