

## 3/29/20 - Matt. 6:9-13 - "Prayer: The Lord's Directive"

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[ 0 : 00 ] So as we begin to look at the Lord's Prayer, let's begin with prayer. Father, thank you for this time to gather together as your children, to take a moment to read your word, to study, and to learn. Father, I pray that in this you would be glorified, that your name be magnified. Lord, that you would open our ears and our hearts to receive from your word, that we would be edified. Lord, that we would grow in our love for you, that your will be done. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. So as we look at the Lord's Prayer, we can note that he begins with, or Jesus begins with, adoration. He lifts up a praise and a worship to the name of God. His desire is to bring honor and glory to the Father. His first priority is that the name of God would be honored, exalted, and kept holy. He begins with, our Father. And there are a few things we should point out when we look at this phrase, our Father. First, the word Father he is using here is like Abba Father. That could be translated today as dad or daddy, right? It's a term of endearment, an intimate term. And he begins by calling on God as his Father. And this would have been uncommon in that day. The Old Testament did refer to God as the Father, but it was rare, and it was only a shadow or a glimpse of the intimate relationship to come between God the Father and New Testament believers. I believe to his disciples and those listening, this would have been a surprising or even shocking way to start his prayer. And to the Pharisees, it may have been seen as a blasphemy. If they were listening, for him to call on God as his literal Father, that would be indicating he was the Son of God, which is the very reason he was killed.

And this always makes me stop and think of Jeremiah 30, verse 21, and a verse like it in Hebrews that we'll look at later. But in Jeremiah 30, verse 21, in the ESV, it reads, I will make him draw near, and he shall approach me. For who would dare of himself to approach me?

Right? Who would dare to come before God boldly, calling on him as Father of themselves, except for Jesus, right? Think about the words of God, the warning he gives to Moses in Exodus 33 20.

[ 2 : 40 ] You cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live. And also the warning that we see in Isaiah, when he enters the presence of God, he cries out, woe is me, for I am lost. I'm a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for my heart has seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

And so we realize even the prophets of the Old Testament, they couldn't stand before the awesome and holy presence of God. And so how can we as New Testament believers come confidently and boldly before the face of God and call on him as our dad, our father? And so we know Jesus, he dared to approach God as father because he was the son of God. He was full of grace and truth, and so he had the privilege to call on God as father. I'm going to clarify this point in a minute, but first take notice that he doesn't only call him my father, he calls him our father. And he does this to intentionally bring about a sense of intimacy, calling on God as father, but also a sense of corporate worship, right? This is not a privilege given only to himself or to the individual, but to all who are children of God. And it's a remarkable privilege given to believers. Some of my favorite verses Romans 8, 14 through 17 in the ESV, if you want to read along, those who are called the sons of God and are led by the spirit of adoption, cry, Abba, Father. The spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, right? We are adopted children of God. And this privilege of adoption gives us the right with Jesus to call on God as Abba, Father. The presence of his spirit within us gives us this privilege to call on him as father. And also in Hebrews 10, 21, we read, we have a great priest over the house of God. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, in our bodies washed with pure water. And so

we see it is in the lordship of Christ, in his being our high priest, that we can draw near, we can dare to draw near to God with full assurance of faith. This has been purchased us in Christ. And so I also want to take a moment to note that this privilege to call on God as Abba, Father, is not given to all humanity. Although Christ came and suffered on the cross and purchased this right for believers, it's not given to all of humanity. It's only given to those who are children of God, as we can see in John chapter 1, verse 12.

And so we conclude that Jesus has the right to call on God as Abba, Father, because he is the only begotten son. And we have the privilege to call on him as dad, because we are adopted children of God, right? And so I think this opening statement, we've only made it two words into the prayer, as with the rest, right? It should not be taken lightly or flippantly, because to call on God as father without first being adopted as a child would be presumptuous, arrogant, as R.C. Sproul says, right? And yet how often am I guilty of rushing before God presumptuously with no regard for who he is? I feel like sometimes my prayers go, hi dad, how's it going? I'm glad to see you're doing well. Can I borrow some money, right? How often is that the reality of our prayers?

