

Russell Kelfer
Our Father
Who Art
in Heaven

#1330-B

Series: Prayer: God's Secret Weapon



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Our Father Who Art in Heaven

We come into Thy presence together to bow before Thee. We humble ourselves and come in absolute awe at the Name of Jesus, and we worship Thee. We adore Thee. We praise Thee. Thank Thee for the awesome privilege of calling You, Father, and the wonderful opportunity to literally have fellowship with the Creator-God.

We fall at Your feet this morning and acknowledge that only You can teach. And we ask that You would be our teacher and that your Holy Spirit would instruct us and lead us in the way that we should go. Open our eyes that we might behold wondrous things out of Thy law.

In Jesus' Name,

Amen.

It was a most unusual meeting. The son, a local attorney, was chairing a civic conference where the participants would include his father, a successful local businessman. Usually, attorneys are not at a loss for words. This one was. He was not sure how to address his father. If he called him, "Mr. Johnson", it would seem formal and stiff. If he called him, "Pop", it would seem unprofessional. If he referred to him as "Dad", it would be less formal, but still not acceptable.

He told his dad of his dilemma. A wise believer, his dad tried to be sympathetic and understanding, yet to the point, as well. "Why don't you refer to me with the same sense of dignity, yet love, that Jesus did. At His baptismal service, His Father proclaimed unabashedly, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Son was just as unashamed. "I do always those things which please my Father," He proclaimed. Again and again He referred to Him as "My Father" or "Our Father". "You needn't be embarrassed. Just tell them, I'd like you to meet my father!"

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

The young man was ashamed. If Jesus Christ was that confident in His communication with and explanation of His relationship with His Father, that was good enough for him. And so he proudly introduced his father to the group, “I’d like you to meet my father; the best father anyone ever had.” The problem was solved. The men and women at the meeting gained new respect for both of them.

It may sound trite to you, but how you address your Heavenly Father is important, too. It’s important to Him, and it ought to be important to you. It says a lot about the kind of respect you have for His reputation, the kind of healthy pride you have in your relationship.

Again and again, Jesus demonstrated the balance between dignity and relationship. He never left any doubt about how close He and His Father were. There was nothing they could not discuss. He treasured His Father’s will and his words above everything else. They were so close their conversations were like intimate discussions between two best friends. Yet Jesus never made light of His Father’s position or authority. While they were best friends, His Father was still...His Father.

And, thus, as He introduced us to the issue of prayer, He introduced to us, as well, the principle of how to address our best friend who just happens to be the God who framed the universe. Don’t you see, Beloved, the way we address Him will leave no doubt about the office He holds. He’s our best friend, but He must ever be our Father.

We continue our study of Matthew, chapter six, and a look at the model prayer—Jesus’ effort to clearly delineate how to and how not to pray. We are not to pray publicly in order to show people how spiritual we are. We are to enter our closets, and once there, we are to shut the door. Then our Father, who sees in secret, will reward us appropriately.

Then He cautioned us not to use vain repetitions as the heathen do. We were not to babble meaningless words, nor were we to gauge whether or not we had prayed effectively by how we felt emotionally. We were to pray with our minds, thus yielding our wills. We were to be honest, transparent, and humble. We learned that from the prayer in Gethsemane. But at the same time, we need a plan, a pattern, so we’ll know

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

what God wants when He wants us to pray. Jesus was just as clear about that. He said:

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil [one]: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

(Matthew 6:9-15)

Jesus began: “After this manner, pray ye”. This was to be a pattern. A pattern is something you use to make something. It is an outline, giving you the parameters and the objectives, leaving you to adapt it to your needs without violating the intention of the pattern.

