

## **The Small Catechism of Martin Luther**

### **Part Three: The Lord's Prayer**

*The Lord's Prayer, or Our Father, is found in **Matthew 6:9-13** and **Luke 11:2-4**.*

Introduction

Traditional: *Our Father, who art in heaven,* Contemporary: *Our Father in heaven,*

Q. What does this mean?

A. In this introduction, God invites us to believe that God is our real Father and we are God's real children, so that we will pray with trust and complete confidence, in the same way beloved children approach their beloved Father with their requests.

#### **The First Petition**

Traditional: *hallowed by thy Name,* Contemporary: *hallowed be your Name,*  
Alternative: *may your name be holy,*

Q. What does this mean?

A. Of course, God's name is holy in and of itself, but by this request, we pray that God will make it holy among us, too.

Q. How does this take place?

A. When God's Word is taught clearly and purely, and when we live holy lives as God's children based upon it. Help us, Heavenly Father, to do this! But anyone who teaches and lives by something other than God's Word defiles God's name among us. Protect us from this, Heavenly Father!

#### **The Second Petition**

Traditional: *thy kingdom come,* Contemporary: *your kingdom come,*

Q. What does this mean?

A. Truly God's Kingdom comes by itself, without our prayer. But we pray in this request that it come to us as well.

Q. How does this happen?

A. When the Heavenly Father gives us the Holy Spirit, so that we believe God's holy Word by God's grace and live godly lives here in this age and there in eternal life.

### **The Third Petition**

Traditional: *thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

Contemporary: *your will be done, on earth as in heaven.*

Alternative: *may your will be accomplished, as it is heaven, so may it be on earth.*

Q. What does this mean?

A. Truly, God's good and gracious will is accomplished without our prayer. But we pray in this request that it be accomplished among us as well.

Q. How does this happen?

A. When God destroys and interferes with every evil will and all evil advice, which will not allow God's Kingdom to come, such as the Devil's will, the world's will and will of our bodily desires. It also happens when God strengthens us by faith and by the Word and keeps living by them faithfully until the end of our lives. This is God's will, good and full of grace.

### **The Fourth Petition**

Traditional: *Give us this day our daily bread.*

Contemporary: *Give us today our daily bread.*

Q. What does this mean?

A. Truly, God gives daily bread to evil people, even without our prayer. But we pray in this request that God will help us realize this and receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

Q. What does "Daily Bread" mean?

A. Everything that nourishes our body and meets its needs, such as: Food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, yard, fields, cattle, money, possessions, a devout spouse, devout children, devout employees, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and other things like these.

### **The Fifth Petition**

Traditional: *And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.*

Contemporary: *Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.*

Alternative: *And forgive our guilt, as we forgive those guilty of sinning against us.*

Q. What does this mean?

A. We pray in this request that our Heavenly Father will neither pay attention to our sins nor refuse requests such as these because of our sins and because we are neither worthy nor deserve the things for which we pray. Yet God wants to give them all to us by God's grace, because many times each day we sin and truly deserve only punishment. Because God does this, we will, of course, want to forgive from our hearts and willingly do good to those who sin against us.

### **The Sixth Petition**

Traditional: *And lead us not into temptation,*  
Contemporary: *Save us from the time of trial,*

Q. What does this mean?

A. God tempts no one, of course, but we pray in this request that God will protect us and save us, so that the Devil, the world and our bodily desires will neither deceive us nor seduce us into heresy, despair or other serious shame or vice, and so that we will win and be victorious in the end, even if they attack us.

### **The Seventh Petition**

Traditional: *but deliver us from evil.*  
Contemporary: *and deliver us from evil.*  
Alternative: *but set us free from the Evil One.*

Q. What does this mean?

A. We pray in this request, as a summary, that our Father in Heaven will save us from every kind of evil that threatens body, soul, property and honor. We pray that when at last our final hour has come, God will grant us a blessed death, and, in God's grace, bring us to Godself from this valley of tears.

**Amen.**

*Amen.*

Q. What does this mean?

A. That I should be certain that such prayers are acceptable to the Father in Heaven and will be granted, that God has indeed commanded us to pray in this way and that God promises to answer us. Amen. Amen. This means: Yes, yes it will happen this way.

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