And so Jesus intentionally begins with our father to show this intimacy that we have with the father through him, and then immediately proceeds with in heaven, right? Because God is not found in a specific place. He's not found in Bethel, as Isaac thought. He's not found in the temple at Jerusalem, as the Jews claimed. Instead, he's omnipresent, and he transcends our physical world. He's not part of nature. He was there before nature. He's not part of the created universe, and so he can't be confined.

[ 7 : 14 ] He's infinite. He's God. And so there's a gulf, a separation between us and between God, and the reality is we can't bridge that gap on our own. And so we should never approach God with complacency or contempt. He is holy, he is righteous, and he's set apart. And so Jesus' prayer, he says in heaven as a quick reminder when we come before our father that he is God, he is set apart. And this brings humility and a proper reverence in our hearts as we come before God with our petitions, as we follow with our petitions. And so I think from that we can conclude that prayer is a gift. We come before God as father intimately with our needs and our desires, but we also come before him as God.

And so Jesus continues with, hallowed be your name, right? This is the first petition. After adoration, Jesus transfers into a petition, but still a petition of adoration. His petition is that the father's name be hallowed. He's praying, let your name be kept holy with proper reverence. This term hallowed means to be regarded and treated as holy. And so we can take a moment to think God's name is revealed and manifested in scripture. He actually, through his word, shapes our conception of him.

And so we don't come before God with our own preconceived idea of God. We don't come before God and project ourselves onto God, our sinful selves. Instead, we come before God as he has revealed himself divinely through scripture. Anything less than coming before God for who God is would be an insult to his name. And so Jesus prays, hallowed be your name. Because God is perfect, he's holy, and he's righteous. And so again, we must never enter the throne room of God presumptuously, forgetting that expanse that once separated us in our sin from his holiness. And so we see Jesus' first priority in his prayer was for the glory of the Father, that his name be kept holy. It was for this very reason that Israel was set apart. This was the reason God chose to separate Israel from the world, and the same reason why he chooses to set us as Christians apart. We see this confirmed in Leviticus 11 44, for I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. And in the New Testament, we see this confirmed in 1 Peter 1 verses 14 through 16. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who has called you holy is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.

Since it is written, quoting back to Leviticus, you shall be holy, for I am holy. And so I believe we can confirm our top priority should be to see God's name kept holy. In our prayers, our lives, in our churches, it should always be our priority to see God glorified. And so for me, this point in the prayer stands out.

Not only do I take time to pray that God's name be kept holy, but that I would be able to better see his holiness and righteousness, that I would have a desire within myself to revere his name. Right? [ 11 : 02 ] So, as Jesus continues his prayer, notice how each of the petitions to follow align with the will of God. He doesn't begin by praying for his desires or his wants, but rather that the will of God be done, that sin and evil depart, and that we would learn obedience to his word. So he continues

with, your kingdom come. And he's praying here that God's promised kingdom, the Old Testament promise of his kingdom to come, would be made visible. Jesus began his ministry in Matthew 4:17, proclaiming and preaching, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And so we see the kingdom of God, it is here. Right? Jesus is praying, your kingdom come, because he desires for his kingdom, his spiritual and moral kingdom to be made visible on earth. That we would see his promised kingdom made visible. He was the foundation of this kingdom on earth. And it is made visible in the obedience of his people, living according to his will. So as we live out the will of God, we make visible his kingdom. So we are praying not only that God would bring to light his kingdom, but that we would obey and display his kingdom. And so we as a church and as individuals, when we pray this, we're praying that the kingdom of God be revealed through his church.

Praying, as I like to say it, that God would be king, that he would be Lord, and that he would be God of his people, and that we would become obedient. We should also be praying for his eternal kingdom, right? The promise of his return when we see Christ return in his glory and his kingdom revealed in its fullness, where he dwells with us for eternity. And then Jesus continues with, your will be done.