Now I like to feel my wife can do just about everything. And one of the things she does that I think is exceptional is the way she sews. But I never cease to be amazed when she spreads out on the dining room table something she calls a pattern. Now you guys feel the same way, don't you? In her mind it's a dress, or it's clothes for the grandchildren. In my mind, it's little scraps of paper pinned together that couldn't possibly produce anything. But it's a pattern. It's not the finished product; but when she applies her creativity and the material she bought to that pattern, something comes out of it. It may not be like the last person who had that pattern produced but the pattern gives the parameters. And that's what Jesus was trying to do in this model prayer. He gives us a pattern.

So we don't just “recite” these words every time we pray. That would be “vain repetition”. But we prayerfully come to understand what Jesus meant by these words, and then we make sure that the *intent of our prayers and the heart attitude*

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

behind our prayers is in harmony with the pattern Jesus set out.

For me, it often helps to recite the words first. They remind me of the principles behind the words. That is a matter of personal preference, but we must take this prayer very seriously, much more seriously than many of us do.

The reasons are several:

1- Everything in Scripture is crucial. It is God speaking to us, and the familiarity of a passage ought to make it more important, not less. We tend to lose the meaning of the most important passages in Scripture the more familiar they are to us. It ought to be the opposite.

2- This passage is doubly important because it was Jesus speaking, and He specifically began, “pray like this”. This is a direct commandment from God Himself.

3- It is important because it follows a passage in which the Master tells us *how not to pray*. Never leave the Word with a negative without first looking for the positive that replaces it. God doesn’t just tell us not to steal; He tells us to replace stealing with hard work. He doesn’t just tell us to quit lying; He tells us to learn to speak the truth in love. He doesn’t just tell us not to get angry; He tells us to replace anger with love. So much legalism and negativism in the Christian community would be done away with if believers would not stop at the “thou shalt nots” but rather find out what we “shalt do” instead. In this case, the “shalt do” is quite plain and very important.

So He begins:

After this manner therefore pray ye: (Matthew 6:9a)

This is the way God wants you to pray. Why would anyone live years of his Christian life without searching to understand every word, every syllable of this wonderful set of instructions? If we do, we are overlooking how God wants us to approach Him.

“Pray like this:” would be a proper translation. Pray like what? Pray always with these principles dominating your heart. Remember, the words you say are not the key. God looks on the heart. And unless the heart is in tune with the

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

melody of God's prayer pattern, you may well say words and not communicate with the Father at all.

We will see this pattern unfold:

I- Unity in worship (our)

II- Relationship and worship (Father)

III- Authority in worship (Who art in Heaven)

IV- Humility in worship (hallowed be Thy Name)

It all begins with how to address God. Once again, the dignity with which Jesus begins is crucial. He begins, of course, "Our Father". We often overlook the "our". Were it not important, it wouldn't be there. Most of the time Jesus addresses His Father as "My Father". Here, He addresses Him as "our" Father. In John, chapter 17, Jesus, praying to His Father in an anthem of love, prays like this:

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

That they may be one as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.

And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

(John 17:20-22)

UNITY IN WORSHIP

We need to see the intensity of Jesus' concern that although our relationship with the Father is *exclusive* in the context that there is no other way to have that relationship except through the Son, it is inclusive, in that all who come to the Son on His terms have eternal life and they become our brothers and sisters, having been adopted into the same family. You say, "You don't mean those whose peripheral theology is so far from ours do you?" Well, we better go back and read the passage again. If they have the same Father, what does that make us? Okay, so we must pray for them, love them, encourage them and acknowledge them as part of the family.

That does not mean we compromise our doctrine. Definitely not. Nor does it mean that we assume that all who

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

call themselves Christians are genuinely Christians. But it does mean that all who have put their trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, come to Him and asked Him into their lives, have the same privileges as we do. And, in many cases, in spite of what we call their “faulty theology”, they may be storing up treasures in heaven the likes of which we’ll never see.

Jesus’ driving desire in John 17 was that we have the same oneness in the body that He and His Father had. That means, even within our own churches, we ought to lay petty differences aside and focus on the unity that is ours in Christ Jesus.

