

Christ for the Crisis
Everlasting Father
Matthew 6:6-13

Dr. Steve Horn

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Introduction: We return to the book of Isaiah this morning. With the exception of a few Sundays here and there for special emphases, we have been in the book of Isaiah in this latter part of the year. We are considering this book from the general theme of “Crisis,” because it is a prophetic message from a time of crisis in Isaiah’s day, focused on the nation of Israel and more precisely, Judah. To this point, we have examined the *Confrontation that Comes from Crisis*, the *Comfort for our Crisis*, and the *Challenges in the Crisis*.

We are concluding this month our study of Isaiah by using Isaiah 9:6 as a focal point. Another preacher (James Merritt) called this verse the “centerpiece of all prophecy.” I am amazed and confirmed in my faith by the fact that Isaiah could point to the advent of Christ 700 + years before His birth.

Christmas is the reminder that God is our Wonderful Counselor, our Mighty God, our Eternal Father, and our Prince of Peace. Today, we examine specifically God as our Eternal Father.

We learn much about Jesus as our Eternal Father in his own prayer to the Heavenly Father.

Text: But when you pray, go into your private room, shut your door, and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁷ 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.

⁹ “Therefore, you should pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
your name be honored as holy.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come.

Your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And do not bring us into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.

Introduction: We have prayed this prayer over and over. Have you ever considered what the prayer tells us about our Everlasting Father? As we have discovered, Jesus came to be our Wonderful Counselor and our Mighty God. Today, we want to explore what it means that Jesus has come to be our Eternal Father. Jesus’ instructions to the disciples about prayer and the prayer itself help us to understand God as our Everlasting Father.

Now, before we get to the Matthew text, let’s say just a few words about how Isaiah most likely meant the words Eternal Father. Father was a term used in Israel to refer to rulers. So, this term “father” goes

with the words of verse 7 that Messiah's kingdom would be vast and never end. There should be no confusion to the three persons of the Trinity here. This term "father" speaks to the character of Jesus. He, by His coming, would point us to the character of God.

And, that is what thrills and comforts me so as we think about the Eternal Father today. Think about these things with me. This is the heart of the Christmas message.

My Father's Position anchors me to my deepest Convictions.

Our Father who is in Heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.

This portion of the prayer points us to some of those deep convictions.

- **He is Personal.**
So many people have this view of God as an impersonal God. In my opinion, heretical descriptions like "The man upstairs" and similar phrases have done much, even if it is unintentional, to foster this idea of God. God is personal. Perhaps no other title than "Father" helps us to understand that God is personal.
- **His Place is in Heaven.**
God is on the throne of Heaven. He is sovereign, He is in control, and He has all authority and power in my life and in the world.
- **His name is to be Praised.**
"Hallowed be His name" the prayer continues. That's my conviction in life. No matter what—His name is to be praised.
- **His kingdom is Progressing.**
The Bible tells us that His Kingdom is coming. The kingdom is progressing toward a historical climax. Again, God is in control.
- **His will is Perfect.**
Another conviction of my life is that God always does what is best. That's what good fathers always do. If we strive for that as earthly fathers, how much more does God want to bring about His perfect will in our lives?

My Father's Providence assures me of my deepest Needs.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver from evil.

- **Physical Needs**—God meets our physical needs. I heard a story about a woman who believed God for everything. She prayed about everything. She prayed for her daily bread. She had a neighbor who was an unbeliever. He resented the fact that his neighbor, the woman, spoke of God in such personal ways. He resented the fact that she praised God for everything. Wanting to prove to his neighbor that her trust in God for her provision was in vain, he went out and bought the lady a sack full of groceries. He put them at the door,

knocked on the door, and hid in the bushes. When the lady saw the groceries, as was her habit, she began to thank God for the blessing. The man jumped out of the bushes and said, "God didn't provide those groceries, I did." Immediately, the woman prayed again, "Thank you God for providing these groceries, and even using my neighbor to provide the groceries."

We can count on God, our Heavenly Father, to provide our physical needs.

- **Spiritual Needs**

- (1) **Forgiveness**

Lest we forget, this is our greatest need.

- (2) **Triumph over the enemy**

We need both our physical and spiritual needs met and our Heavenly Father has come to do just that. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said this: "Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? **11** If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!" (Matthew 7:9-11)

We are at the gift giving season. Some people are what I call good gift-givers. Others are not. You see these folks in the stores. They are just staring at items. They don't know what size, what color, what brand, whatever to buy. Finally, they just buy something so as to have something. God is not like that at all. He knows what His children need and He gives.

My Father's Power answers my deepest Questions.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

We all have questions that we will never be able to answer. God, as my Father, helps me to put these questions into perspective.

- **God is Able.**
- **God is Eternal.**

Conclusion: God as our Everlasting Father. What did God want to give to us in giving Himself as our Everlasting Father? Isaiah wrote to a hurting people—a people uncertain about their future. They needed to be reminded that God was going to be to them as a Father and He was going to be forever.

I was touched a few weeks ago at the funeral service of President George H.W. Bush. I especially like the tributes from his children. President George W. Bush said of his father, "the best father a son or a daughter could have."

What a wonderful tribute! I want to be that kind of father. But, when I fail, I am reminded of our Eternal Father—all that a father should be and that forever.

So What?

Would you let Jesus be in your life all that he came to be?