

Reading: Luke 11:1-13

“Our Father who is in Heaven!” (Lk 11:2)

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, He pointedly told them whom they must address: “Our FATHER in Heaven!” (Lk 11:1,2). This was not a casual statement but a deliberate teaching. In the parallel passage in Matthew chapter six, see how many times Jesus uses the phrase, “Your Father” (vv 1,4,6,8,14,15,18,26,32). He linked every spiritual discipline, like praying, forgiving, fasting and alms-giving, to the Father. After resurrection He sent word to the disciples, “I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God” (Jn 20:27). I cannot understand where, when and why Christians slipped into the habit of addressing Jesus directly in prayer and closing it in Jesus’ Name! We can’t ask Jesus in Jesus’ Name! Illogical!

Referring to the dispensation of the New Covenant that would begin with the death of Christ, He pretaught His disciples, “*In that day* you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the FATHER in My Name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full” (Jn 16:23,24). Until Christ died the disciples had been directly asking Him whatever they wanted. They never asked the Father in Jesus’ Name. Jesus emphatically pointed out the change in prayer pattern beginning with the new dispensation by the words, “Most assuredly I say to you...” The early disciples very quickly grasped this truth and we see them addressing the Father in prayer. This was also Paul’s consistent practice. He said, “I bow my knees to the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph 3:14; 1:16,17).

Let’s now come to sin confession. Apostle John teaches that sins must be confessed to the “Father” and the blood of “His Son” will cleanse us from all sin (1 Jn 1:6-9). When we confess our sins “to” the Father, the Son as a merciful and faithful High Priest at the right hand of the Father advocates “for” us (1 Jn 2:1; Heb 2:17,18) and intercedes “for” us (Rom 8:34). The Holy Spirit also intercedes to the Father for us (Rom 8:26). Let’s never forget this divine organisation in prayer.

Even though all spiritual blessings come through the finished work of Christ on the Cross, we are taught to ask the “Father” for them. Take for example, the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the One who baptises us with the Holy Spirit (Lk 3:16). But He has commanded us to ask the Father for this gift (Lk 11:13). Does this mean that we can never address Jesus in prayer? No. But praying to Jesus can be an exception and not a rule.

*Reading: Lk 11:1-13**Memorising: Lk 11:2*

Our Father who is in Heaven, hallowed be Your Name! For, Yours is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever!

Father God, we are ashamed when You ask us, "If I am a Father, where is My honour?" We have not worshipped You enough as our Father. We have not thanked You enough as our Father. We have not obeyed You enough as our Father. Though we rejoice in Christ Jesus who is Your only begotten Son, and who is on Your bosom, we have forgotten You who sent Him. Though we abundantly enjoy the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we have forgotten You who sent Him.

Holy Father, we worship You!
The Father of mercies, we worship You!
The Father of spirits, we worship You!
The Father of lights, we worship You!
Perfect Father, we worship You!
The Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, we worship You!
O God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we worship You!
O God, who corrects us, we worship You!
O God, who as the Vinedresser prunes us, we worship You!
O Everlasting Father, we worship You!
O the Father of the fatherless, we worship You!
O the Father of glory, we worship You!
O God Omnipotent, we worship You!
O God Omnipresent, we worship You!
O God Omniscient, we worship You!
O the Great I am, we worship You!

We join David and say, "Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the Kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as Head over all. Both riches and honour come from You, and You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; in Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. Now therefore, our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious Name!" Through Jesus Your Son, Amen!

*(Mt 6:9-13; Mal 1:6; Prov 8:30; Jn 1:18; 3:16; 14:26; 17:11; 17:25; 2 Cor 1:3; Lk 6:36;
Heb 12:9; Js 1:17; Mt 5:48; Eph 3:14; Ex 3:6; Heb 12:6; Jn 15:1-3; Isa 9:6; Psa 68:5;
Eph 1:17; Gen 17:1; Jer 23:23,24; Job 11:7-9; 1 Chr 29:10-13)*