**“Pray”**

Psalm 138

Genesis 18:20-33

Colossians 2:6-15

**Luke 11:1-13**

 Pentecost 7, July 23/24, 2022

“Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.’ And He said to them, ‘When you pray, say: “Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indepted to us. And lead us not into temptation.”’”

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Bridge**

Immediately after Jesus showed us how to **worship** (having used Mary by example in contrast to her sister Martha), He teaches how, then (after that), to **pray**. From where no one had had this **gift of being able to pray by a right**, **Jesus** made that a **PRIVILEGE** **TO HAVE** through a baptism into Himself … (as Colossians calls it) a “**burial and then resurrection with God’s Son**” **making His Father also ours**. Through that, those so baptized and believing the Father has “raised and exalted **with Jesus** **through faith** into the **powerful working of God who raised Him from the dead**”. Which is also prayer (the ability to ask and be heard and answered because Jesus won that opportunity for those who are made to be in Him). Baptism is “burial with Jesus” as Scripture calls it (Colossians 2:12 says that’s what it’s all about). And through that burial with Jesus the Father’s has graced us to, with Him, **live with Him in His life**, the Father “forgiving all trespasses for the sake of His Son, canceling (by His Gospel choice) the record of debt that stood against us who He makes then (with His Son) able to pray to Him and be heard (like the Son is). This **debt** He set aside, nailing it to Christ’s cross”.

Baptized, we’re brothers and sisters with Jesus. And as He petitions the Father (prays to Him), so can we. And we ought to and given to. So He instructs disciples on **how and what to pray**. The 2nd Commandments demands that we do … and Jesus says we can start by calling upon the Father with that gracious relationship name.

**Text**

“Lord, **teach us** to pray”, which was, is, and ever shall be a “doing as He did” activity. He offered what He utilized as a gift of divine communication and relating. It’s for us to do and be heard in.

Jesus wasn’t the first to, yet the first to gain hearing on His own with that Fatherly name. Each teacher’s “**reached out**” just as did John the Baptist who (as we hear in our Gospel account) taught those around him to “**reach out” to God**. People have asked for awhile what they needed, knowing it’s from God they should ask and they’ve given thanks to Him for providing the things that were needed: “Lord, teach us to pray as John taught His disciples”. So Jesus gave the way and words, and we follow that to the “T”. It’s called the “Lord’s Prayer” because it was His and His gifted way and words.

“Jesus was praying in a certain place”, and He was doing that deliberately and, apparently, for a fixed time He set aside to do that communicating with His Father. And Jesus (asked) taught others He blessed to **how** and **what we should** **pray in order to be heard as He was**.

The **privilege** was to pray to the Father in the **same way** **He did (newly granted by Him)**. “Father” in the Old Testament, wasn’t an approved way to **address God**. Jesus, then, is, the Permitter (or Mediator) in this. He gave and instructed prayer to those **AS HE WAS ALLOWED TO PRAY**, so let us (with Him) **address the Father as “Father”**. ….

So that is “**how**” by gifted relationship and permission and access, instructed by Jesus, but it’s also the “**what**” in a **“laundry list” that’s His also**. We pray that “laundry list” addressing God as Jesus did. **We’ve** prayed those petitions virtually always verbatim as He gave it, with only the variation of speaking it, chanting it, or singing it, but also praying it in an expanded way to remind of its substance. We pray it verbatim because we pray it with the Church in all the world, which is **why we pray it verbatim**. And our catechism teaches the “what of it" … and so I recite:

* We address Him as “Father”, and “with these words God” (by Jesus’ teaching and having bridged that gap for us to be able to do so) “tenderly invites us to believe that **He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father**
* … and God’s name is certainly holy in itself, but we pray that it may **be kept holy among us when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, lead holy lives according to it**.
* And the kingdom of God comes by itself certainly (without our prayers), but we pray that **it may come to us also when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit so that by His grace we believe His Word and lead godly lives**
* … and the good and gracious will of God is done already, without prayer, yet we pray that **it may be done among us when He breaks and hinders evil plans and the purpose of the devil, this fallen world, and our own sinful natures** but **strengthens us and keeps us firm in His Word and faith**.
* And God gives us daily bread (**to everyone, believer or not**), yet we pray to **keep realizing this and receive everything with thanksgiving**. We pray for **all** that supports this life, such as food and drink, clothing and home, sufficient finances, spouses and children, faithful government, health, a good reputation and friends.
* We pray for **forgiveness of our sins and that our sins not disclude us from being heard by God**. We are neither worthy of His listening, nor have we deserved that privilege, yet ask that we **have this hearing always by grace**. We, too, promise to forgive as we’ve been forgiven.
* And it is not God who tempts anyone toward evil, so we pray that **He guard us from those influences, that nothing deceives us or leads us to falseness, despair, or any shame or vice**. Although attacked by **temptations**, we pray to **overcome them with God’s help**.
* We pray that our Father **rescue us from evil in all its attacks and lead us toward an end of our struggles that’s blessed in the Paradise that’s coming as we remain His**.
* Amen and our doxology ‘for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever’ is the Church’s **‘add on’ of appreciation and glory to the One who’s granting us this relationship**. Our prayers are **directed to the God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who has created and redeemed us (saving us), and adopted us into the child- and brotherhood of His kingdom**.

**Application**

And the content of the “laundry list” of Jesus’ prayerful petitions is summarized in **MERCY**. **Abraham** begged for God’s mercy upon Sodom and Gomorrah where some minimal reception of that could be found, and **we pray** for mercy upon ourselves and others. We are gifted to ask for it, and God’s mercy is to condescend to listen and interact. As He **was** **with Abraham in his praying**, so He **is** **with us (except Fatherly) as we join the Lord Jesus**.

Our “amen” is the **faith to know all of this** (both His hearing of us and the gracious act of offering it by Jesus death for us on a cross and our connection with that by baptism and God’s promise and name that it all was, indeed, for us and for our salvation acknowledged by us as we pray, appreciating that (in thanksgiving and praise). In +Jesus’ name. Amen.

Now may the peace of God that truly passes all human understanding keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Amen.