

# The Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-15)

## A Small Group Outline



### 1. Praise *(Purpose: To worship God)*

- What are you thankful for this week? *(let the group's secretary write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Song Service
  - Sing a few songs of praise to God

### 2. Pray *(Purpose: To carry each others' burdens and to seek the Lord)*

- What challenges did you have this week? *(write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Go into a season of prayer

### 3. Review *(Purpose: To learn accountability)*

- Tell us how it went with what you promised to do in last week's meeting? *(e.g. Who did your share your faith with this past week? Who did you minister to? How did actioning your I WILL STATEMENT go?)*
- *Where people have failed to fulfil what they said they would, do not be harsh with them but gently encourage them to try again in the coming week. Give them more support by phoning or joining them in the week.*

### 4. Give *(Purpose: To be good stewards of our monies)*

- This is the time to return tithes and offerings. If done electronically, kindly ensure that you get the bank account details of your local church from your treasurer. Don't forget to complete an envelope and to send the breakdown to him/her.

### 5. Discover *(Purpose: To learn to listen to God, and be obedient to His Word)*

#### • **Notes for the facilitator**

- Read *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessings (MB)*, pp. 102-122
- "Prayer is beyond question the highest activity of the human soul. Man is at his greatest and highest when upon his knees he comes face to face with God" (David Lloyd-Jones)
- The Lord's prayer is divided into 7 petitions: The first 3 deal with God and His glory, the last 4 with human needs and necessities
- "[Jesus'] days were passed in ministry to the crowds that pressed upon Him, and in unveiling the treacherous sophistry of the rabbis, and this incessant labor often left Him so utterly wearied that His mother and brothers, and even His disciples, had feared that His life would be sacrificed. But as He returned from the hours of prayer that closed the toilsome day, they marked the look of peace upon His face, the sense of refreshment that seemed to pervade His presence. It was from hours spent with God that He came forth, morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men" (MB 102)
- Vs 9: Our Father – This concept of God's as a loving Father is only found in Scripture (see MB 74). It speaks of a caring God, who sympathises with our needs and burdens. If we all have a common father, then we are brothers and sisters in Christ.
  - "But if you call God your Father you acknowledge yourselves His children, to be guided by His wisdom and to be obedient in all things.... You will accept His plan for your life. As children of God, you will hold His honor, His character, His family, His work, as the objects of your highest interest" (MB 105).
- Vs 9: We hallow God's Name this by: worshipping Him as the only true God, using His name with respect and reverence (i.e not treating it lightly), and representing Him in life and character

- Vs 10: Your kingdom come: That is, “Help me to extend your kingdom of grace through my lifestyle, and active sharing of the gospel, and in so doing hasten your kingdom of glory.”
- Vs 10: Your will be done ... in heaven: God’s will is found in the Bible and more specifically in His law. This prayer is effected when we are willing to surrender to God’s plan for our lives, and obey it as it is obeyed in heaven (angels do God’s will **swiftly** and with **great joy**). This prayer is also a petition that the reign of evil may end and that God’s heavenly kingdom be established.
- Vs 11: Give us this day our daily bread: After making God first (in vss 9-10) we can have confidence that our own needs may be supplied. God does not supply all our needs at once, he provides our DAILY bread. This makes us constantly dependent and reliant on Him. We also don’t have to worry about tomorrow’s bread – God already has made provision for that.
  - Here are some promises that God will supply our need: Ps. 37:19, 25; Isa. 33:16; Matt. 6:25-27; Rom. 8:32
  - “When we pray for daily bread, we are praying at the same time for money, jobs, government, business, labour, good crops, good weather, roads, justice, and for everything economic, political and social.” (FD Bruner)
  - By asking God to give US our daily bread, we don’t only think of ourselves but of others. We ask so that we can also feed others as well.
  - Our daily bread implies that we are willing to work hard in order to secure a daily living. We work together with heaven, and don’t expect God to drop bread in our laps.
  - This petition is not only for physical food, but for Jesus, the Bread of Life, who nourishes our souls for eternal life. We feed on Him by receiving Him into our lives, and spending time in His Word.
- Vs 12: Forgive us our sins as we forgive... : We only receive forgiveness *as* we forgive. An unforgiving person cuts off God’s channel of mercy
  - When God forgives us, it is not merely a judicial act of wiping sins away. “It is not only forgiveness **for** sin, but reclaiming **from** sin” (MB 114).
  - We don’t really know God’s love if we are unwilling to forgive others (see Matt. 18:21-35)
  - If we have sinned, and feel ashamed to come to God, we should come anyway. Our forgiveness is not based on our own works but on Christ’s righteousness, made available to us as a gift.
  - We should not withhold forgiveness until those who have injured us come and ask for forgiveness. Rather, we should have a spirit of compassion and forgiveness toward those who have hurt us, whether or not they confess their faults (see MB 113-114)
  - Keys to forgiveness (*George Knight, Walking with Jesus on the Mount of Blessing*):
    1. **Understand.** People often do things for good reasons. When we take time to discover their reasons, it is easier to forgive
    2. **Learn to forget.** Don’t nurse feelings of resentment and anger. We need to ask God to flush out our memories
    3. **Love.** True forgiveness is rooted in love. We need to love people as Jesus loved them, no matter how they treat us.
    4. **A need for a daily picture of the cross.** We need to see that Jesus forgave and died for us as sinners, and ask God to help us to be just as forgiving to others.

