

The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:5–15

MPSeries Jesus teaches Christ-followers to pray as the source of all life with God, for intimacy, peace and power.

SERIES INTRO

Today I begin a study of the Lord's Prayer.

LP's "to PRAY" campaign was a powerful season for LifePoint, but we have not yet seen the full extent of all God has been doing among us. Now is the time for what we learned of prayer to take hold of our lives and live by it every day.

Over the next weeks we will walk through the Lord's Prayer phrase-by-phrase to deepen our practice of daily, practical prayer that changes our lives, and impacts the world by God's power. I want us to strive toward what I believe to be Jesus' aim in His teaching, to make our prayers real & relational, divinely powerful, spiritually personal & practical, daily & continual, redemptive for our lives & impactful in the world.

Jesus teaches Christ-followers to pray as the source of all life with God, for intimacy, peace and power.

Matthew 6:5-15

5"And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6But when 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.

7"And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. 9Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

10Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

11Give us this day our daily bread,

12and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil

14For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Relationship

Matt 6:9

MPS True Christian prayer is sourced from our relationship with God as Father and our identity as His children.

OBJ Every Christian should learn to pray from relationship with God through Jesus Christ because of two purposes.

TRANS Today, we begin by making prayer real and personal.

READ Matt 6:9 "Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name'".

"Pray then like this"

Matthew begins his record of Jesus teaching us to pray with these words, "Pray then like this". Luke's gospel records that Jesus' teaching came as a response to the disciples' request to teach them how to pray. With this in mind, it is imperative for us to understand that the Lord's Prayer is not a "script" for only a single prayer to pray. "Pray then like this" means that Jesus is teaching us a pattern for all our prayers and praying.



TRANS It is to this “pattern of prayer” that I direct our attention and focus for each phrase over the next few weeks.

“Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy Name” is not some mantra for entrance to God. There is nothing we can do OR say to get to God. We only get to God because of and through His work for us by Jesus Christ. That work had not yet been completed when Jesus first taught this pattern for praying. But now that it is, we understand all that this phrase means for us. In Jesus Christ, we are reconciled to God ^{2Cor5:18}, and made His children. ^{1John3:1-2} This new relationship with God now defines and redefines the whole of our existence; we understand that we are created for Him and redeemed to live with Him. [Relationship with God through Jesus Christ determines the way we know and relate to God because we are now known by God as His.](#)

Christian prayer is NOT like many common forms of worldly communication. It's not like **testing for a grade**, straining to recall all the right things to say and do, so to score high in the grader's sight. Christian prayer is NOT like **resume writing**, capturing your accolades and achievements to sell yourself and gain favor in the process. Christian prayer is not like **grant writing**, aligning your qualifications to try and compel the reader to understand the importance of your purpose. [Prayer is NEVER trying to get to God, trying to be heard by Him or trying to get Him to care about what we are saying!](#)

The One you pray to, Christian, God the Father knows you. We are His, Christian, WITH Him in Jesus Christ, and He WITH us. Paul describes salvation as a relationship by writing, “*But now that you have come to know God, ...to be known by God*” ^{Gal4:9} [Exercise your faith in God's grace through Jesus Christ that saved you to be the security of your access and the sustaining strength of your life in prayer.](#)

True Christian prayer is sourced from our relationship with God as Father and our identity as His children.

OBJ I want us to consider **THREE Purposes** for why all Christian prayers should flow from relationship with God.

1. **Relationship determines access: it declares WHO we trust to get us to God.**

Approaching God as “Our Father” that Jesus teaches is radically new.¹ Yes, there was an understanding of God as Father in the Old Testament, but not a close familiarity that allowed them to approach Him in this way. [Jesus radically reorients relationship with God so that we now approach Him as our perfect, loving Heavenly Father.](#)

Prayer, the way we talk to our Father, is always an expression of our identity. When we know that our life is “hidden with God in Christ” (Col 3:3), we relate differently to God. He is no less God, Creator and Origin of all, but He is now our Father because we have been made children of God (1 John 3:1) and co-heirs with Christ. (Rom 8:17)

READ 1 John 3:1-2a

[See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.](#)

[Beloved, we are God's children now, 1 John 3:1a, 2a](#)

READ Romans 8:16-17

[The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. Rom 8:16-17a](#)

Now – I know many people who did not have a good relationship with the earthly father can struggle with their understanding of God in this way. I want to encourage you, though. Please do not allow the Evil One to steal this great blessing from you, of knowing God as your perfect, loving heavenly Father. God can heal and redeem all things and He does not desire any earthly wound or hurt to hinder your relationship with Him. Look to Jesus and trust what He models for us. Every posture, alignment and aspect of relationship that Jesus takes toward God on earth now becomes our new normal model in how we have access to approach and relate to God through Jesus. [Jesus models how we relate to God as Father.](#)

¹ D. A. Carson, “[Matthew](#),” in The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 169. “Carson writes, “The fatherhood of God is not a central theme in the OT.”



And HIS WE are. “*Our*” reminds us that God is not just mine individually, but ours corporately. This refers to all those in our local church that we immediately identify with. But we also identify with the church universal that spans all dividing lines of this world and every age. This reminds us, we are God’s people, brothers and sisters together in Christ Jesus. Every time we pray, we should hold this identity in our remembrance, that what we entertain to practice in our praying involves the whole of our identity. [Christian, you may be living in a quasi-isolation under a “stay-at-home” order, but you are never alone in Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ, we are together in Him by Holy Spirit.](#)

Relationship determines access! Relationship with God through Jesus Christ means we have access to God, the One who perfectly and completely knows and cares for us!

