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Willerup United Methodist Church
Sermon Notes
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The Lord's Prayer
1 - Our Father



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During the season of Lent, we will reflect on the Lord's Prayer. This is the example for talking to God the Father that Jesus gave to the disciples and to us.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father, who art in heaven.

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, they will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgives our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from all evil.

For thy is the kingdom, the power and glory forever. Amen.

Prayer – supplication, requests all describe our reaching out God with different purposes.

What is prayer?

It is to go into the presence of God, or to acknowledge the presence of He who is always present. Prayer is a conversation, where we talk to our heavenly Father. The disciples asked Jesus, and He taught them how to pray.

1. Some suggestions regarding prayer – Matthew 6:5-8

- * Not like hypocrites, not to show off. Do not seek a reward from men.
- * Place of prayer – in a closet, in secret. The Lord sees you and will reward you.
- * Don't be like a babbler. Using good vocabulary and many words does not impress God or become effective prayer. It may impress people, but not God. God searches our hearts and knows what is in them. He looks at whether our thoughts match with our words. This does not mean at all that we should not pour out what is bothering us in our hearts. He wants us to express what is going in our minds and hearts.
- * Our conversation describes our relationship with the hearer. Can we talk without any hesitation and share our concerns with the one who is hearing us? Though He knows, he expects us to share with him what is going on in our lives.

2. Hindrances in Prayer

- * When our conscience is not clear, we do not want to face anyone, so how will we face God, the one who knows all about us? We hesitate to come before him with a guilty conscience. Let me give you an example. This is found in Genesis 3. Adam and Eve usually met with the Lord each day. One day they were missing. They were trying to hide themselves from God. The reason was that they had disregarded the covenant with God and broken the commandment or instruction of the Lord. This is what sin is, when we disregard the standards of God for our lives. This distances us from our Loving God and makes us want to hide from him.
- * Many times we are present in the body but our thoughts are wandering somewhere else. We cannot concentrate because the worries of the world encompass us.
- * Rushing – or being in a rut. We recite the prayer without meaning. Just think, how do we converse with our physical father, we can do the

same with the heavenly father. This describes our relationship – intimate and casual. You must have noticed, how little ones talk to their father – without hesitation, whatever they want, they express it and share. Whatever the needs are, they just ask with the rights they have as sons and daughters. So why would the heavenly father not hear us and accept our petitions?

3. **The Modes or Poses of Prayer**

It is not necessary that we should close our eyes and bow our heads to pray. This was suggested by our elders to help us concentrate on the person of God. Lisa Marshal of WNOP Strategic Prayer Coordinator has compiled these as examples from the scriptures. (*Zondervan Pastors Annual, 2008*)

- * Sitting – 1 Chronicles 17:16, 26-27
- * Kneeling – 1 Kings 8:54; Psalms 72:11
- * Standing – Nehemiah 9:5; Mark 11:25; Luke 18:13
- * Raising of hands – 2 Chronicles 6:12-13; 1 Timothy 2:8
- * Walking – 2 Kings 4:35
- * Falling on our faces – Joshua 7:6, Ezra 10:1; Mathew 26:39

Now let us meditate on the first part of the Lord's Prayer.

OUR FATHER

Prayer requires more of the heart than of the tongue. The eloquence of prayer consists of fervency of desire and simplicity of faith. Our trust and confidence ought to proceed from that which God is able to do in us, and not from that which we can say to Him. *Adam Clark's Commentary on the Bible* pg. 777

God is a father to everyone – he is the creator, sustainer, deliverer, who always think about us. When we use this name Father, there are so

many other names to address him – Papa, Daddy, Dad, Pa, etc. This all indicate our relationship with him and our intimacy with him. When we use this name it also shows respect – Sir/madam, mom/dad, uncle/aunt, grandpa/grandma etc.

Our petitions are based on our relationship or our respectful love which we should feel for God and strong confidence in God’s love for us. It is the bond of relationship between Father and his children.

WHO ART IN HEAVEN

How far is heaven? When we think of heaven our minds go very far – to orbit, sky, space – very, very far up there! The Greek word which is used here is *uranus*. The simple meaning of this word is nearness – closeness. The Lord is very near to us, just a breath away. This also indicates that we are not alone. His presence is very close. When we realize that God is near us, the fear goes away. He will never leave nor forsake us, but promised to be with us always. Matthew 28:20b, “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

When we talk about heaven we recognize his omnipresence. “But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven cannot contain you ...” 1 Kings 8:27

His majesty and dominion over His creatures. “O Lord, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you.” 2 Chronicles 20:6

When we realize his close proximity, we will experience a wonderful change within us. We will experience the fullness of joy, and peace that passes all understanding. Our faith and trust will increase many-fold.

So let us come to him boldly and say, “Our Father, who art in heaven.”