



teach us to
pray

‘This, then, is how you should pray:

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.
And 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 -

TEACH US TO PRAY

One day, when Jesus was praying, his disciples asked him, “Lord, teach us to pray”. Not because they were ignorant of prayer, for Israel had a long tradition of faithful prayer that was core to their identity.

Prayer, simply put, is talking with God. It is communication. Jesus' disciples knew this, and they themselves prayed three times a day, as many faithful Jews did. From the beginning, God showed that he desires fellowship and communication with his people (Gen 3:8). And if the creator of the universe wants to communicate, we shouldn't be silent in return!

In this series, we'll consider what prayer is, why we pray, and how we pray. We will also look at the Lord's Prayer. Although the disciples had learned to pray from childhood, they recognised that there was something unique about the way Jesus prayed. So they asked him to teach them. Jesus gave them a prayer that is both simple and profound.

Of course, prayer can be difficult and can at times seem fruitless, especially when our world and our situations don't get better. But the Lord's Prayer helps us shift our priority back to where it always should be: to God our Father. As we shift the focus of our prayer to the living, creating, and all-redeeming God, we will be changed. Because the purpose of prayer has always been to grow our trust in Him.

As we learn about prayer together, my prayer is that this becomes an opportunity for us to deepen our trust in the living God, who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine (Eph 3:20).

Amen.

In Christ,
Rev'd Matt Skelton
Stanthorpe Anglican Church



why should we pray?

Warming up:

Who do you spend most of your time talking to at the moment? How would you describe your relationship with this person?

Read: Matthew 7:7-12

1. Who is speaking in this passage? Who is their audience?
2. How would you summarise vv. 7-8 in your own words?
3. The verbs in this passage are in 'present active' tense (i.e. keep asking, keep seeking). How should this inform our attitude to prayer?
4. What stops you from praying with passionate persistence?
5. Does this passage teach us that we should expect to get everything we pray for?
6. What do these verses teach us about prayer?
7. How would you summarise vv. 9-12 in your own words?
8. Does this passage accuse us of being evil? Why/why not?
9. What are some 'good gifts' that God has given you?
10. Why is it important to understand that God is our Father?
11. What kind of love does the Father have for his children?
12. Are you a child of God?
13. What does the goodness of God's character tell us about prayers that aren't answered the way we would like them to be answered?
14. What role does v.12 play in the teaching of the passage as a whole?
15. If a friend were to ask: "why should I pray?" How would you answer?

Rubber hits the road:

What's a prayer that you've given up on, that Jesus' words here can encourage you to persist in?

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

Loving Heavenly Father, thank you that you are a good Father, whose nature is always to give good gifts. Thank you for the gift of prayer.

Help me to nurture and treasure this gift in the coming year.

Holy Spirit, please grow and deepen my prayer life. May the passion and persistence of Jesus mark the way I pray. Amen.



how can we pray?

Warming up:

Do you ever feel that your prayers go unheard? If so, what makes you feel that way?

Read: Hebrews 10:11-18

1. What is the contrast that is made between the work of the priests and the work of Christ?
2. Where is Christ in relation to the Father? Could the priests go there?
3. What does the sacrifice of Jesus mean for those who are in Him by faith?
4. If our sins are 'remembered no more', how does that change the way we pray? Should we still confess our sins? Why/why not?
5. What has prayer got to do with God writing His law in our hearts and minds? (See: Romans 8)

Read: Hebrews 10:19-22

1. What does the sacrifice of Jesus give us confidence to do?
2. What do you think stops us from praying with this confidence?
3. If Jesus opens the way to God, how then can we pray?
4. What does it mean to pray *through* Christ (in Jesus' name) rather than merely to God?
5. What is the Trinitarian shape of prayer? (See again: Romans 8)

Rubber hits the road:

Consider how Jesus makes prayer possible by opening the way through his death, resurrection, and ascension. When we pray, we talk directly to God through Jesus. How does this change the way we pray? Does this challenge a transactional or ritualistic approach to prayer?

