

The Lord's Prayer

Introduction:

Saint Paul encouraged the church in Colossae and us to be “devoted to prayer.” Prayer is an essential practice for a Christian. What is prayer? As we study Jesus’ teaching, we learn that prayer is simply talking with God. Not that we inform God of our needs; He already knows them (see verse 8). Not that we can magically influence God (see verse 7). Rather, it is a time when we speak to God as our dear father.

Jesus’ teaching on prayer happens in the middle of the Sermon on the Mount. His words guide us to understand that prayer should be directed to God and not for show. However, verse 6 should be understood as hyperbole. Jesus’ use of “our, us, and we” in his prayer clearly indicates that Christians can pray together.

Jesus wanted us to pray with familiarity to God. The words, “Father” and “debts” in the original texts tell us Jesus taught his disciples to pray in Aramaic rather than Hebrew. Aramaic was the language his students spoke every day; Hebrew was the official language of the synagogue liturgy.

Pay close attention to the petitions in the Lord’s Prayer as you study, so that your prayer life may be enriched as Jesus taught. Finally, the early church instructed followers of Jesus to pray this prayer three times per day. That’s good practice for us to continue to follow.

Read Your Bible

- Colossians 4:2-3
- Matthew 6:5-15

Apply God’s Word to Your Life:

1. How and when do you pray?
2. Describe the prayers of the hypocrites and then the pagans.
3. Who taught you, and when did you learn the Lord's Prayer?
4. Do you pray verses 9 and 10 as a wish or as a bold statement?
5. What do you think Jesus means by "daily bread?"
6. How do verses 12, 14 and 15 challenge you in demonstrating forgiveness?
7. How have you experienced God's deliverance from evil?

Reflecting on the text:

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen