We are speaking about learning to make space for God in our lives – I spoke last week and gave three fundamental prerequisites for a devotional life in general and a prayer life in particular

- A sanctuary of time.
- A sanctuary of place.
- Resolve.

What I plan to do is walk you a model of prayer. It’s a model I have loosely followed for many years. You don’t have to slavishly adopt it; it isn’t inherently more holy or more effective than any other model. I offer it simply to people who might possibly be struggling in actually knowing how to pray.

**Luke 11:1-4.**

“And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.
And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is
indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.”
[See also Matthew 6:9-13.]

When the disciples watched Jesus they saw God’s rule come into the situations he entered into. He was the embodiment of the Kingdom. Wherever he was the Kingdom was. They recognized that there were wells that He drank from that they didn’t appear to have access to.

They didn’t simply dismiss this by saying – as we often do – “Well Jesus was God. Of course he had access to resources that we don’t.” They assumed his humanity. They assumed that they could, in fact, should, do whatever he was doing.

He was the Rabbi and they were his followers. When a person signed up to follow a Rabbi it was with the understanding that they were called to do the same things the Rabbi was doing. The problem for the disciples was that their Rabbi was pulling off things that they didn’t have a hope of emulating unless they could discover what made him
‘tick;’ what gave him this extraordinary power and authority.

As they observed Jesus closely, they came to the conclusion that the ‘something’ that made him different was his prayer life. They made a connection between the way he prayed and the manifestation of Kingdom power and authority. It was a compelling, logical and, I believe a correct, connection that they came to.

There is a pathway of prayer that introduces heaven’s rule into earth’s situations.

They noted that heaven’s rule came as Jesus prayed. Of all the things that they might have asked Jesus to teach them – how to multiply bread and feed thousands; how to walk on water; how to still storms etc. The thing they were most moved by was the way he prayed. They wanted to be able to pray like he did.

They saw that as he prayed it introduced things into earth’s situations that were different from what was happening at the present juncture.

• Death was operating – he prayed and life took over.
Sickness was in control until he prayed – then healing happened.

Torment was uncontested until he prayed – then release happened.

Jesus took their request seriously. He didn’t dismiss them or indicate that they couldn’t do what he was doing. He seemed to share their notion that what he, the Rabbi was doing, could be done by the followers also. He willingly, readily introduced them to this ‘Kingdom-welcoming-prayer-pathway.’

He taught them a prayer what we like to call, ‘The Lord’s Prayer.’ More accurately it should be called, ‘The Disciples Prayer.’

The Lord’s Prayer is actually found in John 17.

This prayer is much quoted and most often little understood.
So often it is prayed with a blank mind and with a ritualistic repetitiveness.
I don’t think that this prayer was ever given by Jesus with the understanding that it would prayed verbatim.
[I think the very fact that Luke’s version is slightly different from Matthew’s is indicative of the fact that the exact wording is not the point of the prayer.]

- Worship was intended to be longer than a sentence.
- Petitions are not confined to bread.
- Forgiveness is to be requested in specifics and not just in generalities.

At that time Rabbis would teach their disciples to pray. [They acknowledged that John had taught his disciples a way of prayer.] They would use what they called ‘Index Prayers.’

They weren’t intended to be prayed word for word. They were like what we today call an acrostic. We use a word so that each letter in the word opens you up to a concept to be remembered. In ‘index prayers’ each line is to open up a concept that you are to dwell on and grasp.

What I’d like to do is take you through how I pray the Lord’s Prayer. I do this regularly. It’s not some legalistic form. I vary it; I sometimes go off on a tangent and never get more than a line into it. Sometimes I don’t use it at all.
I take each line as an area of prayer to work through.

1. “Our Father in heaven, hallowed by thy name...”

This has to do with the confidence of relationship we enjoy.
I begin with thanksgiving for the relationship that I have with the Father through what Jesus has done. Sometimes I have to remind myself that the access I have isn’t about what I have done or have to do. If I haven’t had a good prayer time for a period, I’m tempted to be hesitant in my approach to the throne; I don’t deserve to come. If I’ve blown it in some way; I’m tempted to feel disqualified in my approach. The opposite can be true as well. If my times of prayer have been regular and there is no glaring sin that I’m aware of I can be tempted to come as if I’m deserving. In both cases I’m wrong. My approach is always based on what Jesus has done for me. It’s doesn’t rest on my abilities. It’s not about my failure or my apparent success. It’s a good time to realize why I can come and why I can call God ‘Father.’
2. “Hallowed be thy name …”

This prayer begins and ends in praise. All its petitions are ‘bookended’ by praise and worship.