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

Holy God,

We thank you that through the sacrificial death of Jesus we now have full access to you. Help us never to take this for granted. Help us to have confidence to approach you with everything. Remind us always that your presence is with us by your Holy Spirit.

Amen.



anglican prayer

Warming up:

Think about your last church service. What are the prayers we use? What do they teach us?

Read: APBA pg. 168 and Psalm 51

1. What is the Prayer of Preparation all about?
2. What are the similarities between this prayer and Psalm 51?
3. What does this prayer teach us?

Read: APBA pp. 174-175 and John 3:16-21

1. What is the purpose of the exhortations? (See also APBA pg.108) Why should we examine ourselves before confession?
2. Consider the Prayer of Confession. Why must we confess our sins to God?
3. Consider the Absolution. Why is this important for us to hear?
4. The verses after the Absolution were called the 'comfortable words' by Thomas Cranmer in the BCP. What makes them comforting?

Read: APBA pp. 176-177 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

1. Consider the words of the Great Thanksgiving. This is a prayer, not an incantation. What does that distinction mean for our worship?
2. What is the request of the Great Thanksgiving?
3. What does this prayer say about sacrifice? What is our sacrifice? (Hint: see pg.179).

Rubber hits the road:

The next time you are in a church service, consider what you have learned. The Holy Communion service is all about what God has done for us, not what we do for God. Our place in the service is to respond with repentance, humility and faith.

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

Gracious God,

We thank you for the gift of our wise forebears who crafted this service. We thank you that in it we are constantly reminded of the great gift of grace given to us in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Help us, every time we come to worship you together, to respond to your grace with repentance, humility, and faith. Amen.



our Father in heaven

Warming up:

What names do you regularly use when you address God in prayer?

Read: Matthew 6:9-13

1. How does Jesus instruct us to address God in prayer? What name does he tell us to use?
2. Why do you think Jesus uses 'Our Father' rather than 'My Father'? What does this suggest about community?
3. The Jewish worldview of heaven was one in which the heavens were layered; around us, above us, and the unseen spiritual realm. In the original Greek, Jesus uses the plural 'heavens' – emphasising that God is both high above and around us at the same time. Why is it significant that God our Father reigns over every visible and invisible realm?
4. 'Hallowed' means to be/make sacred, holy and set apart. What do you think it means for God's name to be hallowed?
5. Although we know the nearness of God as our Father, why is it important that his name also be 'hallowed'?

Read: Ezekiel 36:22-28

1. For whose sake is God restoring his people? Why is he doing this?
2. What is God wanting to show in v. 23? What does this mean?
3. Why is God concerned about being 'proved holy' before the nations?
4. What work does God do and what does he promise in vv. 24-28?
5. How does this add meaning to the first line of the Lord's Prayer?

Rubber hits the road:

In the Lord's Prayer, we are invited to approach God both in confidence and reverence. How can you pray with both of these things in mind this week? What is one practical way you could live, speak, or pray this week so that God's character is made visible to others through you?

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

God our Father, thank you that we can come to you with confidence, knowing you are near and that you love us. Help us never to forget that your name is holy and set apart. Shape our prayers, our words, and our lives so that they honour you. This week, may the way we live point others to who you are, that your name would be hallowed on earth as it is in heaven. We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.



your kingdom come

Warming up:

If you could be the Queen or King of any country in the world, which would you choose and why?

Read: Matthew 6:9-13

1. What does Jesus urge his disciples to pray about 'kingdom'?
2. What do you think of when you think of a kingdom?
3. What sort of kingdom is Jesus referring to in the Lord's Prayer?
4. Who is the king of this kingdom?
5. What do you think this kingdom is like?
6. Read v. 9 in a couple of different Bible translations (you may need to use your phone for this). How do the versions compare?
7. Why do you think Jesus urges his disciples to pray 'Your kingdom come'?
8. How should v. 9 inform our prayer lives today?

