

Pray Like Jesus | Our Father | Discussion Guide - *Matthew 6:9-13*

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The disciples once asked Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray." The council that He offered has come to be called *The Lord's Prayer*.

Matthew 6:9-13 NLT *Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. 10 May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today the food we need, 12 and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. 13 And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.*

It is interesting that the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. Perhaps, they witnessed Jesus' prayer life and somehow understood that God's power flowed in Jesus because of it.

We also need to learn to pray. We certainly need to connect with our God, but we also need to experience God working in our lives.

First, Jesus tells us to pray to God as our Father, and that we should recognize His Holiness. Most translations use the phrase, "Hallowed be your name", but *The Passion Translation* has a very interesting take on it.

Matthew 6:9 (Passion) *Pray like this: 'Our Father, dwelling in the heavenly realms, may the glory of your name be the center on which our lives turn.*

The translator here uses the word "name" as his basis. Here are the footnotes, "*The Aramaic word for "name" is shema (the Hebrew word, shem), a word with multiple meanings. It can also be translated "light," "sound," or "atmosphere." Placing a light, like a lantern, in an enclosed space magnifies that light. This is the meaning here of God's name being made sacred and magnified as we focus our lives on him. The Greek is "treated as holy."* (*The Passion Translation Notes, Brian Simmons*)

God is holy and He behaves in a way that is holy. If we are to enter into prayer, we must begin with a focus and the revelation of who God really is.

God Is Father

Romans 8:14-15 NLT *For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. 15 So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father."*

God has brought us into his family. What does that mean? The world from which the Bible comes to us recognized that a father gave identity, vocation and authority his children. Your Heavenly Father has called us by name, commissioned us, and given us the authority to accomplish the things he has sent us to do. So, when we pray we're not just talking to God, complaining or even praising, we are reporting to headquarters.

God IS Good

Psalms 119:68 NLT *You are good and do only good;*

Goodness could be a term of simple utility. For example, God said that everything He created was good. But goodness also references character. God has a character that is good. But, there is another aspect of goodness that can only be used in reference to God. *He is absolutely good.* Humans may be temporarily good, or relatively good, but they will never be absolutely good. Only, God is absolutely good.

James 1:17 NLT *Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.*

God is Good because of His *providence*. God uses the things of the natural world to meet our needs. God is Good because He *communicates* with us. God communicates with us in so many beautiful ways. The Bible tells us, "*The universe declares the glory of God*". We could easily look around to see that God is communicating to us through the Universe and also through his Word. The existence of our Bible is a wonderful and miraculous gift.

But, the majesty of His goodness is displayed in His plan of redemption. Mankind fell away from God. And, even though He was not morally obligated, he chose to redeem us by the sacrifice of His Son. If we simply turn from our sins and declare Jesus as the Lord of our lives, we will live forever in communion with God. This goodness could change everything for us..

Romans 2:4 NLT *Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?*

God Is Faithful

God is always and forever faithful, and not one of His promises will fail. These truths should lead us into praise, worship and thankfulness. When we pray, this is the God we call upon.

We tend to get distracted as we live our lives. Often when we come together, we spend more time talking about our distractions in life. But, prayer is about focus. If our prayers will honor and understand that our God is Holy, that He is our Father, and that He is Good and Faithful, we will be much more deeply connect with Him. Such a prayer life would likely change our conversations from a review of our distractions to a desire for His Glory!

Discussion:

- How would you describe your prayer life? In what ways is it strong or weak?
- What does it mean that God is "Our Father"? What are your feelings about God as Father?
- What does it look like for you to grow in relating to God as Father—not just God or Creator?
- How would you put the phrase "Hallowed be your name" into your own words? What are your thoughts regarding the two additional translations mentioned above?
- How has God been faithful in your life?
- How might we intentionally discuss our relationship with God among other believers?
- Did anything stand out in your reading today that you could share with someone else?