

Desire: Do I Want Him?

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 02 April 2017

Preacher: Pastor Bart Leger

- [0 : 00] All right, well, how is our prayer life? As we think about it, what fuels our prayer life?
- What is it that brings you to the throne of grace? What is it that brings you to God to speak to him? And I think as we see Scripture all throughout the Old Testament, all throughout especially the New Testament, I think what we see is that desire fuels our prayer.
- Desire for God, time to be spent with him, and our desire for God, I believe, fuels our fervent prayer. And I want to begin this morning by building upon two foundational truths or two primary truths as it relates to prayer.
- And all over Scripture, I believe, what we see is the first thing, the first primary truth is that desire for God is the heart of prayer.
- Desire for God, to spend time with him, to get to know him better, to be able to communicate with him, just like you communicate with a family member or a friend or a spouse that you want to draw closer to.
- [1 : 20] It's that desire to be with them, to communicate with them. I think that's the heart of our prayer.
- I want you to listen to what Jonathan Edwards said. Jonathan Edwards was a preacher back in the Great Awakening, and he wrote a book called Religious Affections.
- And this is what he said, A person who has a knowledge of doctrine and theology only, without religious affection, has never engaged in true religion.
- I am bold in saying this, but I believe that no one ever seeks salvation, no one ever cries for wisdom, no one ever wrestles with God, no one ever kneels with a heart, or kneels in prayer with a heart that remains unaffected.
- In a word, there is never, never any great achievement by the things of religion without a heart that is deeply affected by those things.
- [2 : 25] And when he's talking about religion, I don't think he's talking about religion in the sense that we think about religion. I think Jonathan Edwards was speaking in terms of time with God, our affection for God.
- And he says, No one ever seeks God, no one ever kneels in prayer without being unaffected by that relationship. So the heart of prayer. Last week, we heard that we pray because we need God.
- I mean, think about it. Without God, what can we truly accomplish? Nothing, at least nothing of any eternal value. So we pray because we need God.
- And as the disciples asked Jesus, Please, teach us to pray. They knew that they needed God in order for them to fulfill the mission that God had given them.
- So we need God. But that's not the only reason we pray. I think we pray because we realize that we have a desire for God or because we have that desire for God.
- [3 : 27] And this week, I want us to look at that desire. Do we really want Him? And I don't think our prayer lives can really survive with that intimate desire to get to know God better.

Because otherwise, it's like starting a new habit. It's like doing anything else. After a while, we may lose interest in it and go on to something else.

But if our prayer life is fueled by that desire for God, I believe it will continue and it will go on. So the first thing is heart.

Desire for God is the heart of prayer. And the second thing, I think, is desire for God is the secret to prayer. Desire for God is the secret to prayer.

prayer. And what I mean by that is have you ever tasted a dish that someone made and or maybe something that you both followed the same recipe and theirs just came out spectacular.

[4 : 37] It was like awesome. If it was something they baked, it melts in your mouth, it was moist, the flavor was just awesome and you did it and it was just like oh um.

And you, what do you, what do you ask them? What is your, what's your secret? Well, I just followed the recipe. No, you could not have.

There's got to be something that you did and, and really what, I think what often makes the difference is a person's heart and passion for cooking. They just have that touch that they put into it.

And so when we look at prayer in the New Testament, when we look at the, the, the answers to prayer that the early church received and the disciples of Jesus and we might ask what was their secret?

What is it that they did that, that we're not doing today? You know what I think it is? They had a desire for God. They had a heart for God that these, a couple of thousand years later, we've maybe lost some of that desire for God because we maybe not realize we need him as much and maybe we've lost touch with the very God that sent Jesus Christ to die on the cross in our place and maybe we've become so routine in our religion, so to speak, that we've lost the heart for God and that relationship.

[6 : 06] Now, the following may be an oversimplification. Got a couple of blanks next, but I think as we look at this, as we see the picture of prayer, I think a couple of steps in order to revitalize, revolutionize, and to gain that heart for prayer, the first step I think is this.