The reason Jesus wants us to begin our prayer with “Our Father” is because we are to get rid of that pettiness and that divisiveness, because through our relationship with one another the world might know, don’t you see, that the world might know and believe that the Father sent the Son. Do you think that’s what the world knows when they look at the church today? Do you think that’s what the world knows when they listen to the words we speak about other groups and other denominations and other believers who don’t think exactly the way we do? We are to learn to pray, “Our Father,” to remind us that He is not just my father and your father, He is the Father of all of those in the world today who have come to God on His terms.

The rich and the poor are one in Christ. The races are one in Christ. Male and female, bond and free. One in Christ. Democrats and Republicans. One in Christ. Liberals and Conservatives. One in Christ. Whenever we start to pray, we ought to bow in humility and submission and lay aside every ounce of prejudice and every source of division and come in the spirit of oneness that is ours in Him. He is “our” Father. The petty exclusiveness that is a sign of virtually all cults that has made its way into the body of Christ at large, as well, is of Satan. The reason it is to be done away with is clear: *“that the world may believe that thou hast sent Me.”* The world is confused. They can’t see that the Messiah has come and brought peace to the heart of man if there is no peace among His family. God help us to pray “Our Father” and mean it.

RELATIONSHIP AND WORSHIP

Next, Jesus seeks to be certain that we understand just who it is we are addressing. We are addressing our “Father”. The word “Father” here ought to conjure up thoughts of praise and gratitude. If you have been born again by the blood of Christ, you can call Him “Father”. Otherwise, you are simply saying words. Would you walk up to someone on the street who is a total stranger to you, and call him, “Father”? Would your simply calling him that make it so? Of course not. Your coming to God and calling Him Father does not make Him your father. He created this world and He created you, but that is in the physical sense. For Him to be your Heavenly Father, He has to have been a part of the process of your spiritual birth; you must have been “born again”.

That process involves your coming to God, accepting the free gift of eternal life that He paid the price to provide for you, and asking Him to place the seed of the Word into the womb of your heart, allowing conception to take place. When you ask, He acts. He places His precious Spirit inside of you, and thus confirms that by virtue of your spiritual birth, He now has become your “Heavenly Father” but not until.

What an awesome privilege. That is why you begin your prayers by acknowledging your relationship with God. He is more than Creator to you. He is your Father. He gave you life when you had none. The very mention of that title ought to cause your heart to bow in humble submission and go back to that cross 2,000 years ago, fall on your face and say, “Oh, praise God, You adopted me into Your family. You paid the price. You are my Father.” And every time we pray we need to remember that. We come presumptuously; we come demandingly, because we forget who it is we’re praying to. Had it not been for what took place on Calvary 2,000 years ago you would not have the privilege of coming to Him, and you could not call Him your Father.

So never approach God without calling Him “Father”. It isn’t because the word “father” has some magical meaning. It’s because in your heart it ought to surface anthems of praise in remembrance of your salvation. God lifted you up from the trash heaps of life where you were headed for the

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

dempsey dumpster called hell and placed His own life in you and adopted you as His son or daughter. Before you approach Him for anything else, be sure to acknowledge what He has already done for you. He has transformed you, redeemed you, and assured you of an eternity in His presence in the glory of heaven. He is our Father. He is our Father, indeed.

AUTHORITY IN WORSHIP

We have learned why we approach God as “our Father”. Jesus now goes on to teach us the next important factor in coming to God’s throne. It has to do with God’s authority. He reminds us to pray,

Our Father who art in heaven. (Matthew 6:9b)

What is the significance of that? It is both a source of great comfort and a sobering reminder, as well. G. Campbell Morgan said,

The word (heavens) here is plural. (Our Father, who art in the heavens) The New Testament speaks of at least three heavens. ‘The birds of the heaven,’ where the reference is to the atmosphere encircling the earth. ‘Wonders in the heaven’ where the stellar spaces are intended. ‘Caught up even into the third heaven’ that is beyond the stellar spaces, to the place of the supreme manifestation of the presence of God.”

