

The Our Father (1)



Matthew 6: 9-13

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ instructed the disciples how to pray. He taught them an important prayer, the Our Father (or the Lord's Prayer). We pray the Our Father before Holy Communion. It is a prayer which should be prayed earnestly. The Lord's Prayer is prayed by the entire congregation. It is an expression of heartfelt fellowship.

2

The children are shown the significance of the Lord's Prayer so that they can pray it earnestly. They learn it by heart.

Jesus Christ and his disciples travel throughout Galilee teaching the people. His miracles are spoken about everywhere, even far beyond the borders of Galilee. Whenever he comes to a village, people flock to see and hear him. This is what happens now too: A great crowd is milling around Jesus. He goes up on to a hill with his disciples. The people find a place to sit on the grass or on rocky outcrops and watch him expectantly. It is very quiet. Everyone waits for him to commence his sermon. The Lord Jesus starts speaking in a clear, firm voice, urging the listeners to live a life pleasing to God. He speaks at length about praying and teaches them a very important prayer: The Our Father.

1

"Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, for ever.
Amen."

As the children of God, we have a father in heaven, namely the Lord. He cares for us, he loves us, he helps us, he protects us. Surely we can be grateful that we may call the Lord our Father!

When we pray "Our Father which art in heaven", we call on the Lord. He then listens to us. This also happens when we pray at home.

2

**Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.**



*Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.*

Jesus Christ is our teacher

We ask the children: "How can we hallow God's name?"

The picture gives us an answer. The girl in the picture has her hands folded and her eyes closed. She knows she is speaking to the heavenly Father. The Lord hears the prayers of his children.

We should pray reverently. That is how we hallow the name of God.

We should hallow his name by doing his will.

Thy kingdom come



Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

We ask the children to consider the following:

How do you visualize the kingdom of God? What will it be like there? What must you do to fit into God's kingdom?

We look at the picture. All these children want to enter God's kingdom.

There we will be happy for ever. That is why we try to live according to Jesus Christ's example. We strive, already here on earth, to develop the kingdom of God within us more and more and to experience security, peace, love and fellowship.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven

What is the will of God?

God wishes all people to be helped. He wants to guide and bless all people. We want to enquire as to his will and be guided accordingly.

The Lord Jesus lived in accordance with the will of his Father and is our example.

The children look at that same picture again. God wants to help all children, all people on this earth, whether they are poor or rich, black or white. He wants us to live peacefully and happily—as if in heaven!

1 The children try to recite the Lord's Prayer. Who knows it by heart? Who knows parts of it?

2 Refer to the pictures in the children's book. Help the children understand the significance of the Our Father by studying these pictures. At first they discuss the pictures and the texts, then the teacher will supplement the children's statements.