

Prayer According to Jesus

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[0 : 00] now to the Gospel of Luke chapter 11. We're continuing in Luke, but I want to do a different series here in Luke 11. There are 13 verses here on prayer. And I think it would be good for us to pause here and dig into this prayer. This is something Jesus intends for us to pray on a daily basis. It's not something to simply recite. He is giving us an outline. He is giving us a way to pray and guiding us how to put our thoughts together. The things that we want to cover in our prayers. And so I think that is worth it. First time I studied this and meditated, thought through this, it just transformed the way I pray. And to come through it again, I think will be a great review for me. And once again, transform me. There's always something new to discover. Okay, so if you're able, please stand as a read from Gospel of Luke chapter 11.

I'm going to read verse 1 through 13, because that's the whole passage. But then we're going to focus simply on one word. That should give you a warning about what we're in for. Luke chapter 11, verse 1. Now Jesus was praying in a certain place. And when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples. And He said to them, when you pray, say, Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins. For we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.

And He said to them, which of you has a friend? Will go to him at midnight and say to him, friend, lend me three loaves? For a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him.

And He will answer from within. Do not bother me. The door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything.

[2 : 51] I tell you. Though He will not get up and give him anything because he is a friend. Yet because of his impudence, he will rise and give him whatever he needs.

And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be open to you. For everyone who asks, receives, and the one who seeks, finds.

To the one who knocks, it will be open. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of fish, give him a serpent?

Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask you?

So it reads, let us pray. Father, open our eyes to see wonderful things from your word. Teach us today.

[4 : 11] Feed us today. Encourage us. Remind us. Draw us. Woo us. Attract us.

Attract us to you. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. A New York City cab driver dies and reaches the pearly gates.

St. Peter looks up in his big book and tells him to pick up a gold staff and a silk robe and proceed into heaven.

Next in line is a preacher. St. Peter looks up in his big book, furrows his brow, and says, okay, we'll let you in. But take that cloth robe and wooden staff.

The preacher is shocked and replies, but I'm a man of the cloth. You gave that cab driver a gold staff and a silk robe.

[5 : 34] Surely I rate higher than a cabbie. St. Peter responds matter-of-factly, this is heaven. And up here, we're interested in results.

When you preached, people slept. When the cabbie drove his taxi, people prayed.

Speaking of prayer, segue. What is prayer? What is prayer?

It's conversation. What do we mean when we say we're offering prayer to God? It's conversation. What is it?

It's praying. I like it when you look up in a dictionary, you look up what's the definition of prayer and they say, praying. Okay. What else?

[6 : 36] Yeah, conversation. Relationship. Back in the old days, Elizabethan English, they'd say, I pray thee.

What do they say? I'm asking. I'm asking. I'm even pleading. Prayer is talking to God.

It's a conversation. In essence, it's asking. So, we not only want to think about what is prayer, but who is it and how is it that we are to address the God that we pray to.

Does it matter how we address him? Does it matter whether we say Jesus? Or Lord?

Or God? Simply God? Does it matter? in the old testament, they always addressed God as Yahweh.

[7 : 56] Or Yahweh Elohim. they never addressed him as father. Never. God was spoken of in the old testament as like a father.

He treated Israel like a father. But he was never addressed as father in prayer. And so, we come to a text here where Jesus is teaching us not only how to pray, he's teaching us what prayer is, but he tells us a whole new way to address God as father.

Why? Why does Jesus want us to direct God as father? Is it okay?

I mean, why? Why does he? This is what he instructs. Teach us to pray. Okay, when you pray, say, father. Not Yahweh.

Not God. Not even Jesus. Is it okay to pray to Jesus? Of course it's okay to pray to Jesus. But when Jesus is saying, this is how I want you to pray.

[9 : 15] This is how I want you to address God. I want you to address him as father. father. This is radical.

Understand, first century, this is radical. We've seen in Luke, Jesus has already talked about his father. He's already talked about the father.

But now he's directing in prayer. So, here, now, we find this teaching in two places in the gospels. We find it in Matthew 6.

