

The Spirit of Submission

Matthew 6:9-13

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Prayer that most powerfully brings about changes in our hearts is the kind of prayer that asks explicitly for the change. It doesn't just change things around us, but also us. Jesus reveals to us through the Lord's prayer, profound insights of what it means to have a prayer life where we are changed through prayer.

3 steps that are needed for prayer to change you

1) Reject all other kingdoms

v10a – God possesses a kingdom that has implications on earth. The prayer is a petition to reject all other kingdoms, except the kingdom of God, in our hearts. Our human tendency is to allow other things to reign in our lives.

1 Sam. 8 – The people then did not reject Samuel, but God Himself as king; that He should not reign over them. God warned the people that this king they wanted would only keep taking from them. All other kings and kingdoms take from us and enslave us. God's kingdom alone is a giving kingdom. His kingdom is a kingdom of grace.

The kingdom in the Lord's prayer (v10a) means specifically God's redemptive relationship with people through Jesus Christ. The emphasis is not God's sovereign rule over all of creation; it is God's redemptive grace given to people. God's kingdom is not a place but a relationship. Jesus teaches us that 'your kingdom come' as a petition is a matter of the heart (Luke 17:20-21, John 3:5, Mark 1:15).

Don't just pray for God's kingdom to come in the world. Direct God's kingdom to come in our own hearts. Let the change we cry out to our heavenly Father for begin a change in ourselves! The kingdom of God is at hand! Repent and receive God's grace for you!

2) Submit to God's will

v10b – Jesus' emphasis on the will of God in prayer is not the seeking of His will for issues in our lives, but for His revealed will to be

done on earth as it is in heaven. The will of God here does not refer to God's sovereign will of decree, but His will of command, where there is a gap between the accomplishment of this will on earth compared with heaven. Jesus calls for us to pray that we can live in submissive obedience to His revealed will according to His word. Discernment on God's specific will for direction is meant to be found within an on-going obedience to God's revealed will. Prayer is not meant to be a transaction but a relationship with God. Prayer is not convincing God to align His will with our will; prayer is asking God to align our will with His will. The answer to the two petitions of rejecting all other kingdoms and submitting to God's will is found in Jesus Christ!

3) Behold the true King who submitted to the Father's will for your sake

At the garden of Gethsemane, we see the reality of the two petitions in Jesus' prayer (Matt. 26). Jesus gave Himself to us and insisted only on taking from us our sins in His kingdom. While He prayed for a change in the circumstances around Him, His prayer echoed the sentiments of the petition He taught – not His will but God's will be done. Jesus was praying for both a change in things around Him and, at the same time, for Himself to learn to be obedient to submit to the Father's will. He understood that God's kingdom through Him can only come if He submitted to the Father's will in obedience, even unto death. While there was no change in Jesus' circumstances, God answered His prayer to find strength to submit to His will (Luke 22:43). Jesus developed a spirit of submission through prayer. Behold Jesus as the true king in your heart!

In our relationship with our Father, pray not just for things to change, but for our self to change. Pray for a spirit of submission to walk in obedience to the Father's will! Pray

like the king who is enthroned in our hearts
– Jesus!