If we make our wants God's wants. If we make our wants, if what we want, the closer we get drawn to God, then what we want becomes what God wants.

As a matter of fact, that's what Scripture bears that out. And I think also what we see in relationships, when our desires are united with another person's desires, when you both want the same thing with a passion, it tends to draw you together and unify you.

Isn't that true? When a couple, when friends have the same passion for something, even if total strangers, and you find that you've got the same passion and you've got the same want and the same desire, what happens?

You get together, you start talking about it, and it's like, oh my, where have you been all my life? And it's all of a sudden, it's this same desire, your same wants, bring you closer together.

[7 : 37] And I think we see the same thing in our relationship with God. The closer we come, get to Him, the more His wants become our wants, the closer we get drawn to Him.

And the second thing is, then you ask whatever you want. I told you it was oversimplified, but think about it. What we see about prayer in the New Testament, Jesus says, why don't you have?

Because you don't ask. And then He gave this audacious promise. He said, ask whatever you want and you will want. You will receive it.

So, make your wants God's wants. Make what God wants the same thing as what you want, and then what follows is, ask whatever you want and you'll get it.

Now, like I said, that's an oversimplification, but as we think about that, because what we want, if what we want is what God wants, we're going to pray for what God wants. And then we're going to get what God says we need.

[8 : 45] because very often our needs and our wants are not necessarily in the same ballpark. So what we need to ask God to do is ask our wants and our desires and our needs to be welded together, to become one.

And that's where I think we're going to begin to see God move in our life when prayer becomes the bedrock, the foundation of everything we do. So, it's not, you know what, we do church and we go through, we have a system and we do it this way and that's what we rely upon.

We rely upon the system. But what if we were like the early believers? They relied upon prayer. They didn't get together and start their meetings in prayer and end their meetings in prayer.

They got together to pray and stuff happened while they were there to gather. So, I think if we realize that prayer ought to be the foundation of everything we do and everything else grows out from there, we're going to see a difference.

Now, let's take a look at Luke chapter 11 verses 1 through 4. We started last week. We looked at Luke 11 verse 1 where the disciples asked him to teach us to pray.

[10 : 06] Let's look at verses 1 through 4. Now it came to pass as he was praying in a certain place, Jesus, when he ceased that one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples.

So he said to them, when you pray, say, our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us day by day our daily bread and forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us and do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

Now, some of you may not recognize this as the Lord's Prayer. What we recognize as the Lord's Prayer is in Matthew 6. What Luke records is a little bit different from what Matthew records.

And so we might ask ourselves, well, Luke, why didn't you take better notes? Well, I think what we see here, because there are things that, matter of fact, what Matthew, in Matthew 6, Matthew 6 ends with something else.

[11 : 20] But deliver us from the evil one for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. Luke leaves that out. Some of the earlier manuscripts actually leave that out as well. It's not there.

But what I think we see is Luke was not so specific as to record the exact same words because Jesus never meant for us to pray those exact words.

Because when when Jesus said, when you pray, don't be like the heathen who say the same things over and over and over and over again and expect their prayer to be heard.

I think what Jesus was doing was Jesus was giving an example. That's why I prefer to call this Jesus' model prayer rather than the Lord's prayer.

So we follow it as a model and so when we come to him, what do we ask? So when we come to God, when we have a desire for God, as a matter of fact, when we look at that song that we just sang, our beloved Father, please come down and meet us.

[12 : 32] We're waiting on your touch. But as we go to, I think it's the chorus, we don't want anything but you.

We saw that last week. When we come to the point where it's not about our 401k, it's not about our sports team, it's not about anything else but we want God.

We want Jesus more than anything else. That is going to revolutionize our life. Our beloved Jesus, we just want to see you in the glory of your light.

Earthly things don't matter. They just fade and shatter when we're touched by love divine. And so I think what we see there is the heart for prayer.

the heart that fuels our prayer. So as we look at this, we go into four primary requests that we see in this prayer of Jesus.