And we're going to look at the next part on earth as it is in heaven as well. But he starts, your will be done. And so his third petition is to see the will of God done on earth as it is done in heaven. And this serves as a reminder, right? It's kind of a parallel to your kingdom come, a reminder that although his kingdom is being made visible, sins still exist in the world, and humanity is still disobedient to his will. And so he prays, let your will be done, that we would learn obedience to the will of God and to his word, and in so doing make visible his kingdom. And if we look through the New Testament, we see that Jesus himself learned obedience to the will of God. We see this, and I think Brent may speak on it next week, of Jesus learning obedience in both his prayer and in his life. But one of the clearest places we see it in scripture is in Hebrews 5, verses 7 through 10. If you want to mark that down or read along, in the ESV, Hebrews 5, 7 through 10 reads, in the day of his flesh, or sorry, in the day of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplication. He himself offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears, fervency, to him who was able to save him from death. And he was heard. Jesus himself was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.

And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. And so paralleling his own example model prayer, we see that he himself prayed and offered up petition through reverence, and he learned obedience as he prayed. And so it should be our desire, both as individuals and as a church, to learn obedience to the will of God and to see his will done here in earth as it is in heaven. And so Jesus continues with on earth as it is in heaven. And he prays this because God's will is done perfectly in heaven.

We see this in Psalm 103, 20. David writes in Psalm 103, Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word, bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers who do his will, bless the Lord. All his works in all places of his dominion, bless the Lord, O my soul. And so in heaven we see God's will is done perfectly, and yet on earth, despite his kingdom being present, humans again and again, we break his covenant and we run from his will. So here Jesus prays that his will would be done on earth as it's done perfectly in heaven. So I think it's good to take a moment now and step back and think about these first three phrases and see that there's something interesting in common to our father in heaven. Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, and earth as it is in heaven. I have it in the King James version, but in the ESV it's similar. So it's interesting though that the one common theme seems to be that God's name is hallowed properly when it's kept holy in our obedience. His kingdom is made visible on earth when we obey, and his will of course is done when we obey his word. So up to this point, [17:06] Jesus begins the prayer with this petition that brings about a humility, a reverence, and a state of mind that reminds us of our place in light of God's holiness and righteousness so that God is properly exalted. And so I believe if there were no other reason to pray, if the prayer ended here, this would be enough. If no other aspect of our prayer were heard, to see God rightly exalted is sufficient.

However, Jesus continues with a petition. He brings his petition before the Father, and this petition shows a dependence on God to provide our every need. He transitions from adoration to supplication.

His earlier petitions were all related to seeing the name of God magnified and his will done, but now he asks for provision. God is the provider of all that we require, and we can rest in his promise to provide our every need so that we might continue in doing his will. David prayed a similar prayer in Psalm 30 verse 8 when he said, Remove far from me falsehood and lying. Give me neither poverty nor riches.

Feed me with the food that is needful for me. And Jesus said in Matthew 6 25, Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or what shall we wear? For the Gentiles seek after all of these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. And so this prayer, it shows our dependence on God, our faith that he will provide us he's promised, and it is the answer to our anxiety we need not worry about tomorrow because God has promised to provide. And so it brings trust in God for our basic needs, and also it reminds us to be content, to be content with what we have. Unlike Israel who in the desert cried out for meat, God wants us to be content in his provision, to trust in his provision, and to depend on him. So in the literal sense, Jesus is praying for our corporate daily provision for this day. However, I think also we could enlighten this by looking at the bread of life, the word of God by which we live. As we see in Matthew 4 4, when Jesus was tempted, he rebuked the devil by saying, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

