



| **SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDIES** |

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THE TEXT

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# | THE LORD'S PRAYER |

## **SERIES SUMMARY**

So many of us are discouraged by prayer. We know it's important. We want to do it. But a lot of us don't know where to start. Which is why Jesus cut through all the confusion and second-guessing and gave his disciples a specific prayer to pray. It's like he says, "stop worrying about how to do it. Do it like this." Furthermore, this prayer summarized the entirety of Jesus' mission, and what his followers were called to do in the world. It's why Jesus wanted his disciples to pray it on a regular basis. So if Jesus thought it was that important, then maybe we should just trust our prayer to him and immerse ourselves in the one prayer he gave us.

This 9-part series will explore the cultural and contextual background of the Lord's Prayer. By the end of this series you'll have greater confidence in your prayer life because you'll have a deeper sense of what mattered to Jesus. By understanding the depth and brilliance of each line of the prayer, you'll be inspired to pray more intentionally, live more faithfully, and love Jesus more fully.

## **THIS CURRICULUM IS REALLY EASY TO USE**

**STEP 1:** Click the link in each lesson to watch the video teaching.

**STEP 2:** Reflect on the discussion questions with your group.

**STEP 3:** Start praying more intentionally!



## PART 1 | **DAILY, BOLDLY, COLLABORATIVELY**

### **VIDEO**

*Click to Watch*

### **KEY PASSAGE(S)**

**Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-2; 1 Chronicles 29:10-11**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The Lord's Prayer is the most well-known and well-loved prayer in history. But how well do we know the Lord's Prayer? Sure, most of us can recite it off the top of our heads (and probably in the King James with its "thy's" and "art's"), but do we really understand what Jesus was saying and teaching us when he gave this prayer? I know I sure didn't. But when I began to understand this prayer in context, I was awestruck by how deep and significant it was. And it compelled me to pray more intentionally, live more faithfully, and love Jesus more fully. My hope is that this series will help you do the same.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What was your biggest takeaway from the teaching?
- What has been your history with the Lord's Prayer? Did you grow up saying it?
- Prior to this teaching, what have been your thoughts on the Lord's Prayer?
- Which aspect of the prayer are you most excited to learn more about?
- Do you find prayer challenging? How so?
- With the suggestion for praying this prayer daily, boldly, and collaboratively, how will engage the prayer differently going forward?
- Are there any other truths from this teaching that you want to begin living out this week?

## PART 2 | **OUR FATHER**

### **VIDEO**

*Click to Watch*

### **KEY PASSAGE(S)**

**Matthew 6:9; Exodus 4:22-23; Isaiah 63:16**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The Lord's Prayer begins with "Our Father." Whoa! In Jesus's day, you couldn't begin a prayer more explosively than that. It's been said that when Jesus told us to address God as "Our Father" that he was introducing a new way to approach God. Nope! The notion of God as "Father" had been deeply rooted in Israel's story for fifteen hundred years. What Jesus was doing was calling for revolution, and that revolution would begin as a result of his ministry. The revolution is still underway, and Jesus's invitation for us is to join it. And it all begins by saying the words, "Our Father."

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What was your biggest takeaway from the teaching?
- How did this episode help you better understand the explosiveness of what Jesus was communicating when he called his followers to address God as "Our Father," knowing the history of God as "Father" beginning with the Exodus?
- Knowing that this prayer begins with "Our Father," how does the communal nature of this prayer affect how you will approach this prayer going forward?
- When you pray, do you take into consideration how the answering of your prayer could affect someone else's life?
- Is it challenging for you to address God as "Father?" Why or why not?
- Where do you need to reformat or enhance your view of God as Father as a result of what you learned in this teaching?
- How can you begin walking out the truths of this teaching this week?