- Vs 13: Lead us not into temptation: God does not tempt us to sin (James 1:13), Satan does.
  - This petition can be summarised as follows: “Help us that while going through temptation, we will not get to the place where our hearts are drawn away from You.” This implies that we will surrender completely to God’s guidance in our lives.
  - This phrase is a promise that if we commit ourselves to God, He will not let us “be tempted beyond what we can bear” (1 Cor. 10:13)
  - God will never abandon the soul that is weighed down by temptation and sin. Mighty angels are enlisted to help and strengthen such needy ones.
  - This verse is also a call to put on the whole armour of God in order to stand against the devil’s schemes (Eph. 6:10-17)
- Vs 13: Deliver us from evil. It appears that the word in this verse is a reference to moral wrong. It is thus a request to stay firm to principle and to remain obedient, even amid trial. The best protection from sin is to remain close to Jesus.
- Vs 13: Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever: This sentence is like the first one of the Lord’s prayer. It’s like a sandwich that starts and ends with God. The Clear Word puts it as follows: “For the kingdom, the power and glory are yours forever. Amen”.
  - The power and glory belong to God whose purposes will progress unhindered toward their end. Our Saviour is still in charge of the universe and is directing it toward its glorious climax.
- *Read Matt. 6:9-15. Preferably let one person read it. Let everyone then put down their Bibles and get the group to reconstruct the passage in their own words. This teaches the group to be careful in quotation Scripture correctly and to use it as the basis of their discussions.*
- **Discussion Questions** (use only a few). *The notes in italics after some of the questions below are for the facilitator, and not to be read out to the group.*
  - What does the phrase, ‘our Father’ communicate to you? How does it make you feel? What pictures does it bring to mind? In what ways is God like a father? (*ask one question at a time*)
  - Notice the use of the terms “your Father” (vs 8) and “our Father” (vs 9). How is God both personal and corporate?
  - In what way do you think the Lord’s prayer is not only a model for praying, but also for living?
  - How do you think we can hallow [make holy, honour] God’s name?
  - When we pray ‘Your kingdom come’ what do you think we are actually saying?
  - In your understanding, how is God’s will done in heaven among the angels?
  - Why do you think God gives us daily bread, and not monthly or yearly bread?
  - Why do you think Jesus said ‘give **us** this day our daily bread,’ and not give **me** my daily bread?
  - Why do you think God’s forgiveness of OUR debts [sins] is linked to our forgiving of OTHERS’ debts?
  - How can we learn to be more forgiving to others?
  - In your understanding, what does the phrase ‘Lead us not into temptation’ mean?
  - Why do you think the Lord’s prayer starts and ends the same way, almost like a sandwich?
- **Application Questions** (*select a few depending on your time. One has to be the I WILL STATEMENT*)
  - Which part of the Lord’s prayer speaks to you most powerfully? Why?

- How do you think you execute God's will and instructions in your life? Is it generally done cheerfully and swiftly, or do you tend to do it complainingly and slowly – or somewhere in between? Explain?
- Share how God provides your daily bread, how He provides the food on your table (even though some of you may be unemployed)?
- Are you a forgiving person? Is there someone you need to forgive today/this week?
- What steps can you take to avoid tempting situations (that may come to you through friends, places you go to, things you experience)?
- I WILL STATEMENT: Formulate an I will statement in response to what you have discovered in the Word. Let the group's secretary also record these in an A4 notebook. Ensure that everyone gets a chance to give their I WILL STATEMENT. You have to be specific. E.g. "I will discuss with my spouse the monthly putting aside of a portion of our salaries to assist those in need, as I was struck by the words 'give US this day OUR daily bread', implying that we should ask not only for ourselves, but also to share with others."

**6. Share** (*Purpose: To be witnesses of our faith*)

- Do you have anyone you could share today's lesson with this week? *Be specific.*

**7. Closing prayer**

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