And so we see each day, we depend on the bread of life, the word of God. This is by which we live. And so I'm reminded how many of those at the time, the thousands who were following Jesus, were there for the bread and the fish that he could multiply. They were there for the miracles and the healing, but they weren't really there for the bread of life. And how many of them were still there at the cross? How many of them followed Christ to the cross? And so I think this is a reminder that our priority must be first on the holy name of God, second that his will be done, and then on our needs, all while trusting he will provide them. But that being said, I don't want to overlook the fact that we can bring our petitions small and large to the Father. Nothing that we could ask in his will would be inappropriate to bring before him. He declares in his word, How much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask? And so we can trust that we have a good and a gracious heavenly Father who will provide our needs, big and small, and that he is honored in our humility and dependence when we come before him and pray for his provision. He's gracious to provide. And so I don't think we need to worry when we pray that like in the old movie cliché that God is so busy with the prayers of this world that he doesn't have time for our small prayers. But the reality is he is glorified when we come before him as Abba Father. We bring our small needs for as small as a piece of bread to our big needs for his grace, his forgiveness, and his intercession. So I think we don't need to worry that our prayers would annoy or overwhelm God. He is omnipresent, omnipotent, and there's no chance that our prayers that our prayers are going to overwhelm him. So this time, this time in adoration, this time in supplication, showing dependence on God, it often brings about a spirit of confession, a realization of ourselves before the holiness of God. And so Jesus, he continues his prayer with a prayer of confession. He brings about his confession in the form of a petition.

[ 22 : 45 ] And so although Jesus himself had nothing to confess, no debt that was needed to be forgiven, he offered in this model prayer an example for us, for our confession, our repentance, and our prayers of forgiveness. He starts, forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. Notice in the last petition he prayed for our daily bread. And so it follows that if this prayer is daily for our daily bread sufficient for today, then we might also be praying for forgiveness for today. Each day coming before God in the morning or at night, praying for forgiveness, praying for forgiveness, because the truth is, we're human, we continue to have sin in our lives, and we continue to need forgiveness.

Jesus doesn't pray that the Father would remove guilt. He doesn't pray that the Father remove fear or the sorrow of our sin. Instead, he chooses not to pray a prayer of attrition, but instead a prayer of contrition. He prays that our debt, the weight of our sin, the offense of our sin before God that's been marked in the book of remembrance, that it would be marked out, that it would be cleansed, washed away, that the stench of our sin that rises before God, that it would be washed away, and that we would be made clean before the Father. And so this time of confession, it's a reminder that we are saved, by grace. We were once separated by God from the weight of our sin, and that separation was infinite.

And so I think this realization of our own sinfulness that prevented us from entering the presence of a holy and righteous God, the realization of his grace should move us to show that grace to others. We see this in Jesus' own words. If you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. And so we see in Scripture that God will judge us according to how we judge others.

In Matthew 7, Jesus says, Judge not that you be not judged, for with the judgment you pronounce, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

And so the reality of the grace God has shown us should move us to show that same grace to others. And so we must pray this prayer understanding that we are heaping judgment on ourselves if we fail to take seriously this warning. We who are forgiven such a debt cannot turn around and refuse, as did the debtor in Jesus' parable, to forgive the small, insignificant debt of those of others who have wronged us. R.C. Sproul in his book on prayer goes on to say, It would be an insult to God's infinite honor, majesty, and holiness, an insult for us to withhold forgiveness and grace from others while claiming to ourselves to be forgiven. If God has forgiven someone, how can we withhold forgiveness? Are we more righteous or more just than he?

[ 26 : 13 ] Before we move on to the last part of his prayer, notice again he says, Our debt. This is a corporate prayer, a prayer for all believers. And so it's a reminder that the church is called to live in repentance and forgiveness, as well as the individual. We are all forgiven sinners and called to show forgiveness in proportion to how much we have been forgiven. Just as in this prayer, we are praying that God himself would show us forgiveness in proportion to how much we forgive others. And then finally, we must forgive ourselves. If God has forgiven us, if we are truly forgiven in Christ and our past sins forgotten, the weight of our sins have been stripped away, and we're truly made righteous, then we must forgive ourselves and accept that we are forgiven in Christ.

So the last phrase of Jesus' prayer is, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. He prays for deliverance from temptation and from evil, from the one who seeks to sift us like wheat.

Some of the commentaries note that this should be read as one statement, although there's a comma there. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. These are two parallels, two parallel ways of looking at it.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Those of us who have been forgiven and understand the weight of sin and the grace of God, we should strive to be righteous as he is righteous.