He goes on,

“Our Father who art in the heavens—all of them. That is a doctrine of the transcendence of God; He is far away beyond all that of which we can be conscious. It is also a doctrine of the immanence of God; He is in the very air we breathe, as well as far away, infinitely out beyond the possibility of the mind’s comprehension; in all infinite spaces, and in all near details, everywhere. That doctrine of God is the doctrine which enables man to pray.

The meaning of this phrase literally expands and exposes the depth of who God is. I wasn’t sure what to do so I took a concordance and looked up the word heaven and it is used 690 times. If we were to take the rest of our lives and just look at this word heaven we would never get through. So this

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

morning we're only going to take a glance at it to find out why God told us every time we pray to remember our Father is in heaven. I couldn't figure that out until I began to look at the word heaven and then it began to make sense. He is saying once you grasp who your Father is and what it means that He's your Father in heaven, you cannot help but shout at the top of your lungs every time you think about it, "Hallowed be Thy Name!"

Heaven—we don't talk much about heaven anymore do we? We've got air-conditioned cars, air-conditioned houses. We've got the Dallas Cowboys, America's team, to watch, and we've got all the comforts of home and all the medical help we need and all of these things and we think heaven is going to be just a little bit better than that. But until the time comes, we're just going to live it up down here. Oh, we talk about it a little bit, but I'm not sure we talk about it with the awe that was intended. Do you ever wonder why Satan wanted to stay in heaven? It was so he could have and maintain the attributes of God. Do you remember Isaiah 14?

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:
(Isaiah 14:12,13)

1- Every time you think about heaven, think about God's creative power.

Glory in all He has made. He did not wake up in heaven one day; He made it. Listen to the Word exalt His name:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
(Genesis 1:1)

—For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

(Colossians 1:16)

Everything that was made was made by Him. Glory in His creation, but take no credit for any of it. Humble yourself

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

at the glory of this earth, the glories of heaven, the glory of the human body, the glory of the spiritual body, the church. All things were made by Him who lives in heaven, even the heaven He lives in.

Our Father, which art in Heaven, [thou art the creator God,] Hallowed be Thy Name. (Matthew 6:9)

2- Every time you think of heaven, think of how the elements demonstrate His power and his mercy.

Every storm, every raindrop, every clap of thunder out of heaven shouts His name.

And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. (Exodus 9:23)

And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt. (Exodus 10:21)

And then the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you. (Deuteronomy 11:17)

The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. (Psalm 77:18)

God's judgment, mercy, and love can be seen by His control of the elements.

The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. (Deuteronomy 28:12)

Every drop of rain, every rainbow, every cloud, every volcano that erupts, every earthquake, and every windstorm all speak of His justice, His mercy, His power, and His love. They are His voice speaking out of heaven, saying "I AM". Don't you see that every time the heavens speak through the elements, we ought to bow in humble submission and

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

whisper,

Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name.
(Matthew 6:9b)

3- Every time you think of heaven, think of God's ownership of all things. God owns everything including you.

He has the right to do with you and with this world as He chooses. He made it. He made us. He owns us. That will help us to pray,

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.
(Matthew 6:10)

Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.
(Deuteronomy 10:14)

Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.
(I Chronicles 29:11)

So lest you be tempted to claim ownership of your life or of your future, or of your possessions, daring Him to take from you what you construe to be yours, stop and pray:

Our Father who art in heaven [who made heaven, who owns heaven, and who owns earth and all that is in it, including me], Hallowed be Thy Name.
(Matthew 6:9)

4- Heaven speaks of the omnipotence of God.

He uses heaven to demonstrate His power and the fact that His power cannot be contained. This means that nothing in your life is beyond His ability to resolve. That is why Jesus prayed in the garden, "Father, all things are possible unto thee" (Mark 14:36).

And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.
(Joshua 10:13)

The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his
anointed. (I Samuel 2:10)

Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations of
heaven moved and shook, because he was wroth.