The word “Hallowed,” is not a common word for us. It means ‘to sanctify,’ ‘to set apart,’ ‘to praise,’ ‘to adore.’

We are told to begin this praise by ‘adoration and praise towards His name.
This ‘name’ of God is another way of saying the character of God.
It’s not about God’s title, it’s about His person.

When we say today, “That person has made a name for him/herself.” We don’t mean they have sat down and created some unique spelling of his/her name.
We mean they have developed a reputation that stands behind the name.
When we describe a person as having a ‘good name,’ we are talking about a person who has a good reputation.
Their character can be trusted in that particular realm.

When Moses asked to see God’s glory, God took him up onto the mountain and ‘proclaimed to him the name of the Lord.” {Exodus 34:5}
Exodus 34:5-7.
“And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.”

His name was the composite of all His character attributes. It’s about who God is. When you hallow God’s name, you are recognizing and honouring who He is.

What I’ve done is, I have memorized some of God’s significant names and I use them to open up areas where I can hallow and worship God for who He is and what He does.
Let me illustrate.

JEHOVAH—TSIDKENU.

Jeremiah 23:6
“In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.”

I praise God for His incredible plan of salvation. He sent Jesus to rescue me. He sought me when I wasn’t interested in Him. He looked beyond my failure to see my need. Jesus became my substitute; he became my righteousness.

1 Corinthians 1:30
“It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.”

JEHOVAH-M’KADDESH.

Exodus 31:13
“Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.”
The Lord who sanctifies us. He works within us by His Spirit to bring us experientially into what we possess positionally.

JEHOVAH-SHALOM

Judges 6:24
“So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it The LORD is Peace.”

Peace is more than just an absence of conflict. The word ‘shalom,’ has the idea of ‘wholeness, wellness, harmony with God, contentment and satisfaction with life.’
I can worship God as the one who restores wholeness. He is Holy and He’s making me to be holy [whole] too.

JEHOVAH-RAAH.

Psalm 23:1
“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.”

One of the key issues I draw out of this passage is the Desire of God to lead me.
“He leads me besides quiet waters…”
I thank God for guidance given and seek Him for areas where I need direction.

**JEHOVAH-ROPHE.**

*Exodus 15:26*
He said “If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.”

I’ll praise God for His care for me, for health, and bring before Him any needs I have in this area.

**JEHOVAH—GIBBOWR.**

The Lord who is mighty.

*Psalm 24:8*
“Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.”

I’ll often pick a song that will express this and worship in song for a period.
“Oh Lord you’re wonderful in counsel, you’re wonderful. Excellent in working, you’re excellent,
Mighty to deliver, you’re mighty…”

JEHOVAH-NISSI

Exodus 17:15
Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner.”

I can never think of this Scripture without linking it to another in the Song of Solomon. [2:4]
“He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love.”
I spend time thanking God and giving worship for His love to me.
I return the love.
JEHOVAH - JIREH.

Genesis 22:14
“So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.”

I spend time praising God for His amazing faithfulness to us in the realm of provision.
I may make known some of the present needs I have at this point or wait for another time as I work through this index prayer.

JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH.

Ezekiel 48:35
“And the name of the city from that time on will be: THE LORD IS THERE.”

I thank God for His commitment to abide with me. Hebrews 13:5
“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”

There is material here for an extended time of worship and praise. By the time you add to this your spiritual language you can easily have spent an half an hour to and hour. If the only time you praise and worship God is our corporate times together then something is amiss.

“Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is Heaven.”
Having spent time worshipping the name, we are now authorized to use the name to ensure that the rule of Heaven penetrates the scene of earth’s needs.

Remember, if we don’t ask, then the Kingdom won’t come. He has decreed that we ask.

Two questions naturally present themselves.
1. What are we asking for when we say, “Thy Kingdom come?”
2. Where should we ask this Kingdom to come to?

**Firstly,** what are we asking for?
Simply, we are welcoming God’s rule into the situation.

Let me try and make this very practical, very tangible.

**Romans 14:17**
“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

“**Righteousness**” – right standing, ‘right-wise-ness.’
Where there has been unrighteousness, where things are out of order, where there’s decay, morally, spiritually,
emotionally, into that setting we invite God’s order. Things put right by the power of the Holy Spirit.

“Peace,” – The idea of the Hebrew word, ‘Peace,’ is not just an absence of conflict; the word ‘shalom,’ has the idea of wholeness, wellness, prosperity. The Greek word, ‘eirene,’ has the same feel to it. It does mean, rest and quietness,’ but it is also translated, ‘to set at one again.’

Wholeness comes from being set right. You can’t have wellness outside of being set right. Righteousness comes before peace. The natural outcome of righteousness and peace is joy.