It is part of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus is teaching several things. He's talking about when you give, when you fast, and when you pray. In Matthew's version, it's a little longer.

You'll notice, if you're familiar with the Matthew version in chapter 6, and then you read Luke 11, it's like, well, wait, Luke's missing a couple of parts that are in Matthew.

[10 : 14] so that's kind of interesting. But it's also two different occasions. In Matthew 6, here's a sermon, I believe, Jesus preached regularly at different places that he went.

Matthew is kind of one of these guys that likes to gather all of it and put it all into one. Because you'll recognize if you read through the gospel of Matthew, and if you have red letter edition, chapters 5 through 7, all red, chapter 10, all red, chapter 13, all red, etc.

So he groups, he loves to group stuff. Luke is kind of spreading it out as it happens. And I think this is a different occasion because here in Luke 1, we're told the disciple asked him, teach us to pray. Which is really interesting. if Jesus has already taught this prayer on a regular basis wherever he went, they've heard this before.

And now the disciples have seen Jesus pray over, Luke has mentioned it multiple times, he gets away and he's praying.

[11 : 33] He gets away and he's praying again. He's in another place, now he's praying again. prayer. And I guess one of the insights I think we pick up from this is prayer is not just taught, prayer is caught.

Because they see him doing it again and again and again. He's not just this miracle man, he is this man who is dependent on his father.

And now they want to be dependent like that. And I wonder if this disciple who asked Jesus to teach him to pray is thinking, okay, you teach the multitude in Matthew 6, you know, you teach the big crowd that prayer.

We want our prayer. Maybe they're thinking they're going to get something a little another level. And then Jesus gives them the same prayer.

Wait a minute, you mean for the multitudes it's this prayer and for us who are more advanced than the multitudes. It's the same prayer. No more extra secrets.

[12 : 40] It's the same prayer. Yeah, because God's priorities are the same. They're the same. So just briefly overview this chapter 11, one one through four.

We have the prayer that Jesus teaches and it's a pattern of prayer. Okay, it's not just recite these words. It's here are the five or six subjects for prayer.

And then verses five to eight, he gives a picture, a parable, you know, a friend going to another friend and when does, how does he get what he wants?

Well, he doesn't get what he wants simply because he's a friend. He gets what he wants because he's, what's the word he used in verse eight? Because of his impudence. Anybody know that's not a regular everyday word?

What's that word mean? It's kind of bordering on disrespect. Okay? Shameless. In other words, just because he's a friend and he knocks on the door, says, nah, I ain't getting out.

[13 : 52] But what if he keeps on knocking on the door until he gets up and gives him what he wants? That's impudence. impudence. Okay?

And Jesus is saying that's how we're to pray before the Father. And then he adds to that verses nine to the end is kind of the practical application.

So keep asking, keep asking, keep asking, keep asking. In other words, the impression is that just asking God once isn't going to do it.

He wants you to keep coming and keep asking and keep knocking. In fact, almost shamelessly, give him, the Old Testament talks about give him no rest.

Okay? So that's the structure. The pattern here in verses two to four, where he says this is what to pray, say these things. it's not just say these words.

[15 : 01] It's not saying recite this as if that's just something you always repeat, just exactly these words. In Matthew's version, it says not pray these words, but it says pray in this manner along these lines.

Include these ideas. Six areas. areas. The name of God, the kingdom of God, the will of God, your bread, your relationships, and your spiritual battle.

Those are the areas. And by the way, if you pray those six areas, you cover everything you could ever pray for. Everything. these are the priorities.

It moves from the things of God to the things of us, right? His name, his kingdom, his will, and then our bread, our forgiveness, and our temptations.

But it starts with his things, which is really interesting. Because I want to get to my things. And part of learning to pray is to pray for his things first.

[16 : 14] Because that kind of filters a whole lot of stuff. By the time I get to me, it's kind of like, oh, I kind of dealt with that. My things aren't as big a deal anymore. Especially once I've said, thy will be done, not my will.

