

Introduction

- The subtext, the assumption lying behind all we've seen so far is that this teaching is for those who are in the kingdom
 - and what is it to be in the kingdom?
 - **it is to be in relationship with God through Christ...**
 - this sermon fills out what it is like to live in that relationship
 - the incredible selflessness of turning the other cheek, of loving enemies, is only possible in the context of being loved by God, knowing him
 - the generosity of the early verses of chapter 6 only comes when we have experienced God's boundless generosity towards us
 - and indeed, in the verses immediately before this, on prayer, there is the hint that relationship with God, intimacy with him, is itself the reward that comes from time with him

Why we pray

- We pray because we are in relationship with God, and because of **who he is**, **where he is** and **what he is doing!**
 - he is the accessible and approachable Father (v.9)
 - he has an eagle-eye's view of every need and circumstance we face (v.9)
 - and he is in the business of bringing to this earth on which we live the blessing and the joys of heaven (v.10)

What we might pray for

- The **what** of prayer encompasses the things we need everyday - across the whole range of need
 - not just literal physical bread, food, and so on, but everything we need to come through each day
- *(I've been struck by the huge range between v.10 and v.11 - heaven, God's will, to Asda's finest white loaf!!)*
 - and forgiveness - to heal the broken places in us and around us (v.12) - to give and to receive that forgiveness

What might happen when we do...

- v.13 - this is about where the relationship that is reflected in the earlier verses takes us:
 - into a life of temptation and opposition
 - but the prayer is a prayer for the relationship to grow, deepen, continue... its a conscious turning to God to see us through the tough times

Questions without answers

- Does the way we use the Lord's Prayer on a Sunday reflect these themes?
- Do we utilise the teaching, example or outline here at other times or in other ways?
- Do we agree with John Wesley when he says:
 - "The man who never fasts is no more in the way of heaven than the man who never prays"