

## **CoreGroup Guide | The Lord's Prayer - Part 1**

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### **Welcome**

Welcome Back! Whether this is a re-up with old friends or you are joining a new group, we are glad you are here. Last week we used this time to get to know one another – to hopefully establish an ease for everyone to participate in the group. This week we begin our regular discussions of the sermon topics. Our beginning series for the year is focused on The Lord's Prayer. It is the most prayed prayer in human history. It is said to be simple enough to be memorized by small children yet profound enough to sustain a whole lifetime of prayer. Over the next three weeks, we will examine what makes this prayer so powerful. What do the words mean? To us? To the church? To the world?

### **Opening Prayer**

Let's begin our session today by praying the Lord's Prayer together:

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy Name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
Forever and ever. Amen

### **Ice Breaker**

Prayers are often a bedtime tradition for children and their parents. Look at the three questions below and choose one to discuss as a group. Responses can be based on your own childhood memories or a practice you've established with the children in your life today.

- Is there a certain prayer you prayed every night? Try to recite the prayer for the group!
- If not a prayer, what is a favorite bedtime story or routine that you remember?
- What is something that makes it hard for children (and grown-ups!) to fall asleep?

### **The Head**

Jesus' teaching of the Lord's Prayer is recorded in two gospels, Matthew and Luke. Luke presents the teaching as a response to a request by the disciples who had observed Jesus in his own practice of seeking out time with God. In Matthew, which is the most often quoted version, the prayer is included as part of the [Sermon on the Mount](#).

In both versions, what we now call *The Lord's Prayer* comes directly from Jesus to give instruction on how we should pray.

### **Matthew 6:5-9**

*"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

*When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

*Pray, then, in this way:*

*Our Father in heaven,  
May your name be revered as holy."*

- What instruction does Jesus give as to how we are to pray (and not pray)?
- What reasoning does Jesus offer for his instruction?
- The prayer Jesus teaches his followers begins with the phrase "Our Father." Why does acknowledging God as Father matter?
- List some other names for God. What name do you prefer to use when you pray?
- What does it mean to revere God's name as holy? Other versions use the words "Hallowed be thy name." What does this phrase mean to you?

### **The Heart**

For some people, prayer comes naturally. For others, it's difficult to even know what to say. The thought of praying out loud in public might be completely out of the question for some, while others find great joy in leading others in spontaneous prayer. In scripture, we sometimes see Jesus retreating from everyone for a time of personal prayer and solitude, but we also see him praying openly in front of large groups of people. We know that he did both.

- What is your own comfort level with prayer?
- In what ways is it easier to join in written prayers, such as the Lord's Prayer?
- How does prayer influence your relationship with God and others?
- Why might addressing God as "Father" feel problematic or hurtful to some individuals?
- How can the Lord's Prayer be used as an instrument for healing, harmony, and belonging despite these challenges?

### **The Hands**

The Lord's Prayer has been said to be radical, in that when we pray to our Father, we are acknowledging that we are all family. There is no division, no superiority among us. Consider the gravity of such a thought in our current cultural environment.

This week, think about ways your group might want to engage in a service activity of some kind for a particular individual or group of people who have been marginalized. Come prepared to discuss your vision next week. Things to consider:

- Who lives in your neighborhood or the surrounding community that might need some encouragement or assistance?
- Is the group able to incur any sort of cost for this project?
- Would this be a one time event or an ongoing activity?
- What are the time constraints of group members?

Some examples of what this might look like include assembling and distributing personal care bags for the unhoused, participating in Pride activities, collecting food or serving in a food pantry, providing a meal. How might you incorporate prayer into these acts of service?

### **Closing Prayer**

Our Father, thank you for this time together and for each person present. Thank you for this prayer that nurtures our relationship with you and with one another. Use it to teach us day by day. Amen.

### **Going Deeper**

Compare the two scripture records of the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4.

- How does this prayer of Jesus compare to other scripture passages such as Psalm 23; Hannah's prayer in I Samuel 2:1-10, Paul's prayer for believers in Ephesians 1:17-19?
- What other parts of scripture inform your understanding and practice of prayer?

### **Additional Resources**

Check out [The Bible Project](#) for a number of helpful commentaries, videos, podcasts and more. This is a great resource to explore individually or as a group. For this series, go to the search bar and type in "Sermon on the Mount" or "The Lord's Prayer" to learn more!

### **From Pastor Charity**

#### ***You're Invited***

This is a big moment for The Gathering and I want you and your CG to hear about it! Please come learn about the vision for The Gathering over the next two years directly from Pastor Matt. There are several dates available. A meal and childcare are provided.

Click here for more information and to sign up: [MUCH Generosity Events](#)