Whenever you pray, he says, verse 2, when you pray, or when, literally, whenever you pray, say this. He intends for his followers to use this pattern regularly, at least daily, to guide and direct, to focus us on what's important, what are the priorities.

So, today, as I said, we're going to walk through this. So, I thought it would be valuable to not just go right into the first request, hallowed be your name, but to the word before that, Father.

Father. Who is it that we're to address? When you pray, say, Father. Or in Matthew's version, our Father, who is in heaven, or our heavenly Father, distinguishing.

In the Old Testament, Father was reserved for Abraham. He's known as Father Abraham. The patriarchs were known as the fathers.

[17 : 49] Even in the Old Testament, the Pharisees would talk to Jesus about the fathers, meaning previous fathers. fathers. Jesus would of course turn that on them, but now Jesus is saying, address God as Father.

So what does that mean? Why does Jesus want us to say Father? What does it mean to say, address God as Father?

So let's just take some time to reflect on that. The New Testament reveals six qualities of God as Father. six ways, six characteristics, six attributes of how his Father, how he, his Father, is expressed in the New Testament.

So let's just walk through these. In Matthew 6, we see that the Father refers to our Father, God is our Father who knows and provides what we need.

So that's basic about a Father. We expect a Father to know and provide what we need. Matthew, Matthew's recording of Jesus in Matthew 6, 6 says, when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.

[19 : 15] And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. and when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they'll be heard for their many words.

Do not be like them. Why? For your Father knows what you need before you ask him. pray. And then in Matthew's version, he goes on, pray then like this. This is how to pray. These are the things to pray.

So your Father prayed private, right? Go, close your door. So this is about private prayer. prayer. Pray to your Father in secret.

And then, you know, you don't need to be eloquent. You don't need to use a lot of words. You don't need to use, keep it simple. Keep it simple. You're just talking to God. Just be yourself.

[20 : 19] Talk to God. Not to God. Sorry. Father. Talk to your Father. It personalizes it, doesn't it? Father.

And then he says, you know, don't use a lot of words. Why? Because your Father already knows what you need before you ask him. Well, I got a question. If he already knows what I need, why am I praying?

He's God. He knows. He knows what you need before you ask him. So why would I don't need to, in other words, one, I don't need to inform him. Well, this is what's going on, Lord. You know, just so you know.

Yeah, I know. So why do we ask? Why does Jesus tell us to ask when he already knows what we need before we ask him? Why?

He wants us to relate to him. There's no other answer. He wants us to come into a private room, not around anybody else, close the door, and be alone with him, just to be with him.

[21 : 31] He wants relationship. He wants to hear our heart. He wants us to pour out our soul. Like the Psalms.

Tell him your miseries. Tell him your hardships. Tell him your pain. Tell him your joys. Tell him, not because he doesn't know, but he wants you to relate.

He wants us to seek him. It's so significant that Jesus said, go in private. Private. Make this very private, very personal.

Have a place. Maybe it's your car. Maybe it's outside on a walk. Maybe it's a closet in your house. Wherever. Find a place that's very private. Where you can talk.

Verbally talk. And just be with you and him. That's the first thing we learn about father.

[22 : 39] Second thing we learn in John 1. Well, here's the question. If I address God as father, how can God be my father? Is Jesus teaching some universal thing that God is the father of everybody?

No, he's the creator of everybody. He's not the father of everybody. Father is a very personal, intimate thing. So how can God be my father? Oh, well, the gospel of John tells us some things here.

John 1 says, to all who receive him, speaking of Jesus, to all who receive him, who believe in his name, he, father, gave the right to become children of God.

Who were born, not just children of God in some generic sense, who were born, who had a birth, not of blood, so not a physical birth, nor of the will of the flesh, not just a decision, I raised my hand, made a decision, and I'm born again.

No, it doesn't work. I tried it hundreds of times, doesn't work. I'm not born again because I raised my hand or made a decision, or because I really wanted it even.

[23 : 53] that's not how we're born again, nor of the will of man, your parents don't decide that for you, but of God, born of God, born of God, God births you, gives you new life.

