

Sermon: The Lord's prayer - *For the kingdom is yours forever.*

Jesus came to earth with a key message: Matthew 3,2: *"Saying, Let your hearts be turned from sin; for the kingdom of heaven is near."* **We have to shift our attention.** We have to leave everything we have been doing until now and start to **pay attention to what is coming.** The Kingdom of heaven is near!

MISTAKES WE MAKE ON OUR WAY TO THE REAL PRAYER: When we pray we often make this mistakes

a. **My priority is my own intention.**

When I begin to pray my very first thought is my own idea of what God should do. I hope that somehow I can get God to do what I want him to do for me. This is my goal. Sometimes I don't get what I want. Sometimes I get what I want but it is not at all what the Kingdom of heaven offers. And it is a shame for me because I am so close to it.

b. **I am talking to God but to myself.**

My prayer is very often centered only around me. I seek an understanding of God that I am OK with rather than a reality of who God really is. And this is the difference between meditation and real prayer. You should seek the true God who is independent of you (Ephesians: 1, 17 *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him*). The Apostle Paul is not praying for God to protect people, bless people, solve their problems and so on, but for people to really and truly know God.

c. **I pray because I feel that I have to.**

My conscience is clear when I pray quite often and I also feel guilty when I don't pray for a long time. Can God be fooled? Can I somehow dazzle him and win more of his love than he already has for me? (Matthew: 6,6 *But when you make your prayer, go into your private room, and, shutting the door, say a prayer to your Father in secret, and your Father, who sees in secret, will give you your reward.*) Prayer is not about performance but about intimacy. God wants you to see yourself by God's eyes.

THE TRUE PRAYER RESET OUR HEART

True prayer isn't centered around our wishes, our achievements or ourselves at all. It is the other way around. True prayer is a space where we allow God to **shift our heart.**

Tim Keller says in his book called "Prayer": *"Prayer allows me to see my heart in a new light. It is the only gateway to true self-knowledge. It is also the main way we experience profound change - rearrangement of our loves."*

"Prayer is God's way of giving us many unimaginable things. It is through prayer that it is safe for God to give us many of the things we most desire. Because through prayer we come to know God in a way that ultimately allows us to treat God truly as God. Prayer is simply the key to everything we have to do in life and who we are to be". We cannot be without prayer..."

The real prayer changes us. It is our desire - we want to be people changed by Jesus Christ and we also want to be people who change others around us. In prayer, we meet God who again and again gives us a right perspective to our relationships, lives, events,... We are lost without the prayer. Prayer is like glasses that focus our uncertain vision so that we can walk on the right path again.

LORD'S PRAYER TEACHES US HOW TO ALLOW GOD RESET OUR HEART

The Lord's prayer, that Jesus taught his disciples, is the perfect guide. It contains 4 steps:

1. Anchoring

We put ourselves in the right context by the very first words of the Lord's prayer: *"Our Father in heaven..."*. We declare that there is a Father above us who knows about everything we need. And we are surrounded by our brothers and sisters in Christ. We can see God in every one of them and we can serve God through them.

2. Self-emptying: Praying for the affairs of God

Second step is hidden in those words of the Lord's prayer: "...hallowed be your name. Your kingdom comes. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." In this step I realize everything isn't just about me. The affairs of my heavenly Lord comes first. I let my desires die because Jesus Christ died for me too. I am moving forward through surrender.

3. New fulfillment: Praying for the affairs of human

In this step we are speaking about these words: "Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial, rescue us from the evil one." It is about our full complete trust in God. We believe that God knows what is best for us and will provide. He knows our needs and can meet them in a way that is actually part of our daily discovery of God's kingdom for us because we have kept up with Him.

4. Confessions of the faith and confirmation of our new perspective

In this step we are speaking about the last words from the Lord's prayer: "For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever." Those 3 things (kingdom, power and glory) have a very specific impact on my life. When I say them out loud I do an inventory of my life perspective. Did I really change my perspective? Did I really reset my heart? You can ask yourself 3 questions:

1. Do I have the Kingdom of heaven in my life forever?

Who or what rules you? How much does God really decide about you and how much other people, circumstances or yourself decide about you? Are you fully committed to God in various areas of your life? Is the way you live your life or the way you think about your future an indication that His is the Kingdom, not yours?

2. Do I have God's power in my life forever?

What are your resources? What/who do you draw from? What are you listening to? If you don't know God's heart and words, you have to rely on your own wisdom and power. Do you carry His power within you, not yours?

3. Do I have His Glory in my life forever?

What do you want to achieve? What are your goals? What do you want? Is God a good luck charm on the way to your own goals, or is it about His glory in your life, not yours?

Not mine, but yours is the Kingdom.

Not mine, but yours is the power.

Not mine, but yours is the glory.

Forever.

Amen.

Amen. - **So be it.** In a book called the Talmud it is written that "If you say Amen with all your soul, you will open the gates of paradise."

Matthew 3,2: Saying, Let your hearts be turned from sin; for the kingdom of heaven is near.

If you can say with all your soul that "For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever." Then you are **shifted**. Your heart has been reset and the Kingdom of heaven is here.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Try changing the way you pray. Try to be less focused on yourself and more focused on the living God. Be open. Try to see what God wants to shift or reset in your life. Do it regularly. Do this everyday for at least one week. Later you can see how God changes your heart, your perspective, your relationships, your circumstances, events and so on.

Write down your own Lord's prayer. Work with it every day. Use it to reset yourself and you will not miss the kingdom of heaven.