

“Lord, teach us to pray...”

Matthew 6:9-13, Luke 11:2-4

1. According to Jesus, the most important premise of prayer is that we talk to God as our Father.

2. This is amazing because in ancient Palestinian Judaism, calling God “Father” was rare and calling God “my Father” was non-existent!

“The Eighteen Benedictions”

Blessed art thou, Yahweh, God of Abraham, God of Isaac and God of Jacob, the most high God,
Master of heaven and earth, our shield and the shield of our fathers.

Blessed art thou, Yahweh, the shield of Abraham.

3. Yet Jesus addresses God as “Father” in every prayer he prays in the N.T.

4. So, Jesus invites us to enter into the intimacy and authority of a relationship with God as Father.

5. So when we pray, we come with passion and confidence to God as our Father!

“The Lord’s Prayer has long been introduced in the liturgies of both East and West with the words: ‘Grant that we may dare to call on thee as Father and to say, ‘Our Father...’ [Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom] or ‘We are bold to say, ‘Our Father...’ [Roman Mass] – expressing the feeling that it is a privilege that Jesus empowered His followers to say Abba after Him. Boldness to address God as Father comes from the assurance of being a child: children may say Abba.”

[Joachim Jeremias, “N.T. Theology”]

