

Order of Worship for July 24, 2022

Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn: “Hear Us, Father, When We Pray” - Hymn #773

P: The disciples of Jesus asked Him, “Lord, teach us to pray.” We join today in praying the prayer He taught them, reflecting on each petition, as we pray...

C: Our Father Who Art in heaven; hallowed be thy name...

P: We begin our worship in Your name: The name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Help our worship to be to Your glory and a blessing to us.

C: Thy Kingdom Come

P: Come into our hearts. Fill us with your love. Your kingdom comes to all who believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Help us to continue in that kingdom by Your grace, until we enter the eternal heavenly kingdom.

C: Thy Will Be Done On Earth As It Is In Heaven.

P: Help us to continue doing Your will every day. Bless each of our days, that we may dedicate them to You. Turn even our bad experiences into good for us as You have promised.

C: Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

P: We know that everything comes from You. Help us to remember this always and teach us to be thankful.

Confession of Faith:

All: We can say these things only because we believe in God. We believe that God gives us life, both physical and spiritual. We believe that God the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to believe in Jesus as our Savior and Lord. We believe that God gives us eternal life now, and will take us to live with Himself forever. Amen.

Entrance Psalm:

P: Call upon Me in the day of trouble;

C: I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.

P: With my whole heart I cry; answer me, O LORD!

C: I will keep Your statutes.

P: I call to You; save me,

C: that I may observe Your testimonies.

P: I rise before dawn and cry for help;

C: I hope in Your words.

P: My eyes are awake before the watches of the night,

C: that I may meditate on Your promise.

P: Hear my voice according to Your steadfast love;

C: O LORD, according to Your justice give me life.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P: Call upon Me in the day of trouble;

C: I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. O Lord, let Your merciful ears be attentive to the prayers of Your servants, and by Your Word and Spirit teach us how to pray that our petitions may be pleasing before You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Hymn of Praise: “In Holy Conversation” - Hymn #772

Lessons

Genesis 18:20–33

R: Then the LORD said, “Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grave, I will go down to see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me. And if not, I will know.”

So the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. Then Abraham drew near and said, “Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city. Will You then sweep away the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?” And the LORD said, “If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”

Abraham answered and said, “Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the LORD, I who am but dust and ashes. Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking. Will You destroy the whole city for lack of five?” And God said, “I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there.” Again Abraham spoke to Him and said, “Suppose forty are found there.” God answered, “For the sake of forty I will not do it.” Then Abraham said, “Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak. Suppose thirty are found there.” God answered, “I will not do it, if I find thirty there.” Abraham said, “Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the LORD. Suppose twenty are found there.” God answered, “For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it.” Then Abraham said, “Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there.” God answered, “For the sake of ten I will not destroy it.” And the LORD went his way, when He had finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

R: O Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Colossians 2:6–15

R: Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him.

R: O Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Luke 11:1–13

P: 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 Jesus 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 indebted to us.
And lead us not into temptation.”

And He said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything’? I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

P: O Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Children’s Message:

Sermon Hymn: “Come, My Soul, With Every Care” - Hymn # 779

Sermon: “Teach Us to Pray” - Luke 11:1–13

Last week, I was at Junior High Week at Camp Okoboji. Part of my duties there included leading the mealtime prayers. Normally the camp counselors do that, but they were doing enough extra jobs this year, I handed the prayers myself. The challenge is, not everyone knows all of the prayers. We did some fun ones, like the Superman prayer or the Jaws prayer. We tried a couple that I knew, but no one else did. The best known ones, though, were what we call the common table prayer and the doxology. The prayers that the campers and staff had learned at home, from their parents and families. They had been taught to pray, and it showed in those prayers.

Today, we hear about prayer. The disciples ask Jesus, “Teach us to pray.” They ask Him to apprentice them in prayer. They’d been taught to pray by rabbis in synagogues. They’d learned to pray from their parents. They’d learned to pray through the Psalms. Yet, prayer was not for them a natural thing like breathing. It didn’t seem as easy to them as it did to Jesus. And so, they asked Jesus to teach them to pray.

Which he did, using what has come to be the prayer most often prayed by Christians. The prayer we call the Lord’s Prayer, though maybe it should more accurately be called the disciples’ prayer. Jesus prayed in a different way than the disciples were used to. He talked to God as his Father.

When we pray to God as our Father, we remember that we are the adopted children of God. And when we do that, when we approach God as a child approaches their parent, we remember that we are praying to a God who takes care of us better than our parents could. “Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him” (Luke 11:11-13).

But more than teaching them what to pray, Jesus taught them how to pray. Jesus taught them to pray persistently. To keep praying, to keep asking. To pray without ceasing. Jesus wanted his disciples to be persistent pray-ers. But not because God was like some annoyed neighbor who would grudgingly give you what you ask, or because God can be pestered into giving you whatever you want. Repeatedly asking God for a new bike, a new car, a million dollars, isn’t going to make those things appear. Talking to God in prayer is not like using a vending machine or putting your order in on Amazon. Who would want to live in a world in which anything for which anyone asks would be granted? While it may sound appealing at first, the reality is quite different.