The LORD thundered from heaven, and the most High
uttered his voice. (II Samuel 22:8,14)

God demonstrates His awesome power, not only to relate how powerful He is, but also to tell you how much He loves you. He will deliver you when the time comes. That's what so many of those passages say. The children of Israel were in trouble and when the time was right God spoke from heaven and it was done. And, Beloved, I don't know what's going on in your life today. Some of you may be going through struggles you have gone through for weeks or months and years. The pressures may be building and building and building, and you look to the heavens and the heavens appear to be silent. When you pray to the Lord and you pray, "Our Father who art in Heaven," remember, Beloved, that God is Omnipotent. And when the time is right (not before), when He has had enough, when the enemies of God's children have been allowed to unleash their power toward God's own for a season, He will speak and the nations will crumble. He will speak to your heart and the enemy will have no effect.

...the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his
eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered
a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle
you. (I Peter 5:10)

So if you are undergoing testing, tribulation, persecution, despair, look to heaven and begin to praise. God has not forgotten you. He is omnipotent. Nothing in your life is beyond His power. You are never out of His mind.

*Our Father, who art in heaven [who will reach down
from heaven when the time is right and vindicate your
name], Hallowed be Thy Name.*

5- Heaven speaks of God's omnipresence.

You will never be out of His reach, out of His sight, or out of His mind. He cannot be contained, suppressed, delayed, or limited. He is everywhere. He is wherever you are, whenever you need Him.

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee:

(I Kings 8:27a)

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

(Psalm 139:8)

Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.

(Isaiah 66:1a)

Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth?

Saith the LORD.

(Jeremiah 23:24)

God continually uses His heavenly abode to remind us that He is not bound by that which binds man. He is not bound by time, by space, or by circumstances. He is omnipresent. We are not alone. Never. We never will be. From this time forth, through the endless ages of eternity, He will be in us and for us. So when you pray, pray like this:

Our Father who art in heaven [and yet who are not bound by heaven], Hallowed be Thy Name.

6- The very heavens also remind us of the mercy of God.

Even the distance between heaven and earth is not without meaning. God wanted us to have a picture of the breadth of His mercy:

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

(Psalm 103:11)

Every time God forgives you of your sins and allows you to realize how gracious He is and how merciful He is, look to the heavens. Can you see Him? No, He is intentionally too far away to see. He wanted us to comprehend how merciful He is. Praise Him. Pray,

“Our Father who art in heaven, [so far beyond our understanding, to demonstrate how far beyond our understanding is your precious mercy and love,] Hallowed be Thy Name.”

7- Heaven also reminds us of God’s sovereignty.

Whatever happens, God is not out of control. He either engineered it, or He allowed it. Be it through sowing and reaping or simply a test of His love, God never loses control of

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

His people or His plan.

Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven,
and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

(Psalm 135:6)

Never forget it. God is in control. In heaven, on this earth, and even in the depths, He IS. So you can pray with confidence,

Our Father, who art in heaven, [and who is totally in control of what happens in heaven and on earth,] Hallowed by Thy Name.

8- Heaven reminds us of His immutable word. He made that clear:

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

(Matthew 5:18)

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

(Matthew 24:35)

Heaven reminds us that even it will vanish before His Word will cease to be. So if we have a promise from God's priceless Word, and Satan begins to plant seeds of doubt in our hearts that it still applies today, take heed. Heaven and earth will pass before this Word will change one jot or one tittle, so you can pray with confidence,

Our Father who art in heaven [even heaven will pass away before your Word ceases to be all that you said it is. Praise God], Hallowed be Thy Name.

9- Heaven speaks of our departure to dwell with Him.

We should never think of heaven without thinking that one day He will take us to heaven, and then, with Him, we will descend from heaven as He comes in clouds of great glory.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

(I Thessalonians 4:16)

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.

