

These words I just read to you introduce the Lord's Prayer in Luke. We have the same words given in Matthew but they are introduced differently because Matthew introduces them with a warning against vain repetition. How ironic that the very prayer that is introduced with a warning against saying words should be more often repeated thoughtlessly than perhaps than perhaps anything else in the Bible.

God does not necessarily want us to use these words, but He does want us to learn from them something of what is important in our prayer life. "Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name." God is our Father. How ready we are to rush before the Lord with our desires, with our thoughts, with ~~our~~ our troubles. God wants to know our troubles, He wants to know our situation, He wants to help us. But we should come into His presence with the knowledge of who He is, and that first it is important most of all that we approach Him as the one who reigns over all the earth.

You notice how these two thoughts are brought together in the Lord's prayer: our Father, who is in the heavens. It does not begin Mighty King who is in the heavens; Great Ruler who is in the heavens; Controller of all things who is in heaven. God is indeed all of those. It is important that we recognize His power, His majesty, and His greatness. It is also important that we recognize that if we truly believe on Him He is our Father.

So in the first half of the Lord's Prayer, the only reference to us is in the Lord as our Father. Otherwise it is a reference to Him and His greatness. Our Father who is in heaven. What does this mean, Who is in heaven? Does it mean He is far away like Barth said, God is in heaven and you are on earth! and you cannot understand Him. He must break through to you. You can understand or know anything about him except that He's utterly different.

No. The Bible tells us a great deal of what God is like and we have a right to come right into His presence, and we have a right to know that He is our Father. When it says, Our Father who is in heaven, it doesn't mean our Father who is far far away. The Genesis record begins God created the heavens and earth, and heaven there means everything except earth. God is everywhere. God is in all His creation. God controls everything but God is right here. He wants us to approach him as our Father but to approach him as the great heavenly being who controls all things.

He wants us to come before Him thinking of His will. Thinking of His purposes. He's interested in our purposes, our plans, our difficulties. But He wants us to give His plans and His purposes first place. When we look at His purposes, when we look at the fields that are white unto harvest, when we look at the thousands that don't know Him at all, when we look at American life that is filled with unbelief, that is filled with forgetfulness of God. Where that which would drag you down is found