So, so the second trait or quality of our father is our father gives us new life. Our father is somebody that gives us new life.

He gives us life that we did not have before. this is how he becomes our father. He's given us his life. Like a physical father gives physical life to a child, so our heavenly father gives life that we had not had before to us as his children.

We were at pulpits that we were dead. Right? We were dead. And now we've been made alive. Because the father has acted. In fact, how does this happen?

So, later in John, John chapter six, Jesus is teaching, and this is where he's teaching about the bread of heaven, right? The bread, the manna from heaven and the bread.

[25 : 09] So, listen to what Jesus describes. John six, Jesus said to them, truly, truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my father gives you the true bread from him.

All that the father gives me, Jesus is saying, the father gives to me will come to me. Whoever comes to me, I will never cast out.

Okay? A little bit later, Jesus said, no one can come to me. Earlier in that sermon, Jesus said, come to me.

And then a little later, he says, oh, by the way, no one can come to me. Unless, yes, no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him.

how involved in your conversion and your salvation is the father. You don't even come to Jesus unless the father draws you. And Jesus says, I will raise him up on the last day.

[26 : 19] It is written in the prophets and they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has heard and learned from the father comes to me. And he said, this is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the father.

Notice in Jesus' words here, how involved the father is in our salvation. It's not even possible for us to be saved unless the father acts.

Unless the father draws. The father speaks. We hear and learn from the father. So he speaks and he teaches us.

And it's gift unless it's granted by the father for me to come to his son.

What does that mean? Think about it from a father. Don't get upset about, okay, but my will matters. My will matters. Well, of course your will matters.

[27 : 29] But your will's not as strong as his. don't get bothered over, okay, I can't even come to Jesus unless the father draws. Look at it from a father perspective.

What does this mean? If I have come to Jesus, if I genuinely come to Jesus, that means the father wants me.

he wants me. He's drawing. He draws me, which means he woos me.

He tugs me. He pulls me. Even though I'm wandering and lost and doing my own thing, he pulls me. For me, it took from the age of three, when I probably verbalized I love Jesus because I knew all about Jesus.

Well, how much do you know? Three. Anyway, early age till probably my early twenties. He was tugging me, drawing me.

[28 : 42] I didn't awaken until much later. But I believed and I wanted it and I was walking that aisle and I was throwing that stick and I was praying that prayer and I was raising that hand.

I wanted it. He was drawing me. I couldn't make it happen, but he was drawing me. He was working.

He woos us, he pulls us, he tugs us, he attracts us, he charms us. The very first movement in our own conversion, in our coming to Jesus, is God the Father acting first, opening our eyes, awakening us.

Is he your father? You know him? You have an experience with him, drawing you, teaching you, speaking to you. God the God.

So, okay, that's two characters. Third characteristic. So, I'm his child, but what if I fall? What if I fail him?

[30 : 01] What if I wander from him? What if I get lost? I'm his child, but what if, you know, what if I'm not faithful to him?

What would my father in heaven do then? Will he say, fine, see ya. What would he do?

Well, the third characteristic we find about our father in heaven is that he will never abandon us. He will never leave or abandon us. Even if we abandon him temporarily, he will not abandon us.

John 14, Jesus said, I will ask the father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever. Even the spirit of truth whom the world can't receive because it neither sees him or knows him.

But you know him for he dwells with you and will be in you and I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you.

[31 : 09] Fascinating text because he talks about the father and he talks about himself as the son and then he talks about the Holy Spirit. So there's a trinity involved here. The father, Jesus will ask

the father, the father will send the spirit and Jesus will send the spirit and so when the spirit comes in us, in a sense we have the father and the son and the Holy Spirit in us.

Never leaving. Jesus is sending the spirit, well he's asking the father to send the spirit but he's also sending the spirit because they're both God and then the spirit comes and they represent both father, son and Holy Spirit because in a sense we just say holy holy three in one.

Right? But Jesus speaks of it so freely as it's this is just true. I don't have to tell you how it all works it's just father, son, spirit.

