Luke 11:1-13 The Lord's Prayer

When you pray what do you do or say? shopping list? wordless? all praise? all asking? centred on yourself and your needs? focussed on the world?

It may be right that at any time, one particular aspect dominates our prayer, but over a period of time we should expect to find a balance, as we find in the **Lord's Prayer**.

The L's P appears in both Luke and Matthew, each slightly different.

Despite the various translations, the new and old version, and being in many languages across the world, the L's P still **unites** Christians of all ages and denominations.

It was taught by Jesus in response to his disciples asking, '*Lord, teach us to pray*', after seeing Jesus himself praying.

The disciples were all Jews, who had known about prayer all their lives, the daily prayers set out in the Jewish Law, and the Sabbath prayers in the synagogue. They must have seen something different in Jesus' praying that prompted their request.

The Lord's Prayer is both a **model** prayer, which we pray together in all our services, and also a **pattern** as to the way we might pray.

It is also a **Corporate Prayer**. It is in the plural, '*our*' and '*us*', not '*I*' and '*me*'. It is to be prayed with others and for others as well as ourselves. This reminds us that we are not alone in our faith, but are part of the Church, the people of God. We are strengthened and upheld by one another's prayers.

As Jesus goes on to teach us, we need to learn to persist, persevere, in prayer, it is the channel of life for us, our link to the living God.

'Our Father' We address God personally as **Father.**

We come as his children, to a Father who loves us and cares for us, and for every part of creation. It is a personal and intimate relationship, listening, sharing our lives with our Father. Prayer is not a duty or a formal lifeless thing, nor a particular set of words or any special way of saying things, but a real, open, and honest meeting with God.

Then the L's P begins and ends with **Praise to God**.

'*Hallowed by thy name*', and '***For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.*'**

'***Hallowed***', honoured, glorified, worshipped and adored, held in awe and respect.

Not often used today, except in sporting terms, '*hallowed turf of Lords cricket ground'*…

'*Hallowed* ***be thy name'***, **God's name** is often taken in vain in our society. God's name is God's essential character and nature, what God is really like. So, we pray for God to be recognised, acknowledged for who he truly is. This means praying for our community, and our leaders, our common life together. So, this prayer is about how we relate to our neighbours. It is also about how we live as individuals, whether God is hallowed in the way we live, in our character, in how we treat others. Our prayer, and our lives, are to give glory to God.

'*For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.*'
This final line is an affirmation of faith. When things go wrong, when the church is struggling, when we face problems, we look to God and affirm our faith in him.
It is not a selfish prayer or an earth-bound prayer, it unashamedly gives glory to God, and prays that all people and all creation may also give glory and honour to God.
Archbishop William Temple, '***Adoration**.. is the most selfless emotion of which our nature is capable, and therefore the chief remedy for that self-centredness which is our original sin, and the source of all actual sin*'. So, **praise** is good for us!
The middle part of the prayer are petitions: **'*thy Kingdom come, thy will be done*'.**
The Kingdom is where God's will is done. It is both present and yet to come. We see signs of the Kingdom now, glimpses, illustrations, examples of what could be, as we see God's Spirit at work… Life in God's kingdom is an alternative lifestyle to the world around us.
We pray that God's Kingdom may come ***on earth as it is in heaven***.
In L's P it is God's will that is sought, not our comfort or prosperity, and we see in Jesus' life what that can mean, to put doing God's will above all else...
'Give us this day our daily bread' Intercession for our own needs.
'***bread***' is not just what we eat, it is all of our daily needs.
We also think of the bread of Holy Communion, or even Jesus himself, '*the bread of life'*
It is a prayer of dependence. It reminds us our Creator also sustains us day by day.
When we say '***give us'***, we shouldn't suppose this will just drop into our laps if we sit idly by! No, if we can, we are meant to work, to co-operate with God.
'*daily*' is a word which when prayed, in the morning means the day's bread, in the evening it's tomorrow's bread. Jesus invites us to live one day at a time. Very wise!
And as we pray for ourselves, we are also praying for others too. We cannot pray these words and ignore the needs of the world around us. So, it is right to pray for our own daily needs and the needs of the world. The Kingdom is where everyone has daily bread, no-one is hungry, or lacks food, shelter, warmth, where everyone is loved and valued.
'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us'
We are to both give and receive forgiveness, according to the L's P, and these two are closely linked together. This can be quite a challenge to us…. It is in experiencing the forgiveness of God that we are enabled to offer forgiveness to those who hurt us.
The Kingdom is a taste of heaven, where sin is no more, as it is totally forgiven.
'lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil'
A prayer for God's protection, and also to strengthen us to resist the power of temptations which would lead us away from God and God's love.
Let us use the L's P as our model and guide, and may we find joy in our prayer and God's presence every day of our lives.