

Bible e-Study /Pennies From Heaven #3

3 Coins in the Fountain - the Lord's Prayer as Our Model for Prayer -
🍀 In God we trust - We can talk to God with confidence.

"Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." Matthew 6:8

NUGGET – Aren't the words of Jesus here one of the things that makes prayer difficult to understand? I mean if the Father knows what you need before you ask Him, what's the point? Why does He need for us to say what He already knows we need?

I don't claim to have a complete understanding of an answer to this question but I would put forward the following ideas to think about:

🍀 God wants to hear from us what we think is important to us and what we think we want.

🍀 God wants us to talk to with Him and so, though He knows what we need (as *Jesus says, before we even ask Him*) He desires for us to be present in our relationship with Him and so talking to Him about what we need helps to grow that relationship.

It's like a good marriage relationship. How many of us husbands know what our wives would like us to do for them, say, around the house, yet we still want to be asked. It's not nagging we want, it's affirmation and courtesy. "Honey, would you please mow the lawn?" And for wives it's no different with affirmation and courtesy either, "Dear, would you please make pot roast for dinner again this Sunday?" (*Now it could be the wife who mows the lawn and the husband that cooks the pot roast, but the same idea applies then as well!*)

The husband knows what is needed and the wife knows what is wanted; but how many say to themselves, "unless s/he asks me, I'm not going to..." Why? Why do we do that? At one level it can be stubbornness and pride or selfishness and laziness. But there is also the God-honoring desire for relationship with your spouse to be expressed that is longed for. None of us like to be taken for granted... neither does God.

Relationships, like our marriages can help us understand our relationship with God. And God, though He knows what we need, wants to hear from us, no different than **we** want to hear from each other.

So the upshot is, that we have here in this nugget verse today a promise from Jesus that God hears our prayers because He knows what we need. One of those needs we have, is to know that we are heard by God. So, because He knows our needs we know that He will hear whatever we have to say to Him.

And in the preceding verses, especially 6 Jesus makes it very clear that God hears us, wants to hear us and will listen to our words, though they be few. Knowing that God hears us when we pray the Lord's Prayer or any prayer, our knowing to a rock-solid certainty that He hears us, changes us.

APPLICATION –

1. Knowing the God of all Creation hears us when we pray connects us beyond what we can see and touch. How do you picture that in your mind?
2. With such knowledge comes a peace beyond understanding in this world. Standing at the edge of a clear calm ocean aids me in grasping that reality, what helps you?

PRAY – Accepting that God accepts what you pray, bring to Him what you most want Him to hear from you right now.

Peace in Christ, Pastor Tom Rhodes



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*Going Deeper together. We meet in the **Fellowship Hall** during the Education Hour for discussion and prayer with all those who're able to come. If you're not able to make it Sunday, please feel free to e-mail me with your comments or questions so that we can have the benefit of sharing them together.*

GOING DEEPER

So what does the Lord's Prayer teach us about God hearing us? From Luther's Small Catechism.

The Conclusion

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

What does this mean?

This means that I should be certain that these petitions are pleasing to our Father in heaven, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this way and has promised to hear us. Amen, amen, which means "yes, yes, it shall be so."

234. Why do we end the Lord's Prayer with the word amen?

The word amen means "so shall it be" and emphasizes that God, who has commanded us to pray, will hear our prayers and answer them as He has promised.

(See also the Luther quote below.) What about our prayer relationship with God can we take from what we've just read?

When you know you're being heard and truly listened to by your spouse, your friend, your God, you are being given the great gift of affirmation. Your presence is being acknowledged and your words take on a weight of meaning that casual conversation doesn't carry.

One example of this was when I had the privilege of praying in the House of Congress. I *knew* I was being heard (I knew I was being broadcast on TV for heaven's sake!) and so my attitude toward praying that prayer was affected. Oh I'd like to have you think otherwise, but... when you know to a certainty that others are listening to your words, your choice of words and how you say them is different than, as we said, a casual conversation. The point is not that you can't be casual with God but to be mindful of the certainty that God is hearing us, listening to our words!