[13 : 35] Some say it's five. What we're going to do is we'll take the first two and we're going to put them together. So four primary requests is what we will look at this morning. And the first thing that I see here is that Jesus says we are to ask God for his glory.

He says, Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.

Now let's not miss the point here as we see Jesus begin this prayer. For many years I really looked at this and thought that the way Jesus started his prayer was a declaration of the glory of God.

Kind of like God, you're great, you're holy, then we ask you for what you want. But as the more I studied this, I realized that this whole prayer is an ask.

Because as we look at the language of the Greek, as we look at the language that is here, the verb is passive. And as we look at, another word for hollow that we see in the New Testament is the word sanctify.

[14 : 53] And there are two usages for the term sanctification. One is to make something holy. To be set, to set apart to make something holy.

As a matter of fact, we are in the process, as we become more like Jesus, we are in the process of being made more holy. The closer we get to Jesus, the holier we become.

Sanctification is also a process. The New Testament bears that out. And the other aspect of sanctification is to be to treat something as holy.

It's already holy. holy. God is already holy. There's no room for God to be more holy. Because God is holy. And so I think it's that second usage that we see here, and the passive verb, where literally what Jesus was saying here is, rather, God, help us to treat your name as holy.

Let your name be treated as holy. It's a request for God to hallow his name. And that's also a request.

[16 : 14] And so what we're literally hearing here is Jesus saying, God, let the world treat you as holy.

Let the world see you as holy. Let the world see you as who you are. Let your name be glorified. Let your name be treated as holy.

I don't know how it affects you, but it affects me when I hear someone take the Lord's name in vain. And I think it follows right along with what Jesus prayed.

Lord, oh, Father, let your name be treated as holy. Hallowed. Let your name be hallowed. And so when we come to God, it is a declaration that God is holy because he is holy.

But I think what Jesus is saying is, let us treat God's name as holy. Let us realize that he is holy as well.

[17 : 19] So one of the things, we see some characteristics of God here as well in this prayer. And the first thing that we see is, he is the sovereign father. Because how does Jesus begin his prayer?

Father. And we know that he is in control. Your kingdom come, your will be done, in heaven as it is on earth. But I want us to think about this.

When we call God our father, think about it, that God the father calls you his child.

If you belong to him, the God who spoke everything into existence, who hung the stars in space, who by the very power of his existence, the Lord Jesus holds everything together, that same God calls you son and calls you daughter.

Isn't that a special relationship? that we can look to him and like the New Testament says, cry out daddy, Abba, father. It ought to blow our mind.

[18 : 35] See, that was a foreign concept in the Old Testament. God was feared, revered, and New Testament, now we have Holy Spirit living within us, and we have a different relationship with the Heavenly Father.

Father. So he is our sovereign Father. But second thing that we see is, he is the Holy One. Hallowed be your name.

Allow your name to be treated as holy. And I think this kind of reminds us back of Isaiah 6. And what we see in the throne room of heaven, the only attribute of God that's repeated three times, holy, holy, holy.

We serve a holy Father. We serve a unique God. Think about it. There is no other God like God. Actually, there are no other gods.

So God is uniquely holy, but thirdly, he is also the coming king. He is the coming king.

[19 : 42] What we see in what Jesus prayed is, your kingdom come. Now as he is saying this, we understand that as we grow closer to him, we grow closer to Jesus Christ, and as he rules and reigns in our hearts, and Jesus talks about the kingdom of God, that anywhere God is glorified and obeyed and followed, that is within the realm of the kingdom of God.

But also we understand that there is coming a day when Jesus Christ will return. Ultimately, eventually, he will set foot back upon the earth, the second coming of Jesus Christ.

And what will he do at that time? He will begin to rule and reign, and he will be the one. See, now, Satan has been given the opportunity to do his best.

God will reign. But one day, Jesus is going to say, that's enough, and he will begin to rule and reign. So your kingdom comes. So I think it's looking future as well when Jesus Christ will rule and reign.

