

40 Days OF PRAYER

SESSION TWO

Why Pray When You Can Worry

OPENING

Do you pray in the same way you would talk to a friend? Why or why not?

MEMORY VERSE

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.* Matthew 6:9-13

BIBLE STUDY

Before teaching His disciples how to pray, Jesus clears up some misconceptions that were common to the way prayer was being practiced at that time.

Read Matthew 6:5-6

1. How was prayer being misused in this example?

2. How does the prayer that Jesus taught contrast with this type of praying?

3. Jesus teaches us to go into our “closet” and “shut the door,” why would this be important?

4. Most of us live life in fast-forward, we’re driving kids here and there, always going at work, involved in this or that activity. We may need to be creative about what our “closet” will be. As we go forward in the 40 Days of Prayer, what will you use as your prayer closet and what time of day will you use it?

Read Matthew 6:7-8

“Babbling like the pagans”

Pagans were people who did not believe in God but believed in any number of false idols. These people, in their prayers, would name off a long list of every God they could think of hoping that they would stumble on one who would answer their prayer.

5. What modern misconceptions about prayer compare to the type of prayer Jesus warns against?
 6. In what ways does Jesus' prayer contrast with this type of prayer?
- Read the Lord's Prayer**
- "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name."**

To "hallow" God's name is to acknowledge that God is holy. The holiness of God refers to two aspects of who God is. First, it refers to God being the Wholly Other. Holiness is what distinguishes God totally and completely from everything else. Second, holiness refers to God's absolute purity.
7. What is the value of starting our prayers like Jesus does?
 8. When we grasp the holiness of God, how will it change our life? How will it change our prayers?
 9. Compare the Lord's Prayer with your own prayers. Which parts of the Lord's Prayer do you usually include in your own prayers? Which parts do you usually leave out?
 10. What does it mean to pray "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven?" What is Jesus teaching us about the purpose for prayer by including this sentence?
 11. Why does Jesus put the focus on *daily* bread? See Proverbs 30:7-9 and Matthew 6:25-34 for additional guidance on why the emphasis is on daily.
 12. How strong are you at confessing *specific* sins without offering excuses? Why is this important enough for Jesus to include?
 13. How well do you do at forgiving others? Read Matthew 6:14. Why is forgiveness an important part of prayer?
 14. Read 1Peter 5:8 and Ephesians 6:16-20 then read Mark 14:37-42 & 50. After reading these scripture passages, what is the role of prayer in spiritual warfare? How aware are you of

Practice

In the Daily Devotional Guide, you are encouraged to use the “4 C's” to reflect on the scripture passage each day. From your study in this session, share your answer to any one of the “4 C's”

- What can you CELEBRATE?
- What will you COMMIT to?
- What do you need to CONFESS?
- What will you COMMUNICATE to someone else?

PRAYER

Since this is the 40 Days of Prayer obviously prayer will be an important part of what we will do during our small group time.

For prayer today, you will be doing a prayer exercise where you will be “praying scriptures” while following the pattern of the Lord’s Prayer. Your leader will give instructions and guide you. As you use God’s Word to inspire your words this will become a wonderful time of prayer.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being. *Revelation 4:11*

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

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. *Proverbs 3:5-6*

Give us today our daily bread.

Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God. *Proverbs 30:8-9*

Forgive us our debts,

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. *1 John 1:9*

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. *Matthew 6:14-15*

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. *1 Corinthians 10:13*



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