We should have a desire for holiness as he is holy. And we must recognize it is God alone who provides strength to overcome temptation and strength to overcome evil, to persevere in the faith.

[ 28 : 11 ] And it is the evil one, the enemy, who comes and tempts us to sin. I think Psalm 23 is a beautiful illustration of this.

He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Again, for the holiness of his name, he leads us in righteous paths and restores our souls.

And in Matthew 13, 19, we see Jesus warning to his disciples, when anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart.

And so we can conclude we're not tempted by God. If we look back at Job or Chronicles or Samuel, we see parallels of temptation and evil.

But we can conclude confidently we're not tempted by God. We are tested by God, but never tempted. Temptation comes from the enemy and often from our own flesh.

[ 29 : 18 ] The reality is the lust, the evil within our own hearts is often sufficient to lead us into temptation without any help. As we read in Matthew 26, 41, paralleled in Mark 14, 38, watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation.

The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Or also 1 Corinthians 10, 13, no temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man.

God is faithful and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability. But with the temptation, he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. And so we have confidence in this prayer that God will deliver us from evil and from temptation.

It's by his spirit within us that we are able to overcome temptation. And as we read in Romans 8, that we are able to put to death the deeds of the flesh. I love as it's put in 2 Timothy 4, 18, which reads in the ESV, The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his

heavenly kingdom.

To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen. And so Jesus' prayer finishes with a prayer that the Father would deliver us from evil, from the attack of temptation.

[ 30 : 36 ] Because the reality is, on our own, apart from his intercession, we would surely fail. As in Hebrews 7, 25, He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

And so we see, again, that it is in Christ that we dare draw near to God through him. So, as we take the reality of Jesus' prayer and look at how we apply it to our lives, I want to note the fluid and the active transition of his prayer.

For some of us who have memorized and recited it throughout our lives, I think it can be easy for this prayer to become somewhat passive and lifeless. But the reality is, the prayer is filled with life, with adoration, petition, and confession.

And every phrase, every statement that Jesus put there has purpose in meaning. These statements, they bring about a humility, a realization of God's holiness, and a sense of trust in his provision.

It begins, the supplication, the petition begins with asking that the Father's will be done. And I think this is imperative, that when we pray, when we bring our prayers before God, that our first priority should be the holiness of God's name, and also that his will be done, not our will.

[ 32 : 10 ] And so it flows into a time of confession, asking forgiveness. And the last phrase is that the Lord would protect us from evil. And so I think the amazing thing about the Lord's Prayer, when we look at the various parts of it, is the way which it carefully sets priorities in order.

And I think we can trust that Jesus, when he was answering his disciples' request, he was giving them a good gift as he promised to do so. He taught them carefully, and with divine inspiration in his set of priorities.

And actually, from this set, adoration, supplication, and confession, we actually get the acrostic acts that Brent taught on last week. Acts is just a useful acrostic to remember these three parts, adoration, confession, in addition to thanksgiving, and then supplication.

And so I believe in answer to our question at the beginning, should we recite this, should we memorize it, should we pray it repeatedly, I believe that the Lord's Prayer is actually meant to be a model prayer, an example that we can depend on to model our prayers.

I think it would be strange for Jesus to teach on vain repetition of the Gentiles, and then to just give an example prayer for us to repeat, right?

[ 33 : 33 ] Instead, he gave us a model, a framework to model our prayers. And so the structure that he gives us is vital. And I believe there's great benefit to always beginning our prayers with adoration and confession, to get our hearts right and our minds right, to remind us of the separation, and yet to bring to light the intimacy we have with God the Father, a right that's been given to us through grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

And finally, in supplication, we can bring our needs before God and trust in his promise to provide our every need. And we can trust also that when we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all these things, all the other needs will be added to us.

And so I think Jesus' own prayer is structured. It's intended to guide us to seek first his kingdom, his righteousness, and then to find comfort that he will provide our needs.

And so while Thanksgiving may be left out of this prayer, it may seem like we've added it. The reality is, I believe this is a model prayer. We can rearrange it. We can add to it and take from it at times.