So the God we serve, the Jesus Christ, who is our Savior, he is sovereign, he is holy, and he is coming. So when we pray, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, literally what Jesus is saying we ought to be praying is, God, come and make your name known, God, and come make your reign known, and what are we crying out for that when we do?

[21 : 24] Our personal Father, who is personal to us, when we say, Father, hallowed be your name. I think what we see here is that we're praying, God, make yourself known in my life.

God, make yourself known in my life. That's our next fill-in-the-blank. God, make yourself known in my life. Cause me to treat your name as holy.

Because how often during our day do we take God's name in vain? You say, I never take God's name in vain. You bet you do. Because when we talk about God and don't think about what we're saying about God, what have we done?

We have used his name without thinking about it. Now, I'm not saying it's sinful and it's all, but think about it. How were the early Jews, what were their concept of the name of God?

It was so holy it was not even spoken. But yet, I'm not saying we individually here this morning, but some people say the big man upstairs or when we say oh God, are we using it as an affirmation of him or are we using it flippantly as an exclamation just think about it.

[23 : 02] The closer we become to him and as we pray God, how would be your name in my life so that every time I think of you father every time I mention your name I'm really just talking to you or I'm telling someone else about you.

So God how your name in my life but the second thing is how will God's name be known throughout the world through us and so I think when we're praying that we're also praying God make yourself known in all the world God hallowed be your name your kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven so I think what we're also saying is God make yourself known in all the world and I see this as a universal dimension to prayer because think about it we've seen in revelation what's happening in the throne room of God what did John the revelator see he saw a multitude a vast multitude that he says could not even be numbered from every tribe from every language from every people group and

I think what that's teaching us is that God is going to use us his mouthpieces his missionaries to spread the gospel throughout the entire globe and so that one day people who have come to know Jesus Christ as their savior are going to come from every country every part of the globe from every language from every tribe from every people group and they are the ones we are the ones who are going to be proclaiming his glory so God let your name be known the entire globe and I think we will be able to truly carry out the great commission as we as God's people as we as faith our faith family come to God in a heart of prayer wanting to meet with him day after day crying out together as our faith family

God make yourself known throughout the world let your name be known let your name be hallowed be sanctified throughout the world so that's number one is ask God for his glory the second thing that I believe we see here is that we can ask God for his gifts ask God for his gifts give us day by day give us daily our daily bread so why does he ask that I mean think about it there are things we need more than bread we need water more than food we need air more than food but I think Jesus had a reason for including this because think back to the Old Testament think back to Exodus 16 God had taken his people the Jews out of

Egypt and here they are in the wilderness and they become hungry and they want food so we ask ourselves why were the people hungry you might think well obviously they didn't have food well I think there's a deeper reason I think they were hungry because God created within them hunger and we're going to see that borne out in just a few moments and so when Jesus says give us day by day your daily bread I think what we see is it's only God that can satisfy our hunger it's only God that can satisfy our hunger and that's why the Israelites in the wilderness were hungry he caused them to hunger so they would look to him to fill that need and so what he tells them in

[27 : 37] Exodus 16 he says I know you're hungry so here's what is going to happen you're going to go to bed and are you going to wake up in the morning and there's going to be bread manna you go out and you pick and he gave them how much to pick he says don't pick any more and he says you're going to have enough to eat so they ate their bread they go to bed without bread for tomorrow but just like people are what did some of them do you remember they got greedy God said pick up one epho or I don't remember exact amount but they said we're going to pick up too we're going to pick up more because we want to make sure we are not hungry so what happened to it the next morning when they got up their little store went to the cupboard and went to eat their manna for breakfast it said it bread worms and stank it didn't stink it stank and so

