

Bible e-Study – Pennies From Heaven #1
3 Coins in the Fountain - 3 things from Lord's Prayer
🍀 Penny for your thoughts - God wants to hear from you

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." Luke 11:1

NUGGET – The reason why I chose this verse to begin with is to point out the relational aspect of prayer. The idea is that God wants to hear from us and we need to talk with the God who made us. Its family stuff here. Parents love to hear from their child and the child needs to talk with their parent. The phrase 'penny for your thoughts' is often said between friends and family to express interest in what someone is thinking.

Notice in this verse that it starts out with Jesus praying. Jesus is having a conversation here on earth with His (and our) heavenly Father. Jesus is God's child and as such He talks to His Father. He lets Him know what is on His heart and mind.

The second aspect of this verse that points us to a more fundamental level of relationship is what the disciples do. They come and ask Jesus to teach them to pray. They want to know how to improve their communication with God. Prayer is intelligent conversation with the God of the universe Who is our Heavenly Father.

Here are some other thoughts on these verses from Dr Harold Buls who taught Greek at the seminary.

- There's something wrong with a child that does not speak to its parents. The pleas and requests of a child are welcomed by the parents.
- Prayer is an exercise of faith, a response of the Christian to God. Parents feed their children daily bread. The children respond by speaking to their parents.
- Evidently, Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer often but did not always use the same form. The Lord's Prayer was spoken by Jesus one year earlier at Mt. 6:9-13. That was in Galilee. This second time in Lk. 11 occurred very likely in Judea. This is a shorter form of the Lord's Prayer. *Prayer is not rigid and mechanical.* In the Lord's Prayer Jesus teaches us what we should pray for. Vss. 5-13 tells us how we are to pray.
- [Vss. 5-8 and 11-13](#) are examples of what is called "the lesser to the greater" figure of speech. The illustration in vss. 5-8 says that if a mere earthly friend will grant the request of his friend not on the bases only of friendship but also because of the unashamed persistence of the friend, how much more will not the heavenly Father grant the request of one of His children. We know that He is our friend.

What connected for you from what Dr Buls had to say? What thoughts on the relational aspects of prayer came to mind as you read these statements?

Prayer has conversational aspects to it. It's our response to the blessings of God, our telling God what is on our heart and mind at this point in our lives. It continues the conversation begun by God in His word to us through scripture and through His Son.

APPLICATION –

1. We know that God knows all things, but what is on your heart and mind that you would like Him to pay attention to? That can be focus point for prayer.
2. Prayer is not dictation, it is conversation and that means our participation. Think about the last conversation you had with someone that lasted more than 4 minutes. What can you take from that memory and apply to prayer?

PRAY – Try #1 above and see where that leads you.

*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.*

Peace in Christ, Pastor Tom Rhodes



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

'HEARING, SHARING AND LIVING THE GOSPEL'

Rev. Thomas A. Rhodes, Pastor

PO Box 5, 600 East Aldrich Road, Bolivar, MO 65613

(417) 326-5506 www.zionlutheranbolivar.org

GOING DEEPER

Prayer, as Jesus taught it in response to His disciple's request, is what we know as the Lord's Prayer.

The words, ***Our Father***, are among the most important in understanding that prayer is conversation. From the explanation of the Small Catechism:

*#205 In what way does the word **Father** in the Lord's Prayer encourage us to pray?*

The word Father tells us that God loves us and wants us to pray to Him confidently and without fear.

718 1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. 719 Rom. 8:15-16 You received the Spirit of sonship. The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 720 2 Cor. 6:18 I will be a Father to you, and you will be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. 722 Ps. 103:13 As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him. Bible narrative: The lost son ([Luke 15:11-32](#)).

*#206 What does the word **our** impress upon us when we pray, "Our Father"?*

In Jesus all believers are children of the one Father and should pray with and for one another.

723 Eph. 4:6 [There is] one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. 724 Gal. 3:26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 725 James 5:16 Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

What would you say to help someone who had an abusive father about how to best understand why Jesus uses this phrase both here and so often throughout His prayers?

More words that I think open up the relational aspects of prayer come in the fifth petition, ***Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.***

In this part, Jesus is teaching us that in prayer we have an opportunity to come clean with God and allow His grace to blow out the dirt, shame and fear that our sin always injects into our relationship with Him. Here is where the relationship gets refreshed and renewed. As we confess our sin and need for forgiveness, we open ourselves up to a part of the conversation with God that He has initiated. He has sent Jesus to cleanse our sins with His blood, shed on the cross and thereby establishes a relationship with us that can grow and flourish.

Again From the explanation of the Small Catechism:

224. What do we ask for in this petition?

We ask that our Father in heaven would for Christ's sake graciously forgive our sins.

788 Ps. 51:1-2 Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love; according to Your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. 789 Ps. 130:3-4 If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared. 790 Luke 18:13 God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

225. Why do we include a prayer for forgiveness of sins in these petitions to our heavenly Father?

We are not worthy of the things for which we pray and have not deserved them. We therefore need God's forgiveness so that we may pray to Him confidently and in good conscience.

"Where the heart is not right with God ... it will never dare to pray.... A confident and joyful heart can come only from the knowledge that our sins are forgiven" (Large Catechism III, 92).

791 Gen. 32:10 I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness You have shown Your servant. 792 Ps. 32:5 I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"-and You forgave the guilt of my sin.

In what ways does having a heart full of the knowledge of its forgiveness from God impact prayer?

Lets return to final point that DR. Buls made above concerning [verses 5-13](#) of the Luke passage where Jesus teaches about the Lord's Prayer. When you look at these two parables that Jesus uses, one is about a friend in need being given what he needs and the other is about the relationship of parents to children and giving the child what they request.

How do these two stories, individually and together help to illumine, for you, the relational aspects of prayer?

We started out talking about "a penny for your thoughts" and that God wants to hear from you. What thoughts on the relationship you have with God through prayer would my penny buy?

In the peace of Christ, PR