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La Jolla Christian Fellowship
Stuff Jesus Said: Episode 2 – Our Father
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Matthew 6:5-15

5 “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. 9 “This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. 14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Jesus dismantles the far away, angry God framework and reconstructs the entirety of prayer within the “assurance” of a familial context.

Vs. 9 “This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father *who art* in heaven”

- God as Father is one of the most radical religious concepts known to mankind.
- When you understand and digest God as Father, it changes everything.
 - **Romans 8:15** The **Spirit** you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”
 - **Galatians 4:6** Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”
 - **The Approachable Father God:** God as Father is meant to be seen as an approachable loving Father.
 - **Hebrews 4:16** Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Invisible Father: Praying to an invisible Father activates a faith meant to lead you to assurance. Prayer is meant to cement your faith.

Vs. 6 “Pray to your Father who is unseen.”

- Prayer transports you through the wormhole of faith to a place of spiritual possibilities.
- **While God might not be seen he will be experienced when sought.**

- **Jeremiah 29:13** You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.
- The more you come to know and experience God as Father, the less you will need to resource faith. This is due to the fact that your faith has become a “substance” and “assurance”. Hebrews 11
 - Does God want you to ultimately live by faith or by assurance of faith?
 - **Hebrews 10:22** let us draw near with a **sincere heart in full assurance of faith**, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
 - **1 John 5:13** I write these things to you **who believe** in the name of the Son of God so that **you may know** that you have eternal life.

Does this nullify faith? God forbid, for it is by faith that we are saved, but it is God’s desire to perfect your faith until that day when you stand in his glory and no longer need faith. (1 Corinthians 13)

- **The ebb and flow of faith:** As God perfects our faith in preparation of heaven, he leverages trials to mature us and takes us to higher and higher levels of assurance.
 - **James 1:2-4** Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may **be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**
 - Prayer to a loving father is the pathway to this perfection, which comes as our faith is tested.

This then is the essence of the Our Father Prayer. God wants you to be perfected in your knowledge of him as Father so that you can walk in assurance of faith.

Food for the journey: Use these questions to go deeper in personal reflection or in one of our community groups.

1. When you think of God, is the first thing you think of a Father or some other identity for God?
2. Do you see God as approachable? How would seeing him as a loving Father change the way you pray?
3. Pastor Adam stated that God’s desire is to move you from walking in faith only to walking in the assurance of faith. Can you explain the difference?