

Keep the Focus on Him

Many years ago God called me to use the Lord's Prayer as the pattern for my own daily prayer. In the years following, I spent most of my time in the first half of the prayer:

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:9-10, NIV)*

I gravitated to that first half of the prayer because every morning I crave seeing Him again. When I focus on God, high and lifted up, everything else falls into place.

Often I spent less time on the second half of the prayer:

*Give us today our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one. (Matthew 6:11-13, NIV)*

After focusing on the transcendent God during the first part of my prayer, I felt uncomfortable shifting the focus to our needs in the second half. Yes, I was still talking to God, but now my heart seemed focused on us, not Him. I came to realize that this made the second half of the prayer feel smaller and less meaningful.

Then one morning God showed me that I should pray the second half of the prayer like the first, with my focus still on Him. For example:

*Father, we joyfully depend on You for all our needs today.
Forgive us for our sins,
and we will share Your forgiveness with all who wrong us.
We don't want anything to come between You and us.
Deliver us from temptation and from the evil one.
Keep our hearts and minds on You alone.*

We can keep our focus on Him, even while presenting our needs. We can confess our dependence on Him out of a burning desire to live in Him more constantly and completely. When we pray with our hearts fixed on God alone, the entire Lord's Prayer becomes an act of deep, life-centered worship. We come seeking, not His gifts, but Him.

Hymn: [Our Father Exalted](#)