It should serve as a model, a framework for our prayers. But I don't think Thanksgiving is left out intentionally. I think time and adoration and confession lead to Thanksgiving.

[ 35 : 00 ] Right? We actually saw this, those of us who joined our prayer on Tuesday night on Zoom, which we're going to do again this Tuesday, so I invite you guys all to join us for that.

When we lifted up our adoration, our confession, and our supplication, they almost always took the form of Thanksgiving. We almost always naturally start our prayers with, Thank you, Lord, for.

And I think it's just natural as Christians that we overflow in Thanksgiving. And actually, I think this is an interesting thing to try in your own prayer life. Try to start every phrase of your prayer with, Thank you, for.

And then fill in the blank with your adoration, your confession, and your supplication. And it's always interesting to me when I pray like this that it comes naturally to even turn my confession and my supplication into a Thanksgiving.

Because I can trust in God's promise that I am already forgiven and my needs already provided for. And so I can just simply thank him for that. And I think that's amazing.

[ 35 : 59 ] And remembrance of God's promises, his steadfast love and his faithfulness that we read about in the Old Testament, and his grace that we see on the cross, this naturally brings about an overflow of adoration and thanksgiving.

So, in closing, as we close, I just want to conclude that prayer is a gift of God. A gift that, as we see throughout the New Testament, brings about rejoicing.

It brings about peace in our lives and wisdom. And it's the answer to our anxiety. And I also want to say that prayer is integral to the progress of sanctification in our lives.

It's God who leads us to righteousness and protects us from evil, as we saw. A statement I came across last week made me stop and think about prayer. John MacArthur said, Justification is by grace alone, but not apart from faith.

Sanctification is by the work of the Spirit alone, but not apart from obedience. And glorification is the work of God alone, but not apart from perseverance. And so, in this, we see the parallel of the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man.

[ 37 : 12 ] It's God that brings about faith, obedience, and perseverance. And it's our responsibility to believe, to obey, and to persevere. And the way we find the strength to believe, to obey, and to persevere is in prayer.

In Romans 8, 12 through 17, it's by the Spirit that we put to death the deeds of the body, by the Spirit that we are adopted as sons of God, by the Spirit through whom we cry, Abba, Father.

It's through adoption that we gain the privilege to call on God as Father, and that we can pray the Lord's Prayer. And more than this, we pray with a broken and a contrite spirit that God's name be hallowed, and that we learn obedience.

And it's by the working of His Spirit that we're even able to pray, that we're even able to obey. Provided we suffer with Him, persevere the trials of this life, we can rest in His promise to be glorified with Him in eternity.

And so, we pray that God lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. That God bring about perseverance in our lives, bring about obedience in our lives, because the reality is of ourselves, we cannot.

[ 38 : 27 ] We will fail every time. So look with me at Ephesians 6, 16 through 18. In the ESV, if you want to follow along, Ephesians 6, 16 through 18.

I think many of us know this very well. In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit.

Note, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.

And so we see confirmation that it's always by prayer, in and by the Spirit, that we persevere, and by which we make supplication for all the saints. Now, something I want to note, and to avoid confusion, is say that I'm not arguing here, or stating here, that prayer is a work that is necessary for justification, sanctification, and glorification.

I'm saying that we are called and commanded to pray in accordance with the will of God, and that He is faithful and just to complete the work of salvation in our lives and the lives of the saints.

[ 39 : 42 ] Because the reality is, it's God who brings about faith for justification, obedience for sanctification, and perseverance for glorification. And so we pray, I pray knowing He's faithful and His love is steadfast, and that He will bring about His promise.

And we pray knowing, if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given to Him. We pray knowing He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for Him. And we pray that we might not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, we let our requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus.

And so we might conclude that you can pray and not be a Christian, as many do, but you cannot be a Christian and not pray. And the only clarification I might make there is as we read in Ephesians 6.18, we keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. And so not only do we pray, but we intercede for others and for those who cannot of themselves pray. So with that, let's pray. Let's pray.