Jesus gave us a good example of this. Read [John 11:38-43](#). We are taught here that Christ trusted and proclaimed to those around Him, that God the Father would hear Him. The reason was so that faith that God had sent Jesus would grow and be established in others. And this is backed up by [verse 45](#). So God hearing Jesus teach us that He will also hear us, those who trust in Jesus as being sent from God. As Christ trusted God to hear Him we can share in that same confidence, for the sake of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Again from the Small Catechism.

235. How do I know God is able to answer the prayers of His people in Christ Jesus?

A. He alone is the King who has all good gifts in His control.

823 **James 1:17** Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly

lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

824 Ps. 103:2-3 Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.

B. He alone has the power to grant our petitions.

825 Ps. 33:6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of His mouth.

826 Eph. 3:20-21 To Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

C. He has all glory and is worthy of our praise.

827 Ps. 113:4-5 The Lord is exalted over all the nations, His glory above the heavens. Who is like the Lord our God, the One who sits enthroned on high?

828 1 Tim. 1:17 To the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

There are great and wonderful promises in these Bible passages that give us confidence in the God who hears us. Which 1 or 2 of these passages connect with you? What about God and His relationship with you and your prayers, does that passage or passages teach?

In the peace of Christ, PR

Below is a reading from Luther that pertains to our discussion today

But in the text there is a small addition with which He concludes the prayer, a sort of thanksgiving and common confession, namely this: “For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.” These are really the titles and names that are appropriate to God alone, for these three things He has reserved for Himself—to govern, to judge, and to glory. No one has a right to judge or to rule or to have sovereignty except God alone, or those whom He has commissioned with it, those through whom, as His servants, He maintains His rule. In the same way, no man may exercise judgment over another, or become angry at him and punish him, unless he has the office to do so on God’s behalf. For this is not a right innate in men, but one given by God. These are the two things that He names here: “the kingdom,” that is, the sovereignty by which all authority is His; and then “the power,” that is, the consequence of His authority, its execution, by which He can punish, subject the wicked to Himself, and protect the pious. For he who punishes is doing so in God’s stead; all administering of justice, all protecting and preserving, is derived from His power. Therefore no one should wreak vengeance or exact punishment on his own; for it does not lie within his official capacity or ability, and it does not do any good either. As He says (Rom. 12:19): “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay”; and elsewhere He threatens (Matt. 26:52): “All who take the sword for vengeance will be punished by the sword.”

In the same way “the glory,” or honor or praise, belongs only to God. No one may boast of anything, his wisdom or holiness or ability, except through Him and from Him. When I honor a king or a prince and call him “gracious lord” or bend

my knee before him, I am not doing this to him on account of his own person but on account of God, to one who is sitting in majesty in God's stead. It is the same when I show honor to my father and mother or to those who are in their stead. I am not doing this to a human being but to a divine office, and I am honoring God in them. Wherever there is authority and power, therefore, the glory and the praise belong to Him. And so His kingdom, power, and glory prevail throughout the world. It is He alone that is ruling, punishing, and being glorified in the divine offices and stations, like those of father, mother, master, judge, prince, king, and emperor. The devil is opposing this through his minions. He himself is seeking to exercise the authority and power, to wreak the vengeance and exact the punishment, and to monopolize all the glory. That is why the petitions for His name, His kingdom, and His will are foremost here; for they alone must prevail, and all other names, kingdoms, powers, and wills must be shattered. Thus we acknowledge that He is supreme in all three of these areas, but that the others are His instruments, by which He acts to accomplish these things.

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¹Martin Luther, vol. 21, *Luther's Works, Vol. 21 : The Sermon on the Mount and the Magnificat*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann, Luther's Works, 21:147 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999, c1956).