But the father, so what's the difference between father, son and Holy Spirit in terms of our salvation? Well the father plans it, initiates it, draws us, right?

The son accomplishes it by his death, makes it all possible, justifies us, frees us, redeems us.

[32 : 33] What does the Holy Spirit do? It's his part, he's just kind of hanging out watching? He's a helper. He comes and says, awake, alive, alive.

he will be in you. He will be with you, he'll be a near companion, he'll be always on your side, he will dwell with you in the sense that he comes alongside and he will be in you, within you, as a permanent presence.

What kind of relationship do I have with the father? Father, right, takes care of my needs, the father gives me new birth, the father will never abandon me. What kind of relationship is this with the father?

Well, the fourth thing we find out is our father adopts us. Not just births us, but he adopts us as his rightful children. In the Old Testament, they were children of Israel.

They were children of Israel. They're children of Abraham. In the New Testament, we are children of God. Interesting.

[33 : 55] We have a new birth. So he adopts us. Romans 8 speaks of this. For we all are led by the Spirit. For all who are led by the Spirit are sons of God.

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption as sons. By whom we cry, Daddy.

Daddy, Father, Abba. And the Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

assurance. Assurance. How do I know? How do I know if I'm a child of God? How do I know? Not because of something I did, but something he did.

So how do I know? Well, he says, all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. We know because we're led by the Spirit. Led by the Spirit to do what?

[35 : 06] How do I know it's the Holy Spirit leading me? we have received the Spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry, Abba, Father.

He leads us to cry, Abba, Father. Daddy, personal, intimate, tender. The Holy Spirit does not lead us into fear.

He does not lead us into guilt. He does not lead us into condemnation. fear, guilt, shame, condemnation, where does that come from?

Well, we can stir it up ourselves, but where does it come from? The evil one. The devil. He would love to tear you down. Right?

We have a shield of faith against that. What does the Holy Spirit, how do you know the difference between when it's the devil condemning you and it's the Holy Spirit convicting you?

[36 : 07] It brings you back. It brings you back. It brings you back. Fear, guilt, shame, condemnation, that makes me receive from God.

That's what the devil wants. The Holy Spirit will convict me in a gentle way that will woo me, that will draw me, that will bring me back. It will make me cry, Abba, Father.

That's the Holy Spirit. That's how I know I'm a child of God because I'm drawn back to him. Not by guilt and shame, but by a tender affection, even in my unworthiness.

Well, so he adopts me as his rightful child. He's given me new life.

But even with all of this, he's my father, I still feel unworthy. I feel unworthy. So what else does the father do?

[37 : 14] Number five, the father changes our identity. The father himself changes our identity from sinner to saint.

saint. You feel like a saint? How many saints are here? No? Come on. Not because you feel like it.

How many saints are here? You've been given that. That's not something you earned. That's not something you deserve. You were given that status, that identity. to the saints who are in Corinth, who are messing up this way, this way, this way, this way. The Corinthians or the Coloradans don't look real saintly in that book, but they're still called saints. Even though you're a sinner. That's hard to get into our head. All of this stuff is hard because I don't feel that.

[38 : 27] I don't feel adopted. I don't feel like God will never leave me or abandon me because sometimes it feels like I'm so alone. And so I walk by faith that says I will never leave you or forsake you.

I go through stuff that are so hard. It can't be good. It's all bad. But God says no, everything I do for you is for your good. I walk by faith in that.

I trust him to bring good out of everything. He changes our identity. How do you know that though? Well, let's look at Colossians 1.

What does Paul say about the father? In Colossians 1, Paul's talking about praying, praying for the will of God, praying. And in that prayer, at the end of that prayer, Paul says, we give thanks to the father.

we are giving thanks to the father. Why do we give thanks to the father, Paul? We give thanks to the father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints.

[39 : 39] Well, if I am qualified to share in the inheritance that only belongs to the saints, what am I? A saint.

And I'm a saint, not because I earned it, not because I live like that or I look like that, but because the father himself qualified me as a saint to get that inheritance.