## PART 3 | **ALWAYS NEAR US**

### **VIDEO**

*Click to Watch*

### **KEY PASSAGE(S)**

**Matthew 6:9; Psalm 113:4-6; Deuteronomy 31:1, 6**

### **DESCRIPTION**

When Jesus told us to pray, “Our Father who is in heaven,” it is literally recorded in Greek as, “in the heavens.” Why would Jesus be talking about God being “in the heavens?” What did this mean to the people first hearing Jesus say this? And what does this mean for us in our relationship with God and in our understanding of “Heaven?” All of this and more is addressed in this teaching as we explore not only the God who rules and reigns over all, but the God who is ever present to us in the midst of our circumstances and our lives.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What was your biggest takeaway from the teaching?
- Was it helpful learning how the ancients viewed the cosmos? Does this help you to better understand any other passages in the Bible that weren't discussed in this teaching?
- Being reminded that God rules and reigns the world, what comfort, joy, or challenge arises in you?
- When you think of heaven, do you think of a place far, far away? Has this negatively shaped your view of God in some way?
- In this teaching we learned that God is present and always near us. How will this change the way you pray, if at all? How does this change the way you live?
- How can you begin walking out the truths of this teaching this week?

## PART 4 | **HOLY BE YOUR NAME**

### **VIDEO**

*Click to Watch*

### **KEY PASSAGE(S)**

**Matthew 6:9; Exodus 3:15; Ezekiel 36:23, 26-27**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Hallowed be your name. What in the world does it mean to “hallow” someone’s name? And what is the significance of God’s name? Furthermore, why does Jesus tell us it needs to be hallowed in the first place? As with every aspect of the Lord’s Prayer, this one is loaded with meaning and rooted in Old Testament stories in order to help us understand the absolute necessity of God’s name being recognized in the world, and how our lives bear witness to the holiness of His great name.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What was your biggest takeaway from the teaching?
- What was your understanding of the word “hallowed” before this teaching? How has this teaching changed your understanding?
- Is there significance behind your name or how you received it? If so, do you see any type of connection to the meaning of your name and your life?
- We learned that God demonstrated the essence of His personal name to the Israelites by rescuing and redeeming them from their slavery. Knowing that God’s essence is centered around rescuing people out of their slavery, how does this help you better understand who God is in the Bible and in your life?
- Do you feel your life is bearing witness to the holiness of God’s name? In what ways do you want to grow in your life to do this more effectively?
- How will you pray this part of the Lord’s Prayer differently going forward – both for you and in respect to the world?
- How can you begin walking out the truths of this teaching this week?

## PART 5 | HEAVEN COMES HERE

### VIDEO

*Click to Watch*

### KEY PASSAGE(S)

**Matthew 6:9-10; Matthew 6:33; Psalm 115:16**

### DESCRIPTION

Many people believe that the point of Jesus was to rescue us from our sins so that we can leave earth and go to heaven. But the problem is that Jesus doesn't spend his time teaching about how we from here (earth) to go there (heaven), but about getting there (heaven) to come here (earth). Hold on tight because without question, the content of this episode is the most paradigm shifting aspect of the Lord's Prayer. And my hope is that we may finally understand what we've been praying all along when we've said, "your kingdom come, your will be done, here on earth as it is in heaven!"

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What was your biggest takeaway from the teaching?
- Has your primary understanding of the Christian life been about how we get from earth to heaven? How has this teaching changed or challenged that perspective?
- What are the implications of focusing so much on getting to heaven that we fail to live out Jesus's instructions to join him in bringing heaven to earth?
- Knowing that we each have a kingdom, a realm of influence, how have you been running your kingdom? Have you been orienting your kingdom to The Kingdom, or have you been more focused on building your kingdom?
- What are some tangible ways you can orient your kingdom to The Kingdom in order for God's will and way to advance in and through you to impact those your kingdom reaches?
- How will you begin living out the truths of this teaching this week?

## PART 6 | **OUR DAILY BREAD**

### **VIDEO**

*Click to Watch*

### **KEY PASSAGE(S)**

**Matthew 6:11**

### **DESCRIPTION**

“Give us today our daily bread.” Sounds pretty straightforward, right? But what does it mean to ask for daily bread? How do we bring our requests before God? And what should we be asking for in the first place? These questions and more are the subject of this episode as we seek to understand what Jesus meant by the phrase, “our daily bread,” and what it means to faithfully live out this aspect of the Lord’s Prayer.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What was your biggest takeaway from the teaching?
- How would you assess your prayer life? Where do you desire to grow?
- In what ways did this episode challenge, encourage, and/or help you as you think through your prayer life?
- N.T. Wright wrote, “The danger with the prayer for bread is that we get there too soon.” Why is it important to ground yourself in the first part of the prayer before you get to this segment?
- How were you challenged by the communal aspect of this prayer – “Give us this day our daily bread?”
- How will you begin living out the truths of this teaching this week?