In the film *Bruce Almighty*, one of the climactic scenes occurs after Bruce, who had been given the job of God for the day and had answered everyone’s prayers with “yes”, sees the results of this action. For example, everyone who prayed to win the lottery won, but won a very small amount because of how many people had won. The following dialogue shows these dangers.

“God: You made a mess of things, huh?

Bruce: I just gave them what they wanted.

God: Yeah, but since when does anyone have a clue what they want?”

Persistently praying doesn't always give you what you want. Instead, persistently praying changes the pray-er, the one doing the praying, to ask for what they need.

Jesus didn't just teach his disciples to pray lecture style. He set a compelling example. He prayed before meals. He prayed for children. He prayed for the sick. He frequently went off by himself to pray, even missing getting on the boat his disciples were using to cross the Sea of Galilee to do so. Even the night he was betrayed, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed. Even from the cross, as he died for us, Jesus prayed. Jesus made prayer a priority.

In the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, the narrator, Tevye, keeps up a running dialogue with God throughout the show. He gives credit to God for the good things that happen, while lamenting all that goes wrong. He persistently prays.

Mother Teresa said, “If you want to pray better, you must pray more.” The All-Star Game and Home Run Derby were this week, and the state softball and baseball tournaments happened here in Iowa this past week, as well. If you wanted to know how those teams made it into the tournament, how those players collected the most votes, how those players hit the most home runs, you'd find out it was because of practice. Time spent playing catch, in the batting cage, working with a coach. Time stretching and running, time spent in the weight room. To achieve at a high level, you have to practice.

Prayer is the same way. You get better at praying in public by praying in public. You get better praying out loud by praying out loud. Prayer rather needs to be learned by the persistent practice of prayer, especially of paying attention to God's Word in prayer, and how Jesus and the disciples pray, how the Psalms are prayers. You get better at praying by praying.

That's why we persistently pray. Our persistent prayers don't change God. Instead, they change us to see the goodness in the world and to see it with an attitude of gratitude. They help us to see all of God's good gifts.

We pray persistently because God's gifts are given repeatedly.

We pray persistently because it sustains our spiritual life. Just as all of our human relationships are sustained by communication, so too is our relationship with God. We pray to talk with God, to tell God our concerns. We pray, just like talking to a friend or a parent or a child or a spouse, to maintain and strengthen that relationship.

In the Old Testament lesson today, Abraham bargains with God about how many righteous people would need to be found to save Sodom. Abraham stops at ten, but that's still too high. There aren't ten righteous people in Sodom, and so God destroys it. So God sent His Son, Jesus, to be the Righteous One to save the world. Jesus came into the world. Jesus didn't just teach the world to pray. Jesus saved the world. Through Jesus we have forgiveness. Through Jesus we have access to God.

Because of that forgiveness, because of what Jesus did, we can pray with confidence. As Jesus taught His disciples to pray, so He teaches us to pray. We can pray with boldness. We can pray

with persistence, to the God that we call Father, and we can be called children of God. And through that persistence, through that prayer, we come to know God better. We come to know the God who gives more willingly than a begrudging neighbor, whose love exceeds that of a father for his child. We come to know the God whose love pales beside any comparison. We come to know the God who gives us what we need. We come to know the God who loves us and forgives us, and whose love will never let us go. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Lord's Prayer from Small Catechism: Introduction, 1st and 2nd Petitions (p 323-4)

Prayer

P: Dear Lord, because You have made us Your own children in Jesus Christ by adopting us, ransoming us, winning us, we want to remember that we are Yours. We want to be a part of Your kingdom work. Please use us, and everything about us—our time, our work, our play, our money—to make your kingdom grow in us and others. We pray this, realizing that we need Your help to make our offerings to You, good and pleasing and useful, and so we pray:

C: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

P: We confess that we are very imperfect; that we sin every day in many ways. We ask for your forgiveness because of what Jesus has done for us in His death and resurrection. We also ask for the strength to forgive others who have hurt us. Please assure us that we have Your forgiveness, and give us strength to forgive.

Prayers for Daily Life

C: Lead us not into temptation.

P: O Lord, guard us and keep us from the temptations in our lives. Make us strong to resist, as we remember Your love and forgiveness. Help us to show Your love to others by our actions and words. Remind us that we are Your children, temples of Your Spirit, and that You have called us out of darkness to lead new lives.

C: But deliver us from evil.

P: Keep us safe, as we drive, as we work, as we eat, as we sleep, as we have fun—as we live our lives in Your world. Bless us each day to Your glory and our good.

C: For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing: (Pastor)

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: *“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”* - **Hymn #770**