He has, how did he do that? Paul goes on, he's qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. How? He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin.

The father did that. The father did that. He qualified us to have, to share in that inheritance with all the other saints.

By delivering us from the domain of darkness, from the authority of Satan, from the authority, remember Jesus is always setting people free, he's casting out demons, setting people free, that's him doing that to you.

[41 : 03] He transferred us, he delivered us, rescued us from the authority of Satan, the domain of darkness, and then transferred us, didn't just deliver us, and leave us on our own, but then transferred us from that kingdom to the kingdom of his beloved son.

Where we have redemption, forgiveness. How do I become a saint? Forgiveness. Forgiveness.

Clean. How does a sinner become a saint? Work really hard, right? Just stop sinning.

Just knock it off. Stop being yourself. Stop doing what's natural. Stop doing what you're just, you know, you just, that's how I work, baby.

Now we walk by faith, which means we walk not by leaning on our own understanding. We walk not by the ways that come naturally to me, but now I renew my mind and I walk by faith.

[42 : 22] I walk on a different narrow road, which is not natural for me to do. In fact, I won't do it if I don't think about it. I just want, I'll do what's natural.

So how does the sinner become a saint? No, not by working on it, but because God has qualified me, has made, that word qualified means he made me fit.

He made me fit. I would like to be more fit, right? That'd be nice. I got an excuse now because I did crossfit and it was getting fit and then tore the rotator cuff and then this one fell apart.

I didn't even do anything and it just fell, you know, okay, Bill, you're too old for this stuff apparently. I'd like to be fit. The Father has made us fit for his kingdom.

Amazing. He's made us fit. He's made us right. He's made us qualified. He's made us you make the grade. Not because you did anything. He just made it that way.

[43 : 33] You're in. Because we've been forgiven, because Christ has paid the debt, he's paid the legal debt. His identity thing to be a saint.

When I asked how many saints are in here, it was only like one or two hands came up at the first time. Why? Because all of you think, what? I'm not a saint. I'm not a saint. I'm not a saint.

I don't act like a saint. I don't feel like a saint. Of course you don't. You're not a saint. Except by God's qualification. It's kind of like going into events.

Like we have the Olympics, right? It's like, how did I qualify for that? I don't know. What's an event in the Olympics? Swimming. What? Swimming.

Swimming. I was thinking of the thing on the icing. Curling. Curling. Yeah. Curling. I'm thinking that's hair, right? I can do that. It's like, how do you qualify for that?

[44 : 31] If you're not even qualified, how do you qualify? He may just qualify. So one more thing. So the father, what does the father do? He knows what we need and he provides what we need.

He gives us new life so we become his child. He will never abandon us even when we fail and fall. and then he adopts us into a real relationship where the spirit bears witness with our spirit and then he changes, he also changes our identity even though we're not worthy, he changes our identity. We're suddenly in his kingdom and we're suddenly qualified and we're suddenly saints, holy ones. And then finally, we might ask, the father does all this for us, what does the father want from us? What does the father want from me? Why has he done all of this? He's not just my father who takes care of my needs when I have needs. It's bigger than that.

It's a deeper relationship. He's a father who has changed my life. He has changed my hope, my soul. He has made me alive where I was dead before. He has given me a new heart that wants to do the right things, that wants to love him with all my heart, soul, strength.

[46 : 08] He has given me this new identity, but what does he do all of that for? What does he want? Well, Hebrews 12 describes it.

There's other places that describe this. Our father trains and prunes us to become like Christ, to become like his son.

That's why he provides for us. That's why he has made us alive. That's why he has adopted us and will never abandon us. He doesn't give up on us because he's continued to work on us.

He's given us a new identity because he wants us to become like Christ. Not just one. He's working that. He's making that happen. Hebrews 12 describes it this way.

The people that the writer of Hebrews is talking to are suffering. And so he says to them, have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

[47 : 18] The scripture that addresses you as sons? That addresses you in a family way. Have you forgotten that God addresses you as sons?

