

Lord, Teach Us to Pray

OPENING PRAYER:

Let our church, our family, our ministry, our hopes, our dreams, our desires be a part of what you are blessing. (adapted from Henry Blackaby) Share a prayer you learned from childhood? What's the funniest prayer you've ever heard?

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:

Read Luke 11:1-13.

- What does Jesus pray for in this prayer? What does Jesus' prayer teach you?
- What does the parable teach you about prayer?
- What should be the relationship between Jesus' prayer and your own? How will this change your prayer life?
- Compare and contrast the different versions of the Lord's Prayer. Also look at the context of the two gospels, what happens before and after? What does this teach you about prayer?
 - Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4
 - Ancient Christian Text (The Didache) - "Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, as in Heaven so also upon earth; give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into trial, but deliver us from the Evil One, for thine is the power and the glory forever."

Practicing Prayer – Break down the Lord's prayer by phrase and spend time on each section.

- **Our Father in heaven** – Take this moment to think about the names of God and what they mean to you. Ask him to reveal himself to you more and more. What names of God strike you the most?
- **Hallowed be your name** – Take this moment to meditate on the holiness of God. What does it mean for God to be holy? What does it mean to revere God?
- **Your kingdom come** – Take this moment to think about what God's kingdom should be like. What would it look like for God's kingdom to be here in this community? Ask God to reveal to you how you can advance his kingdom.
- **Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven** – Think about submitting to God's will. Where will you surrender and struggle to trust God.
- **Give us today our daily bread** – Pray for your daily needs – physical and spiritual. This is a prayer to trust for just enough.
- **And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.** – Recognize places where you have strayed – confess and ask for forgiveness. Where are you holding a grudge? Spend time praying for this person and asking for forgiveness.
- **And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.** – What leads you astray. Ask God to guide you away from temptation.
- **For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.** – Finish by praising God.

NEXT STEPS:

- How will your life be different based upon what you have learned?
- Recite the Lord's Prayer as a 'warm up' to your prayers.
- Pray the Lord's Prayer, thinking about the meaning of each petition. Ask yourself the following questions: What am I asking God to do? What am I or should I be offering of myself? What petitions are the hardest for me to really pray and why? What do I need to rethink, redo or repent because of this prayer? Is there anything else I should pray for?
- Use the lines of the Lord's Prayer as a topic for a prayer journal. Keep notes under each petition each day.
- Use the Lord's Prayer as a model for your own prayers.
- Pray the Lord's Prayer when your mind rebels while trying to pray.
- Use the Lord's Prayer as a rallying point for your family devotions. Your kids can learn it by saying it with you.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Lord, I really don't want to turn my life over to you. I want to do my will and not yours. That's who I am but that is not who I am content to be. Please help me to want your Spirit within me. (David Head)