Read: Isaiah 52:7-10

1. Who is sharing this prophecy? What do you know about them?
2. Where is Zion? Why is this place significant?
3. What does it mean to have 'beautiful feet' in v.7?
4. How do vv. 8-9 make you feel? What does this tell us about God?
5. Who is 'the Salvation of our God' in v.10? What does this tell us about what we're praying when we pray 'your kingdom come'?
6. How can you have 'beautiful feet' in the world today?

Rubber hits the road:

How regularly do you pray the Lord's Prayer? This week try praying the Lord's Prayer one more time than you would pray it. As you pray, pause and spend time thinking about God's Kingdom and the glory that await us in Christ.

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

Father in Heaven, we glorify your name. May your Kingdom come into our world and take away all the sadness, suffering, and sin. Holy Spirit, please fill our suburbs, towns, cities, and nation with your goodness and grace. Lord, please give us beautiful feet, and grant us opportunities to share your gospel of salvation and coming Kingdom with our family, friends, and neighbours. Amen.



forgive us our sins

Warming up:

Have you ever refused to forgive someone? Have you ever had someone refuse to forgive you?

Read: Matthew 6:9-15

1. What does it mean to forgive someone?
2. How can we call God, Father? How is our forgiveness won?
3. What does forgiveness have to do with the coming of God's kingdom?
4. The original versions of the Lord's Prayer say "Forgive us our debts". In what way does sin create debt?
5. Our culture has adopted the ethos "if it feels good, do it, as long as it doesn't hurt anybody." How does this compare to the way the Bible portrays our need for forgiveness from God and each other?
6. Has anyone ever hurt you, but wouldn't admit their guilt? Have you done the same to someone else? How does verses 14-15 address that?
7. What is the cost of refusing to forgive sins? What does it say to God when we refuse to forgive sins?
8. Does forgiving the sins of other people mean that we sweep things under the rug? Did God sweep our sins under the rug, or did He deal with them in a special way?

Read Colossians 3:12-17

1. Is forgiveness of sins just an individual thing between us and God?
2. How should the forgiveness of sins change the way we live together as God's Church?

Rubber hits the road:

Consider what sins you have not offered to God. Ask for forgiveness. Ask your neighbours for forgiveness. Then forgive in return.

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

Gracious God,

We thank and praise you for the forgiveness of our sins, won for us on the cross through the death of Jesus. Help us to never take this forgiveness for granted. Remind us of your grace always, and strengthen us by your Holy Spirit to live as forgiven people who freely forgive in return. Amen.



deliver us from evil

Warming up:

What is a time when you faced your hardest choice as a follower of Jesus? What happened?

Read: Matthew 6:9-13

1. What does the Bible have to say about the presence of evil in the world?
2. Read the first line of the prayer. Is evil in control? Does evil have equal and opposite power to God?
3. Testing, temptation and trial are the words often used in translations of verse 13. What does that tell you about what Jesus is teaching us?
4. What are the ways that we face trials as Christians?
5. What does the first request (lead us not into temptation) have to do with the second request?
6. Has Jesus delivered us from evil? Why do we keep asking for this?

Read: James 1:1-15

1. How does James, the brother of Jesus, believe we should respond to trials (same Greek word here!)?
2. What does temptation do for us according to James?
3. What does James mean by doubt here?
4. If God does not tempt anyone according to verse 13, why do we ask not to be tempted?
5. How does James make sense of this seeming contradiction in verses 14-15?

Rubber hits the road:

Consider what it means to ask: Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one? How can we follow this prayer up with faithful action in our lives?

Notes / Prayer points / etc.

Prayer

Almighty God,

We praise you for your victory over all evil in the death and resurrection of Jesus. We look forward to the day when all evil will submit under the feet of Jesus our Lord. Hasten the day of his return. Send your Holy Spirit among us, that we might stand firm in the face of trials and temptations, and that we might stand together to receive Jesus on his return. Amen.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

- Philippians 4:6 -



HOLY SPIRIT
ALGESTER



HOLY TRINITY
KAWANA



GLADSTONE
ANGLICAN CHURCH



stanthorpe
ANGLICAN CHURCH