God says I'm going to give you what you need don't rely upon your ingenuity and yourself for what you need and so what happened was they went to bed with nothing to eat tomorrow but they got up tomorrow and had plenty to eat because God satisfied their hunger not anybody else not their own ingenuity God satisfied their hunger and why did he do that I think he did it to sustain their faith I think he did it so that their faith could be sustained in that God took them out of Egypt and what happened when they got into the wilderness they complained if only we had been back in Egypt we had leeks and garlic and we had all this good food and it's probably not as good as they remembered because the past is like that we talk about the good old days probably weren't as good as we remember them because we don't remember the hardship of those days and so

God is telling them God is showing them I took you out of Egypt because you asked you're in the wilderness but I can get you to the promised land so he sustains their faith to know that they can rely on him let's look at the Old Testament Deuteronomy Deuteronomy chapter 8 and see that they weren't hungry because they didn't have food okay just bear with me all right Deuteronomy chapter 8 verse 3 so verse 3 God says so I did what to you so I humbled you and I did what I allowed you to hunger fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know matter of fact that's where they got the name manna they looked at it and said what's this they looked at it and they said manna so you know what manna means what's it what's this and so he said

I fed you with what you did not know nor did your fathers know that he might make known to you God did it God allowed them to hunger because he had placed with them that hunger so they could come to the point where they realized God I'm hungry and I need you to make you know that man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God the mouth of the Lord think about that he gave us manna he gave his people manna bread so they would know that he could sustain them and so he could sustain their faith over and over and over and over again now kind of makes you wonder why would he say give us our daily bread well most of us need less bread right now I think it's because our tendency to become materialistic because how many of you last night went to bed wondering if you would starve today probably most of us not because you probably had enough milk maybe some cereal or some eggs you had something to eat this morning what that does is that tends to foster within us a tendency to think that we're sufficient but what if every morning we woke up or what every night we went to bed rather every night we went to bed and if it were not for

God we would starve you think that might change our prayer life oh yeah oh yeah and so I think what happens is Jesus is teaching his disciples to realize that there is a tendency to become materialistic there is a tendency to realize that you have all this stuff and you worked hard for it not no matter how hard we work for it we have to understand God gave us the strength God gave us the health God gave us the air to breathe so give us this day our daily bread give us day by day our daily bread I think we could paraphrase that and say God every day give us what we need and we fill in the blank whatever that is but we live in a daily dependence upon God for that fulfillment so he's teaching them that he can sustain our faith and I think prayer brings us back to that realization what if we got into the habit every day

[33 : 44] God meet my needs today God provide today for what me provide me today what I need would that not bring us more into a dependence upon what God only God can provide us God provide the opportunities today to share your name with others God provide me the opportunity today to grow closer to my family to be a blessing to others and I think what that will bring us is away from a self dependence to a God dependence and I think that's what Jesus was teaching his disciples guys you have to live in a daily dependence upon your father upon your heavenly father because if you don't you're going to get caught in the trap of thinking that you did it and you've got the power and you can do it so give us day by day our bread so first of all ask God for his glory

Lord help us to treat your name as holy allow your name to be hallowed in this earth secondly we ask God for his gifts and everything he gives us is a gift is it not all good things come from above the Bible says and then thirdly I think we see here ask for his grace ask for his grace verse four and forgive us our sins forgive us our sins asking for his grace and it's by his grace that we're forgiven because it was through his grace that he allowed Jesus Christ to come for us and it's by grace that we're saved and when we come to know Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven so we ask for his grace and when we do so I think what we see are some elements here when we ask for his grace first of all we experience his forgiveness and forgive us our sins if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to what forgive us our sins and so when we say