He says, my son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord. Don't think little of it. Don't hate it. When he disciplines you, nor be weary when reproved by him.

Why? For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and chastises every son whom he receives. It is for discipline that you have to endure.

God is treating you as sons and daughters. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. If everything's going well, everything's smooth and great, here's a thought, maybe you're not a child of God.

[48 : 31] besides this, he goes on, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them, we understood that's for our good.

Shall we not much more be subject to the father of spirits and live? For they, speaking of our earthly parents, disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them.

They didn't always get it right, but they did as what best they could. But he, the father, heavenly father, he disciplines us always for our good.

Why? What's the purpose? What is the pruning and the training for? That we may share his holiness, that we may be like him. that makes sense.

A father wants his children to be like him. Right? For the moment, here's an understatement. Here's one of these, oh, I can identify with this statement.

[49 : 40] For the moment, all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant. Would you agree with that? It's kind of a, yeah, it's like, yeah, not fun.

but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Who benefits?

Those who yield. Those who embrace it. Those who have been trained by it. See, God can bring things into our lives to prune us and to train us to become more like Christ.

And we have an option. We can either resist it or we can receive it. We can think lightly of it and grow weary of it and say, I don't want it.

That's our default. That's our natural. Or we can say, it's from my father. It's good for me. That's the unnatural thing to do.

[50 : 46] But that's the one that gets trained. That's the one that goes through whatever discipline the father is bringing, whatever training the father is bringing.

If I embrace it, if I say, okay, thy will be done, right? That's when I benefit from it. If I fight it, did you ever fight your earthly father?

father? Yeah. I might have a good reason to fight my earthly father, but I never have a good reason to fight my heavenly father.

father. Because whereas my earthly father's intentions might not always have been the best, my heavenly father's intentions are always, always good and right.

And he sees what I don't see and he knows what I don't know. I always like to joke, I say this all the time, not all the time, but often, especially in the men's group, I like to think of Jesus sitting in heaven next to Peter and John and just kind of, hey, Peter, see Bill?

[52 : 07] Watch what I do. You're going to love it because I put you through the same thing. Right? I like to joke about that. But I kind of believe that too.

Because we have heavenly witnesses, right? Watching. Be interesting to be on that side watching, right? Oh, I remember when he put me through that one.

Anyway, Peter had to learn that, didn't he? Peter fought it, didn't he? I will never deny you. I will never deny you.

I will never deny you. Yeah, you will. Yeah, you will. Yeah, you will. And then you'll learn. Right? After you fall, then you learn.

Okay. So he trains us and he prunes us. So how do you respond to this testing of God? Do you recognize it as the Father's love? Do you recognize that he's training you and molding you?

[53 : 15] Do you trust as you go through whatever you're going through things that are hard? Do you trust that he always seeks for your good? Do you recognize it for what it is?

Our default and our natural response to hardship and to testing is to fight it and to not trust it. but to recognize it for what it is as an expression of my Father's love, his love, that he's treating me as a son, as his child.

See, this concept that Jesus is teaching us, when you pray, say, Father. that transforms our whole outlook.

It puts a personal, intimate, tender aspect in my relationship with God from being Lord Almighty who's the sovereign and the creator to being my Father, which brings it down to where I live.

And it changes, especially going through hard things. It's my Father. That's my Father. So, final question.

[54 : 50] Is God your Father? Or is God your God? Is God your Father? How do you think of him?

Especially as you draw near to pray. you think of him as Father. He's the one who wants an intimate relationship.

He wants you to seek him. He wants you to call him daddy. He wants you to pour out your soul. He wants you to trust him. He wants you to embrace the hard things that he tests you with.

for your good. Let us pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for this incredible concept that Jesus teaches us.

that Jesus himself knew you as his Father, as his intimate, tender relationship with you. And now he teaches us to walk with you in the same way that he walked, to think of you in the same way that he thought of you when he was on earth as a man.

[56 : 04] Help us this week to meditate on that concept. Help us, Father, to personalize and internalize and to when we pray to think more of you as our Father.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen.