

I just was not paying *attention*
It caught my *attention*
C'mon pay *attention*

Direction determines destination.
→ **Attention** impacts direction.

What should we pay **the most** attention to???

G-O-D

- His Kingdom; His Name; His love; His will

Matthew 6:33a (CSB)

But seek **first** the kingdom of God ...

Prayer

- consciously **turning/giving our attention** to God so that He **directs** our lives toward the full reality of His **Kingdom**

Matthew 6:7-8

When you pray, don't babble like the Gentiles, since they **imagine they'll be heard** for their many words. ⁸ Don't be like them, because **your Father knows** the things you need before you ask Him.

Prayer is NOT ...

- Performance (v. 7)
- Persuasion (v. 8)

Prayer IS a practice that directs our path by focusing & correcting our attention.

Matthew 6:9a (ESV)

Pray then like this:

Jesus teaches the Lord's Prayer as the **normal and optimal** pattern of prayer ... [to consciously give God our attention so He directs our paths.]

- Normal does NOT mean only
- Optimal does NOT mean always

Jesus teaches the Lord's Prayer as the **normal and optimal** pattern of prayer:

- Meaning of the word Jesus uses: *Pray* ...

- Jewish tradition of memorized prayer // template for “how to”
- Early (~1st Century) church practice = x3 per day

The pattern of the Lord’s Prayer is the **pattern** for Kingdom of Heaven **living**.

- Life gets disordered.
- Attention gets distracted.
- God gets diminished.

Jesus prescribes a **strategy of rigorous repetition** to capture/focus our attention and thus shape our daily direction toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

Matthew 6:9a (ESV)

Pray then like this:

Matthew 6:9b-13 [ESV]

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹Give us this day our daily bread, ¹²and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*’]

1) Notice the **two categories** of requests:

- a) **God’s** (*Your Name ... Your kingdom ... Your will*)
- b) **Ours** (*needs ... relationships ... protection/deliverance*)

Attention Correction:

- Focusing only on **one** category

2) Notice **the order** of the requests.

- God’s priorities are **first and foremost** (*Matthew 6:33*)
 - **Attention** impacts direction

Our normal starting point: our priorities & our problems.

Attention Correction: **Preoccupation with Self**

- The more I look at myself the more I **move toward** “self” and **away** from God
 - *Anxious & fearful*
 - *Self-pity & selfish*
 - *Self-righteous & self-love*

Attention Correction: **Preoccupation with Self**

- Never have a right view of God if we only look at ourselves and the situations we are in

The best and most loving thing God could do is tell us **to look** toward Him as our Father, with awe & wonder, and in confidence about His will.

- Our highest privilege and greatest joy = consciously being in His Kingdom

Praying the Lord's Prayer → "**Unselfishly Selfish**"

Mark 8:35

For whoever wants to **save** his life will **lose** it, but whoever **loses** his life because of Me and the gospel will **save** it.

3) Notice that the proper **order** puts God in His **place** and us in our **place**.

→ *It's not about us!*

Satan: offered A & E the one thing they did not have, should not have and could never have = God's position.

We dangerously crave god-like recognition, god-like centrality, god-like control, and god-like power.

Attention Correction: Live in **awe** of God

Awe → Attention

Your heart was made and wired for **AWE**.

- Replacing awe of God for anything **less than God** will never lead us anywhere good!

When in awe of God (attention to God's position), then my **provisions are no problem!**

→ *Pray about small things because everything is small to God My Father!*

Move forward (Kingdom direction) in awe and with assurance (~confidence)

→ Attention impacts direction.

"Pray then like this ..." {Jesus}