

# Matthew: Living Like Jesus

## Praying Like Jesus - The Lord's Prayer

→ *Survey: Let's understand the background and context of the passage.*

When you think about prayer, what comes to mind? Does prayer bring you joy & peace as you connect with God? Or is it actually a place of confusion, frustration, and shame? For many of us, we know we *should* pray, but we struggle with it. We're unsure of how exactly to do it, and are often afraid of saying the wrong thing when we do. If that's you, well, there's good news!

This good news is Jesus! Though fully God, he became man to redeem us back to the Father by his perfect life, death & resurrection. This means our relationship with God is not by our own doing, but by His love. This same Jesus teaches us about prayer!

Though Jesus demonstrated a habit of prayer in his own life, retreating up the mountain to pray, he also taught about prayer at the Sermon on the Mount, found in the book of Matthew. This is the passage we will look at tonight. Chapter 6 of Matthew starts with Jesus saying: "Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven." He then gives three examples of this playing out through the topics of giving, praying, and fasting. As we focus on prayer, we are invited to examine our own approach: Do we pray for the right reasons? Do we seek God's will above all else? Are we quick to forgive others as God has forgiven us?

The hope through tonight's study is that you will better understand what the purpose of prayer is, as you grow in confidence to pray as Jesus taught us to. Let's read what Jesus said together.

Read: Matthew 6:5-15 (NIV)

→ *Observe: Let's take a close look at what the text is saying.*

1. Who are we *not* supposed to be like when we pray (v. 5)? How do they pray?
2. How then does Jesus instruct us to pray (v. 6)? Who sees this kind of prayer?
3. How are we *not* supposed to pray (v. 7)? Why do they pray this way?
4. What main contrasts do you see between the ways the hypocrites and pagans pray versus the way Jesus instructs us to pray? Are there any similarities?

*Let's break down the Lord's prayer by verse. Each verse needs a group. Consider together:*

- What is being prayed for? And how would you summarize it?
- Anything else noteworthy from your verse?

→ *Interpret: Let's seek to understand the meaning of this text in its original context.*

1. How does the structure of the Lord's prayer reflect the priorities of God's Kingdom?
2. Is there a right or wrong way to pray? Why or why not?
  - What are the hypocrites & pagans missing about prayer (v. 5, 7)? Why do you think Jesus emphasizes the importance of private prayer (v. 6)?
  - So to summarize, what matters when praying?
3. What is significant about Jesus instructing us to pray by calling God "Our Father"?
  - How does this speak to our identity and our relationship with God?
4. If God already knows what we need before we ask Him, then why pray (v. 8)?
5. What is the purpose of prayer? How does this passage help us understand prayer better?

→ *Apply: Let's explore where the text intersects with our lives and our world.*

1. How does reading the Lord's prayer help shape your understanding of prayer?
  - Which parts of it do you think you do well? Where do you want to grow?
2. In your own life, are you eager or hesitant to pray? How come?
  - How might you use the structure of the Lord's prayer to guide your prayers?
  - Are there any specific parts of it that resonate with you?

*You have the chance to write a prayer using the Lord's prayer as a guide.  
After, we'll quickly debrief that experience before closing in prayer.*