2. Relationship engages divine power: it declares that God is on Heaven’s throne.

In addressing God, we recognize that He is our Father “*in heaven*”. Relationship grants us access, but the One with whom we have access, though familiar, is altogether distinct! [Relationship grants us access with the One who knows and cares for us, and who holds divine power for us!](#)

“*Our Father in Heaven*” declares two simultaneous attributes of God. God is immanent means that God dwells with us, now, among us and for us because of the closest of relationship to us. Yet, this attribute is married to the truth that God is also transcendent, which means that He is completely other than us, beyond us, incomprehensibly bigger and greater and altogether more glorious than us. This opening address that Jesus teaches is not simply to state God’s qualifications correctly, but to align our lives, to fill our hearts and frame our minds with Who it is we are communing.² He directs us to fill our heart and mind with WHO God is, to anchor our prayers in the praise of God, His being, nature and character to prepare our hearts and posture our live for all He desires to do in and through us.³ [Prayer brings us into the very presence of the God of all creation on His heavenly throne, to appeal to His power for all things in this world.](#)

This new way to approach God changes the way we approach everything else. “*Our Father in heaven*” reminds us that no matter how good things may be or how bad they may get, HE is still God, He is still in control, He is still on His throne! IF and when you forget or neglect this, anything that follows will not matter because it will only serve to destroy you, either to be overcome by the situation or to be deceived and led away by false promises and ideologies. IF we can’t turn to and trust God in these times, why bother talking about His love and power when we don’t feel our need as strongly. [God awaits to show Himself more powerful, more beautiful, more magnificent, more overwhelmingly glorious in every way in response to every need, as altogether willing and able.](#)

Christian – do not waste time wallowing in questing God. Confidently make your requests known to Him, your loving heavenly Father, who waits to act in power for glory!

Relationship engages God’s power for us! Relationship with God engages His power that changes everything for us, and for the way we see everything!

3. Relationship exalts God’s glory: it declares that He alone is worthy.

“*hallowed be thy Name*” declares a comprehensive praise for all God’s character and attributes. God is altogether glorious, holy and righteous, perfect in being, nature, character, attribute and every expression. There is no word, no number nor culmination of words that capture the whole of God’s worthiness of hallowedness. [God is glorious without measure and end.](#)

² D. A. Carson, “[Matthew](#),” in The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 169.” Carson notes John Stott’s comments, “The entire formula is less concerned with the proper protocol in approaching Deity than with the truth of who he is, to establish within the believer the right frame of mind (Stott, p. 146).”

³ John R. W. Stott and John R. W. Stott, [The Message of the Sermon on the Mount \(Matthew 5-7\): Christian Counter-Culture](#), The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 146. Stott notes, “It is always wise, before we pray, to spend time deliberately recalling who he is. Only then shall we come to our loving Father in heaven with appropriate humility, devotion and confidence.”



Praise fills the heart and mind with His glory. The more His glory and power fill you, the more He becomes the immediate response to your every care and concern. When our prayers begin with our worries and concerns, they cast a shadow of speculation and doubt on God, His care to answer us and His ability to do anything about our request. Praise for His Name sets our life under the authority and rule of God. His glory becomes our one priority, His power our first confidence, His will our only hope, and His work our guiding stay. **Praise orients our lives so that we not only know that God is with us, but that He is filling and consuming, working in us. Relationship exalts God's glory over us!**

TRANS Prayer is not a benign exercise. Jesus teaches us to pray from our relationship with God because we have access to Him, to His power and to the glory of His praise to consume our lives.

True Christian prayer is sourced from our relationship with God as Father and our identity as His children.

APPL I want to close with two applications today.

First, never under-estimate the potency of praise to God for your life, for your heart and mind. God designed praise to ignite in us a divine power that is closer and more real to us than any reality in this world!

Don't try to fake it. All are concerned, and some really scared. But Christians don't let fear rule or drive us. I do not say this to condemn, but to encourage and strengthen you. When fear and anxiety threaten, face it in the only way it can be conquered, by facing it with faith in Jesus. **Apply your faith where your fear tempts and tests. Set the reality of Jesus over the lie and deception of fear in you.**

Parents – do not under-estimate the value of nor wait for your children to learn the bigness of God at some “later time” in life. Talk to them now at all times and teach them NOW how great, majestic and gloriously powerful, beautiful, holy and good God is. Children may not be able to tie their shoes or understand simple mathematical equations, but a child is never too young to begin to learn the inconceivably majestic magnitude of the glory of God. He created us to know him. From our earliest day we have the capacity to seat His truth deep within our souls. And the earlier we begin and the deeper they are anchored, the more established our life will be in the goodness and grace in the truth and the love and the mystery and wonder of God. Often – children, because their minds and heart are not yet cluttered by life, comprehend the grand and majestic truths of God deeply far more than we think they can. Take time to wonder and glory in the majesty, the beauty and power of God today! Help your kids see it, feel it and taste it, so they will come to know it for themselves. Stoke the imagination of your children to linger in this wonder. Ask them **“Why is that attribute of God so great to you?”** I urge – build that foundation of their life on His character and attributes NOW! Get in the habit of talking to them about how ALL things point to His glory! (Deut 6:4-5f) It may just be, mom and dad, that as you hear yourself telling your kids what they “need” to know about God, you too will come to learn how much you need Him and to believe, to trust in Him right now in these times. They will predominantly learn this NOT only from what you say, but how you live in the midst of this season.

THIS WEEK

- Pay attention to the posture of your heart as you begin to pray.
- Remember: You are HIS! He awaits you to come! His power stands ready for your every need, care and concern.