## PART 7 | **FORGIVENESS HAS A SOURCE**

### **VIDEO**

*Click to Watch*

### **KEY PASSAGE(S)**

**Matthew 6:12; Matthew 6:14-15**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Jesus told us to pray, “Forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors.” Jesus’s assumption is that we would be forgiving others in the manner in which God has forgiven us. But what happens when we’ve been wronged by someone and we’re struggling to forgive them? What do we do when the pain is so real that we can’t stomach the thought of forgiveness? That’s what we tackle in this episode as we seek to understand the nature of forgiveness. And in doing so, we learn how to forgive others well so that we can not only experience the power and freedom of forgiveness, but faithfully live out this command of Jesus from the Lord’s Prayer.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What was your biggest takeaway from the teaching?
- How does our awareness of how much we’ve been forgiven by God help us in forgiving others? Why is this awareness still not enough for many people?
- What are some of the things you learned about what forgiveness is not? Where do you personally find comfort in these?
- What are some of the things you learned about what forgiveness is? How will this alter your ability or desire to forgive more effectively?
- Forgiving can be very hard work. After hearing this teaching, what do you believe is your primary roadblock to forgiving others well?
- Is there anyone you need to forgive? And in what way do you need to ask God – the source of forgiveness – to help you do this?
- How will you begin living out the truths of this teaching this week?

## PART 8 | **TEMPTATION & DELIVERANCE**

### **VIDEO**

*Click to Watch*

### **KEY PASSAGE(S)**

**Matthew 6:13; Matthew 4:1-11; Matthew 26:36-46**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The part of the Lord's Prayer that asks God not to "lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil" has created a lot of confusion. Even Pope Francis has sought to modify this language. Is God in the habit of leading us into testing and temptation? Is there a difference between the two? And how are we to understand the moments when Jesus was tempted? In this episode, we answer these questions, as well as addressing the reality that when we focus on Jesus's divinity at the expense of his humanity, we fail to understand how brutally difficult his own trials and temptations were. But when we understand this, and what he did to overcome, we learn how to do the same in our own lives.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What was your biggest takeaway from the teaching?
- Knowing that there is a difference between temptation and testing, does this change your perspective on this part of the Lord's Prayer? How so?
- When have you gone through a situation where you felt like God was testing you? What was it? Do you feel you were faithful to God's will through it? What did you learn through it?
- Knowing that temptation is something we all face, when are you most susceptible to temptation? Do you have a strategy to deal with temptation that prevents you from falling prey to it?
- Like Jesus, when have you gone through a test that you asked the Father to take away from you? What happened, and what did you learn?
- Knowing you may not see the victory of your testing in this life, will you look at things differently? Will you act differently?
- How will you begin living out the truths of this teaching this week?

## PART 9 | **OWN IT**

### **VIDEO**

*Click to Watch*

### **KEY PASSAGE(S)**

**Matthew 6:9-13**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Throughout this series, we've looked at all of the various aspects of the Lord's Prayer. In this final episode of the series, we look at several methods in which we can pray and utilize the Lord's Prayer on a regular basis to take what we've learned and put into a practice. And in doing so, really owning this prayer in our lives so that it governs the way the way we think and live, and ultimately how we follow Jesus in the world today.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What was your biggest takeaway from the teaching?
- Overall, what has been the most significant learning for you from this series?
- What has been the most challenging aspect of the Lord's Prayer for you? Why?
- Which part of the Lord's Prayer is your biggest area of strength? How so?
- How would you live life differently if you had the Lord's Prayer on the forefront of your mind and heart daily?
- Out of the options given for engaging the Lord's Prayer, which one was most helpful to you? How do you plan on walking this out your prayer life?

## FOR FURTHER STUDY

Click on the Titles below for links to each of these resources.

- *The Lord and His Prayer* by N.T. Wright
- *LORD, Teach Us* by William H. Willimon & Stanley Hauerwas
- *The Divine Conspiracy* by Dallas Willard (Chapter 7 deals specifically with the Lord's Prayer)

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