God I have sinned against you God forgive me of this sin he promised you'll be forgiven and he will be justified in forgiving you because Jesus died for our sin so we experience his forgiveness so the first thing we see I think is we ask for his forgiveness continually and forgive and forgive us our sins tomorrow when we or this afternoon or five minutes from now when we might sin again God thank you for your forgiveness forgive us our sins and the next thing we see is we experience I think we experience his forgiveness specifically because he's not saying God forgive us our sin there's a definite article here in the original forgive us our sins so when I lie or when I have this improper thought or when I treat someone not in love and I ask God forgive me for I have sinned so we not only ask him for forgiveness continually but we receive forgiveness specifically for what we do because we fail him on a regular basis and then what do we see next in verse four not only do we ask him for forgiveness of our sin but then what does he say he says that we are to extend his forgiveness extend that forgiveness to others since we've received forgiveness he says for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us extended to others and there are so many people who are walking through life harboring resentment who have not forgiven someone else it could be someone that is long gone and they're harboring that resentment it could be a parent it could be someone anyone and they have not let go of that hurt and it's hurting them it's hurting us so we need to receive

God's forgiveness and then extend it to others because as the old saying goes hurting people hurt people if we're hurting there's a good possibility that we might hurt someone else because we're just in a bad mood so extend that forgiveness and then fourthly as we wind this down to a close as we get to the end of this model prayer is not only do we ask God for his grace but we ask God for his guidance and do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one we need him because he gives protection amidst temptation and does not God do that he won't allow us to be tempted above that which we're able but will the temptation also make a way to escape God gives us protection in the midst of our temptation now don't think for a moment that the way

Jesus said this that God could possibly lead us into temptation it's not there because James in the book by his name made that perfectly clear we're not tempted by God we're tempted when we're driven away by our own lust you know we're the ones that do it and I know Satan can tempt us but it's a very good possibility that we're enticed or drawn to temptation just merely because we are fallen human beings so God never leads us into temptation but I think what we see here is that God can give us that protection in the midst of those temptations isn't that an awesome promise that no matter what we're being tempted with it could be food it could be it could be of any nature God is there with us and God is only a breath away a prayer away

[40 : 27] God help me God help me because remember what Nehemiah prayed when the king said Nehemiah what's wrong God help me to give the right answer because I might lose my head and he breathed the prayer very quickly and then went on if we're that connected with God in the midst of that temptation or in the midst of that trial or that trouble he's there with us but also the second thing I think we need to understand is he gives perseverance in the middle of a trial he gives perseverance we talked a little bit about that in Sunday school this morning when we have two promises Jesus gave two promises he says in me you will have peace but in the world you're going to have tribulation in me peace in the world tribulation but he says know that I have overcome the world so what does that allow us to do in the midst of the temptation in the midst of the trouble that we're going through in life if we know that

God has overcome it and he's going to bring us out on the other end we can get through it and experience that peace that he says is only supplied in him in me is peace in the world is trouble tribulation problems but don't worry I've overcome the world awesome awesome promise he gives perseverance in the middle of trial and I want to close with this as we think about this model prayer our father in heaven hallowed be your name your kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven give us day by day your daily bread forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us and do not lead us in temptation but deliver us from the evil one and when we realize that God can give us that perseverance through trial I'm reminded of the garden of Gethsemane when Jesus was in anguish over what he was about to experience at one point he said

God if there's any other way to save these humans show it to me because I'm up for it but where does he end that discourse with his heavenly father not my will but thine be done not my will but yours be done and I think as we can get to that point in life God this is horrible this is bad but as I'm going through this God okay I give I give up and I'll just let you drive the bus not my will but yours be done isn't that a hard thing to pray it's not the natural thing to pray it's not the typical self reliant strong person's prayer because for us to say

God it doesn't matter what I want what matters is what you want because I know that if you get what you want it'll be ultimately best for me that's a hard place to be but it's the only place that will get us out on the other end in the best shape possible not my will but yours be done how's our prayer life what drives your prayer life if desire for God is the heart of your prayer and desire for God is the secret to your prayer life it's what makes your prayer life hum that I believe that's where you're right where God wants you to be yeah we pray because we need him and that's fine to understand that and believe that and realize that but I think we need to get further I think we need to get to the point where we just want to be with him because there are things we do because we have to right but there are also things we do because we want to but isn't it awesome when we do what we have to because we want to that's the best place to be for those of you who love your job you show up because you have to but you also show up because you want to let's let our prayer life be that way