(II Thessalonians 1:7)

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

(Matthew 24:30)

Oh, Beloved, what a day that will be. No wonder, with awe and with hope we can pray all the day long,

“Our Father who art in heaven, (I look expectantly to heaven, waiting for that day when the voice of the archangel will cry out, and the trumpet will sound, and we will be lifted heavenward at last). Hallowed be Thy Name.”

Hallowed be Thy Name, indeed.

10- Heaven speaks of His preparing a place for us.

Finally, the very thought of the Father being in heaven reminds us that He is there preparing a place for us. The eternal promises of a new heaven and an eternity in His presence is real, personal, pertinent, and will come to pass.

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

(Revelation 5:13)

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

(Revelation 21:3)

Oh, Beloved, that is what we are living for—not for the houses we live in, the jobs we have, even the acclaim we receive in the spiritual realm. Heaven is our home. Heaven is our destination. We will be with Him forever. Pain will be gone. Suffering will be over. The lame will walk. The blind will see. The deaf will hear. The dumb will speak and proclaim the name of the Lord.

The sun will vanish because the light of His presence will be all we'll need. The fear of the future will be gone. The future will be now, and it will be forever, for He will reign forever and ever. There will be no night, no crime, no sickness, no sadness, no

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

suffering, no shame. For there will be no sin, no Satan to harass us, no guilt to assail us, no persecution to bring us dismay, and no rejection to bring us to confusion.

A new heaven. The kingdom will have come, and we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Heaven is not a part of God's plan for our lives; heaven is is God's plan for our lives. Everything else that happens here is to prepare us for there and to use us to help others to see that heaven is real. God is not confined to the limits our human minds place upon Him. Every time we think of heaven, we ought to marvel at His creative power, at His power over the elements, His ownership of all things, His omnipotence, His omnipresence, His mercy, His sovereignty, His immutability, His coming again. Every time we mention heaven we are giving out our new address. Heaven is where we are headed, if Christ is our Savior. Praise God. Don't you see? When you pray, "Our Father who art in heaven," you are proclaiming everything God is that sets Him apart from everything and everyone else.

No wonder He is to be praised. So do not rush into His presence without first acknowledging that the God who lives in us and who is available to us is the same God who waits for us and intercedes for us...in heaven. That ought to set our minds at ease, Beloved. And that ought to cause us to worship, for truly our God is in the heavens, and our God is in our hearts. We are invincible, because He is invincible. Now, are you ready to pray?

BE AT REST

Our Father who art in heaven,
Trustworthy, faithful and true.
Thou who art in heaven
There's nothing you cannot do.

Oh, praise God in heaven
Who gave us second birth.
Because you are in heaven
We can be at rest on earth.

Let's pray,

Our Father who Art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name.

Amen.

Our Father Who Art in Heaven

Focus on Application

1- How faithfully do you pray for other churches and other believers whose doctrine may vary slightly from yours? How faithfully do you pray for other believers and other churches of the same persuasion as yours?

2- How expansive is your concept of the body of Christ? Do you pray regularly for missionaries all over the world? Do you pray regularly for those you give to?

3- Why can only born-again believers honestly call God “Father”? Is He your Father? Why has the universal fatherhood of God become such a popular false doctrine?

4- Why was Satan so intent on occupying a place in heaven?

5- For the next ten days, pray each day to “our Father who art in heaven”, taking one day each to praise Him for heaven and:

- a- His creative power
- b- His control of the elements
- c- His ownership of all things (including you)
- d- His omnipotence
- e- His omnipresence
- f- His mercy
- g- His sovereignty
- h- His immutable word
- i- His coming for us
- j- Heaven itself and our place in it

In each case, make personal application to the reality of what heaven is saying about that attribute of God. Worship Him daily for heaven. Thank Him that He is the God of heaven. Thank Him for the place He is saving for you in heaven.

6- Make a “thread” of verses to memorize out of the ones listed in this lesson. Call it your “heaven thread”. Use it to worship God in your quiet time as you thank Him for being “your Father who is in heaven.”

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