

OPEN

This week our discipleship groups begin talking about prayer! What does prayer mean to you? Do you find prayer to be fulfilling? Challenging? Maybe both?

STUDY

For the last several weeks we've been thinking about the vital spiritual practice of interacting with our Bibles. We talked about hearing, reading, memorizing and meditating upon the Scriptures. This week we begin thinking about another key practice in our apprenticeship under Jesus: prayer. A great place to start thinking about prayer is found in Matthew 6:9-13. Here we find what is known as the Lord's prayer, which Jesus provided as a template for well-rounded prayers. Read through Jesus' model of prayer and then work through these questions:

- 1) Who is the prayer offered to? What does it mean to refer to God as our Father? How is the Father described in verse 9?
- 2) What is the first request made in the prayer? What is the meaning of this request? Why do you think it comes before all the other petitions?

- 3) What is the request of verse 11? What types of things does God love to provide us with? Do we ever pray for things that are more wants than needs? Are we satisfied with what God has provided for us?

- 4) Verse 12 dares to venture into the well-being of our relationships. Why would Jesus infuse the topic of forgiveness into the practice of prayer? How does having fractured relationships impact our prayer life?

- 5) What is the final topic of Jesus' blueprint for prayer (verse 13)? Why would this be important to pray about? How does undealt with sin affect our prayer life?

APPLY

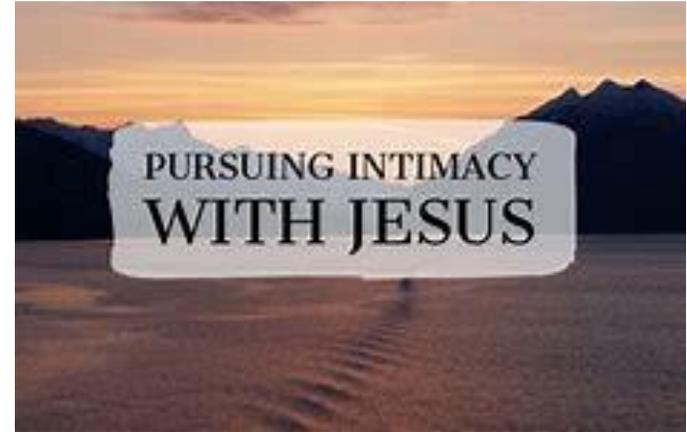
- What makes the Lord's prayer such a good example of a well-rounded prayer?

- The assumption from verse 9 is that God is a good father. Offer some reasons we can approach God with joy, peace and confidence.

- Think back upon the last month. What types of prayers did you offer to God? Were those prayers missing any of the components of the Lord's prayer?

- Get out your calendar or journal and set a time and place to pray that is quiet and distraction-free. For most, the mornings are a good time. But you might prefer an afternoon walk or evening.

- Set a modest goal. Daily is ideal, but if that's too much, shoot for three times a week, for 10-15 minutes, or something that feels a little challenging, yet doable.



MESSAGE GUIDE

February 23rd, 2020
Pastor Kurt Staeuble