

The Gospel of Matthew #53

Sermon on the Mount: chapter 6: LIVING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

HOW TO PRAY: I. WHO WE PRAY TO:

OUR FATHER *IN HEAVEN*

Matthew 6:9b

We are given the infinite privilege of calling the infinite-personal Creator of all reality Father/Daddy, thru faith in Christ, the Son by right.

But He is not only **caring** ("Father") but also **capable** ("in the heavens")

What does "in the heavens" tell us about Him and how does it direct our prayers?

I. What it means

Lit: "in the heavens"

Not: some **place** out there beyond the galaxies

IS: within creation

Egs v10 created beings doing His will

5:34-35 (quoting Isa 66:1): the dimension of God's absolute rule

Invisible to us. But real.

Eph 2:6

Col 3:1-4

One Day these two "registers" of Reality will be united:

Rev 21:1-4

Upper register: real but invisible: the heavens

Lower register: real and visible: heaven & earth

So "in the heavens" refers to His transcendence in power and glory.

II. How it controls my praying: 3 **Ps**:

A. His **P** _____: → my **faith**: He is capable of doing anything He pleases

Psalm 115:3; Eph 3:20-21

Never a Q of whether God is *able* to answer my prayer

B. I **P** _____: my **Worship**: I must never think calling Him Daddy means I can buddy up to Him. Psm 95:6

I must always be aware it is a grace-privilege to call Him Father, and give Him proper awe and reverence

Jews of Jesus' day emphasized God's transcendence and lost His nearness

Contemporary evangelicalism focuses only on the nearness and has lost the sense of His transcendence

Why are not a people of worship and faith.

Our God is not big enough.

He is bigger than earth, our galaxy, all creation

C. Our **P** _____: why first 3 petitions are about HIM, not me
It's not my party

Our Father in the heavens captures the two things about God we must keep in balance to draw near to Him in effective prayer:

He cares infinitely more than you can imagine

He is capable in His majesty and deserves your submission infinitely more than you realize

Cf. Paul's balance in **Eph 3:14-21**

How is your view of this God deficient? How do you see it reflected in the way you pray?

Come to the Father Who gave His only Son for you now, and claim your sonship and repent your self-centeredness.

Let us learn to pray to our Father who is in the Heavens.

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.*

Give us today our daily bread.

*Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one
for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.*

Amen.