

“On Earth as It Is in Heaven”
Matthew 6:1-13

Every line in what is commonly called “The Lord’s Prayer” begs for a oneness, a union, a living fellowship between the Uncreated Creator and the Re-created Creature. In this prayer, we are invited to step into our inheritance, into our own experience of its eternal character here on earth, into an ongoing, ever-growing intimacy with God that is supernaturally adjusting us to His terms, His reality. It opens the door to turning from others’ ideas to what’s going on in the world to God’s idea of what’s going on in the world.

Jesus prayed this prayer... He lived this prayer... He laid down His life because of this prayer... He was raised due to this prayer! Let’s be careful not to demean this prayer as a “baby” prayer – just for the beginner, the newly born ones. Nothing in Jesus’ high priestly prayer in John 17 came to be apart from, “pray in this way.” (Matt 6:9)

Two things to keep in mind as we pursue its intent together: #1) It is a prayer “AGAINST” something – against “unreal religion”... the empty, false, illusory religion of man apart from God! The kind that is full of pretense (6:2), born of “2nd hand faith” (6:7), impersonal and predictably earth-bound (6:9,10), the kind that pursues self-acquisition and self-exaltation (6:1,13). #2) It is a prayer “FOR” something – for the end of the world as we know it! Especially the end of the unreal, man-centered religious world. It is a confession through and through – what we need here on earth comes from another world – the very real and very eternal realm of God Himself.

The first two words direct us immediately to both the “subject” and the “object” of real praying – “Our Father”. At the core of our gospel there is a beating heart – the loving heart of an Eternal Father to have a vast family of sons and daughters to give Himself to and live His life through for all of eternity. Co-operating sons and daughters ever-ready to “commend ourselves as His servants” (II Cor 6:4) to His glory and honor – knowing full well it will take what is from heaven to pull that off on earth if we are ever going to “co-labor with Him” (II Cor 6:1).

“Our Father” reminds us how very personal all of this is – His personal love, provision, wisdom... our personal trust, deference and honor. He is the personal Source of all our strength, love, and satisfaction (Eph 3:14-21); of every good and perfect gift necessary to live on earth as it is in heaven (Ja 1:17); of our new creation identity (I Jo 2:8; 4:17); our child of God inheritance (Ro 8:16-17); and our birthright of freedom (Ga 5:1).

It is not a big leap to see that the will of our God is a family – “our” Father! A lovingly ordered and fully functional family. That explains a lot about things being so messy, so disordered, so dysfunctional on earth. You might say all the dis-order, all the dis-function can be traced back to two things. First, the un-received life – until we receive the Life of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – we cannot be ordered properly, function as designed... by His Life! Secondly, the un-released life – once received, we must be willing to release to others all we’ve freely received (Matt 10:8). Then, we may begin to present to others what we pray for... on earth as it is in heaven!



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Greetings


Thank you for your gracious responses to our thoughts on the February Florida Retreat. As of today, we have enough "interest" to proceed and will keep you informed as things unfold. Our target dates are February 23-25, 2024 if you'd like to "pencil in" that objective.

You will notice in the Calendar in the days to come I have no scheduled retreats and conferences for a while. I have yet to give any hard "yesses" for any dates after October 1st through 2024. Some of you have some "soft"/"maybe" dates next year, but we're doing a bit of a re-set in our priorities for ministry. I'm doing a lot of counseling with pastors and churches in distress and still holding down my "interim" position at one of our local churches (FBCA). I am more than "full up" and will take the next couple of months to determine how to proceed.

As always, we value your input and appreciate your prayers. We want more than ever to fulfill the calling of our God to proclaim the liberating awareness of "Christ in you, the hope of glory", with all clarity, wisdom, and wise investment of resources. Thank you so much for sharing the journey together with us and with our Father. It is a delight to "co-labor" with you!

Praise & Prayer

 The Church's return to the personal nature of "Our Father"

 Discernment for ministry opportunities in the days to come

 Co-laborers in Christ!

 Heavenly sufficiency for earthly needs

Calendar

OCTOBER

1,8,15,22,29	FBCA
10	Alachua Study
31	Ocala Study