People of our age desperately want and pursue joy and wholeness, but don’t want to know anything about righteousness. Everything eludes them. When we ask the Kingdom to come in a situation this is what we are asking for. We invite God’s rule into the situation to challenge things which aren’t in right standing, and to replace them with God’s order; that will move us towards becoming whole, with its natural result of joy. All this is done by the power of the Holy Spirit.
The second question to ask is, “If this is what we ask, where do we ask it to happen?”

This is how I approach this question. I think of it as a series of concentric circles.

I start in the inner circle.

Myself. The Kingdom needs to happen in me – in this piece of earth. When I have finished with the worship aspect of this prayer I move on to asking for the Kingdom of God; the rule of God, to happen in me.

I invite the rule of God to come into my experience. I welcome Him to work ‘right-wise-ness’ in areas where things aren’t in divine order. This will differ in different seasons. It all depends what God has been dealing with me about. It could be an attitude, a point of pride, a pattern of thinking that isn’t right or some unkind ways of speaking. I welcome God’s righteousness into each level of my life – spiritually, emotionally, physically, and socially.
Sometimes there will be a prophetic word that God has given me that will govern this part of my prayer time. There are times when you feel God is saying something to you by way of promise. During this time I’ll lay hold of it and pray that God will work it in me. I will pray that His rule and purpose will be established.

The circle of my touch.

The circle of my touch is those who are closest to me; obviously my immediate family. I begin to welcome the Kingdom with its right standing, its wholeness and it’s joy into my family. I name them before the Lord on a daily basis.

“When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would send and have them purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them...”
This was Job’s regular custom.

As parents, we have a tremendous privilege and responsibility here.

**Proverbs 13:22**
“A good man leaves an inheritance for his children’s children ...”

E. M. Bounds once said,
“The prayers of Saints strengthen the unborn generation against the desolating waves of sin and evil. Woe to the generation of sons and daughters who find their censers empty of the rich incense of prayer; whose fathers have been too busy or too unbelieving to pray. Perils inexpressible and consequences untold are their unhappy heritage. Fortunate are they who’s Fathers and mothers have left them a wealthy patrimony of prayer.”

I pray righteousness, wholeness and fulfillment over them – for every part of them, spiritually, emotionally, physically, socially.

Having prayed for my immediate family, I’ll now increase the reach of my circle. I pray for the circle of my larger, extended family. I pray for my brother and his wife and their children. I do that by name. Then I pray for my sister and her husband and for their kids as well.
I pray for Karen’s extended family; her sisters and their husbands and children and for her brother and his wife and their children.
I’m a Godfather to one of Karen’s great nieces; I try to take that seriously. I made a commitment to pray for that little girl and I do.

I believe I’m called to be salt and light in my family circle. If I don’t pray for the Kingdom to come, if I don’t welcome it by invitation, it may not happen.
You could say to me, “Well that’s a bit presumptuous, there are probably others who are praying for them besides you.”
There possibly is, but I assume it’s my responsibility. I pray as if nobody else is praying.
I invite the Kingdom to invade their lives. In some cases they aren’t Christians, so I ask the Lord to reveal himself to them. Where they know the Lord I ask that He would release the full flow of His purpose towards them.
I allow the circle to be extended once again and I pray for the Fathers family – the church.

I pray for the Kingdom to be fully realized here at Gateway -- Right-standing, wholeness and fulfillment.
What I pray for the Church will often be determined by what I feel the Holy Spirit has been speaking to me, about us. Any points of prophetic revelation that I feel is relevant.

I often pray particular passages of Scripture.

When I first took over the church I prayed Psalm 126 a great deal.

“When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them. The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”

For many years I used a passage from Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians to pray over the church.

1Thessalonians 3:10-13.

“Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith? Now God himself and our Father, and our
Lord Jesus Christ, **direct our way** unto you. And the Lord make you to **increase and abound in love one toward another**, and **toward all men**, even as we do toward you: **To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness** before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.”

The circle of your reach.

What’s the circle of your reach?
How far can you reach in prayer?
The answer is, **As far as you dare to believe.**
To the average person, if you suggested that they could reach out in prayer and touch their nation, or even beyond to the nations of Asia, Europe or Africa, they would possibly struggle with that concept.
But prayer does touch the chord of divine purpose and brings it to bear on human circumstances.
When I pray something happens that doesn’t happen if I don’t pray.
There’s nothing in the Bible that suggests that man is the victim of irretrievable circumstances. The whole concept of redemption argues against it.
  - Ask for nations.
• Pray for those extended from our congregation.
• Pray for national leaders and for peace.

There should be enough material here for an extended time of prayer. We have only moved through two of the areas opened up by this index prayer and yet there is more material here than most of us will cover in one prayer time.