



## ***St. Paul Evangelical Community Church (SPECC)***

**Worship Address** : Cerritos High School Auditorium  
12500 E. 183<sup>rd</sup> St., Cerritos, CA 90703  
(Enter at Bloomfield, across Heritage Park)

**Mailing Address** : 11428 E. Artesia Blvd. # 4 ; Artesia, CA 90701  
562-924-5051

**Website** : [www.sp-ecc.org](http://www.sp-ecc.org)

September 27, 2009

**Theme: God Is Listening**

**Text: Matthew 6:9-10; Mark 1:35**

For the next few weeks we are going to do what pastor Kyle Sanderson urged us to do at our recent retreat. We are going to think about the subject of prayer. Hopefully, we will actually pray as we think about prayer. The subject of prayer raises some questions for me because of the fact that God is All-Powerful and Sovereign, and All-Knowing. The fact that God is Sovereign means that He controls everything that happens in the whole universe. If this is true, why should I need to pray? God is going to do whatever He wants to do whenever He wants to do it. My second question is this: If God is All-Knowing, He knows what I need before I even ask. If this is true, why do I need to pray at all? I want to answer those two questions in reverse order on the basis of Scripture.

If God already knows what I need, why do I need to pray at all? The answer to that question comes from the first part of the first sentence of the Lord's Prayer, which says, "Our Father, Who art in heaven..." One primary purpose for prayer is that it is one indispensable way to have a living and fresh relationship with God. We were created to have a relationship with God and prayer is one way that a believer keeps that relationship with God alive. It is impossible to keep our relationship with God fresh and new if we don't pray.

We learn two important truths about our relationship with God from the first phrase in the Lord's Prayer. First, we learn that God wants us to have an intimate or very close relationship with Him. Jesus tells us about this when He gives us permission to speak to God as Father. This is the way that Jesus Himself spoke to God. In the Garden of Gethsemane he prayed, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you; take this cup from me. Nevertheless, not what I will but what you will." Jesus used two words for Father. The first word is a word is an Aramaic word that Jewish toddlers would use to speak to their fathers. It expresses deep affection and closeness. We might translate that word into English as "Daddy!" So we see that Jesus wants His followers to have a very close relationship with God.

Jesus also teaches us that we are to be reverent or respectful in our relationship with God. Through Jesus Christ, God is truly our Father. But He is our Father who is in heaven. This statement expresses that God is far greater than we are. He is Infinite in His existence, in His power, in His Glory, in His holiness, in His justice, in His Love, in His knowledge and in His presence. Therefore, Jesus instructs us to have a deep and healthy reverence and respect for who God is. Sometimes the Bible calls this the "fear" of God.



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The next thing that we learn about prayer from the first sentence of the Lord's Prayer is that prayer is worship. We were created to worship God. If we don't have worship in our lives, something is lacking. Jesus taught us to pray that God's name would be "hallowed." This means that we should pray that God's name should be thought of as holy by both believers and unbelievers. The reference to God's holiness is a call to worship. It is important to notice that the first request that is made in the Lord's Prayer is a request that God's name would be regarded as holy. The first request that we make is not to ask God for something for ourselves. Instead, it is to ask that God's name be thought of as holy.

The second question that I have about prayer is this: If God is Sovereign over the whole universe, why do I need to pray? The answer to this question comes from the second request in the Lord's Prayer, which says, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." God is in control of the whole universe. He is sovereign over everything that happens in the universe. But God has decided to carry out His will, in part, through the prayers of His people. God's will is done perfectly in heaven by the angels. Jesus instructs His followers to pray that it would be done this way on earth as well. Of course, this will not happen until Jesus returns. This means that we are also praying for His soon return to the earth.

We should pray because Jesus commanded us to pray. Jesus also showed us that we should pray by His own example. Mark's Gospel tells us that after a long day of ministering to people, Jesus got up a long while before day, went to a place where He could be alone, and prayed. Jesus was a man of prayer. Luke's Gospel tells us that before some of the most important events of His ministry, Jesus was praying. Jesus was the Son of God. If the Son of God needed to pray, how much more do we, as sinful people, need to pray? As Ralph Lefebvre says nearly every Sunday, let us commit to pray every day this week. Amen.