

On the Lord's Prayer.

From the The Longer Catechism of The Orthodox, Catholic, Eastern Church
also known as the Catechism of St. Philaret (Drozdov) of Moscow

397. Is there not a prayer which may be termed the common Christian prayer, and pattern of all prayers?

Such is the Lord's Prayer.

398. What is the Lord's Prayer?

A prayer which our Lord Jesus Christ taught the Apostles, and which they delivered to all believers.

399. Repeat it.

Our father, who art in heaven?

1. Hallowed be thy Name;
2. Thy kingdom come;
3. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth;
4. Give us this day our bread for subsistence;
5. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,
6. And lead us not into temptation;
7. But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. [Matt. vi. 9--13.](#)

400. In order the better to understand the Lord's Prayer, how may we divide it?

Into the invocation, seven petitions, and the doxology.

On the Invocation.

401. How dare we call God Father?

By faith in Jesus Christ, and by the grace of regeneration.

As many as received him, to them, gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. [John i. 12, 13.](#)

402. Must we say Our Father even when we pray alone?

Certainly we must.

403. Why so?

Because Christian charity requires us to call upon God, and ask good things of him, for all our brethren, no less than for ourselves.

404. Why in the invocation do we say, Who art in heaven?

That, entering upon prayer, we may leave every thing earthly and corruptible, and raise our minds and hearts to what is heavenly, everlasting, and divine.

On the First Petition.

405. Is not God's name holy?

Doubtless it is holy in itself. Holy is his name. [Luke i. 49.](#)

406. How, then, can it yet be hallowed?

It may be hallowed in men; that is, his eternal holiness may be manifested in them.

407. How?

First, when we, having in our thoughts and heart the name of God, so live as his holiness requires, and thus glorify God; secondly, when others also, seeing our good lives, glorify God.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. [Matt. v. 16.](#)

On the Second Petition.

408. What is the kingdom of God spoken of in the second petition of the Lord's Prayer?

The kingdom of grace, which, as St. Paul says, is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Rom. xiv. 17.

409. Is not this kingdom come already?

To some it has not yet come in its full sense; while to others it has not yet come at all inasmuch as sin still reigns in their mortal bodies, that they should obey it in the lusts thereof. [Rom. vi. 12.](#)

410. How does it come?

Secretly, and inwardly. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you. [Luke xvii. 20, 21.](#)

411. May not the Christian ask for something further under the name of God's kingdom?

He may ask for the kingdom of glory--that is, for the perfect bliss of the faithful.

Having a desire to depart, and be with Christ. [Phil. i. 23.](#)

On the Third Petition.

412. What means the petition, Thy will be done?

Hereby we ask of God that all we do, and all that befalls us, may be ordered not as we will, but as pleases him.

413. Why need we ask this?

Because we often err in our wishes; but God unerringly, and incomparably more than we ourselves, wishes for us all that is good, and is ever ready to bestow it, unless he be prevented by our willfulness and obstinacy.

Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church. [Eph. iii. 20, 21.](#)

414. Why do we ask that God's will be done in earth as in heaven?

Because in heaven the holy angels and saints in bliss, all without exception, always, and in all things, do God's will.

On the Fourth Petition.

415. What is bread for subsistence?¹

The bread which we need in order to subsist or live.

416. With what thoughts should we ask of God this bread?

Agreeably with the instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ, we should ask no more than bread for subsistence; that is, necessary food, and such clothing and shelter as is likewise necessary for life; but whatever is beyond this, and serves not so much for necessity as for gratification, we should leave to the will of God; and if it be given, return thanks to him; if it be not given, we should be content without it.

417. Why are we directed to ask for bread for subsistence only for this day ?

That we may not be too anxious about the future, but trust for that to God. Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. [Matt. vi. 34.](#) For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. [Matt. vi. 32.](#)

418. May we not ask for something farther under the name of bread for subsistence?

Since man is made of both a bodily and a spiritual substance, and the substance of the soul far excels that of the body, we may and should seek for the soul also that bread of subsistence without which the inward man must perish of hunger.

(See Cyril. Hier. Lect, Myst. iv. 15; Orthod. Confess. Pt. II. Q. 19.)

419. What is the bread of subsistence for the soul?

The Word of God, and the Body and Blood of Christ.

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. [Matt. iv. 4.](#) My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. [John vi. 55.](#)

On the Fifth Petition.

420. What is meant in the Lord's Prayer by our debts?

Our sins.

421. Why are our sins called debts?

Because we, having received all from God, ought to render all back to him--that is, subject all to his will and law; which if we do not, we are left debtors to his justice.

422. But who are our debtors?

People who have not rendered us that which they owed us by the law of God; as, for instance, have not shown us love, but malice.

423. If God is just, how can we be forgiven our debts?

Through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom for all. [1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.](#)

424. What will be the consequence, if we ask God to forgive us our sins without ourselves forgiving others?

In that case neither shall we be forgiven.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses. [Matt. vi. 14, 15.](#)

425. Why will not God forgive us if we do not forgive others?

Because we hereby show ourselves evil, and so alienate from us God's goodness and

426. What disposition, then, must we have to use aright those words of the Lord's Prayer, As we forgive our debtors?

These words absolutely require that when we pray we should bear no malice nor hatred, but be in peace and charity with all men.

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and, there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. [Matt. v. 23, 24.](#)

427. But what am I to do if I can not readily find him who hath aught against me, or if he show himself unwilling to be reconciled?

In such a case it is enough to be reconciled with him in heart, before the eyes of the all-seeing God.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. [Rom. xii. 18.](#)

On the Sixth Petition.

428. What is meant in the Lord's Prayer by temptation ?

Any conjuncture of circumstances in which there is imminent danger of losing the faith, or falling into great sin.

429. Whence come such temptations?

From our flesh, from the world, or other people, and from the devil.

430. What do we ask in these words of the prayer, Lead us not into temptation?

First, that God suffer us not to be led into temptation; secondly, that if it be needful for us to be tried and purified through temptation, he give us not up wholly to temptation, nor suffer us to fall.

On the Seventh Petition.

431. What do we ask in these words of the prayer, Deliver us from evil?

We ask for deliverance from all evil that can reach us in the world, which since the fall lieth in wickedness ([1 John v. 19](#)): but especially from the evil of sin, and from the evil suggestions and snares of the spirit of evil, which is the devil.

On the Doxology.

432. Why after the Lord's Prayer do we subjoin the Doxology?

First, that when we ask mercies for ourselves from our heavenly Father, we may at the same time render him that honor which is his due; secondly, that by the thought of his everlasting kingdom, power, and glory, we may be more and more established in the hope that he will give us what we ask, because this is in his power, and makes to his glory.

433. What means the word Amen T

It means verily, or so be it.

434. Why is this word added to the Doxology?

To signify that we offer the prayer in faith, and without doubting, as we are taught to do by the Apostle James. [James i. 6](#).

Source: http://www.pravoslaviето.com/docs/eng/Orthodox_Catechism_of_Philaret.htm