

Summer With Jesus Week 5

God Time – How to Pray

These scriptures are selected to help you gain a deeper understanding of who Jesus is. They are intentionally designed for you to engage in your time alone with God. You will find them complementary to the teachings on the weekend (gatherings) and to the LIFE Group materials.

Some tips:

Use a Bible that is easy to read. The ESV or The NLT are both good translations.

Use a prayer journal. After you read the passages jot down what “jumped out” at you while reading. Then take a few minutes to write a prayer response to what you have read.

There are only five days of reading provided so if you miss a day, you have time to catch up. Do not get legalistic! If you miss a day or even a week...God still loves you!

Monday: Luke 11:1-4

Tuesday: Acts 13:2-3

Wednesday: James 5:13-16

Thursday: Romans 8:26-27

Friday: Luke 11:9-10

Diving Deeper

The Summer of Jesus – How to Pray Matthew 6:5-8

1. As we transition from Chapter 5 to Chapter 6, what is Jesus teaching us? What is the big picture?

Jesus is teaching on the side of a mountain near Galilee. He is in the middle of a sermon to set the record straight on the Kingdom and righteousness. Chapter 5 taught us the proper biblical view of obtaining

the Kingdom, that is, being righteous enough to enter Heaven. And now in Chapter 6, Jesus is explaining the correct way to live in the Kingdom. He summarizes the theme of Chapter 6, neatly in verse 1 – “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them, otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in Heaven.” So, Jesus’ concern is that we live out the righteousness we received by faith in the proper way, so we may receive a full reward in the Kingdom. We live out righteousness as a testimony to a lost and dying world. But we must be careful not to do so in the hope of receiving the praises of that lost and dying world. Instead, we should practice righteousness to please the Lord alone. And Jesus said He will take note of our good works done with the proper heart and reward us in the Kingdom.

The issue for God is the state of our heart. What is our heart’s attitude as we conduct ourselves in these four areas of spiritual life? We can go through the motions for appearance-sake, and perhaps we will receive praise from people who observe us and think we are so pious and holy. But God knows our heart and will not reward a false heart.

2. Understanding the context, look at Matthew 6:5-8 and discuss what Jesus is saying about prayer?

Jesus says that when we pray, there is a right way and a wrong way to pray. But first, take a moment to notice the preposition Jesus uses in verse 7. He doesn’t say if you pray; He says when you pray. He is turning His focus on the heart of the one praying. Are we praying merely to impress other people, or are we praying to communicate with our Father in Heaven? One way is wrong and gains nothing from God, while the other way is correct and gives opportunity to hear from God. Jesus says the wrong way to pray invariably involves using meaningless repetition of words. Do not recite the same words over and over again. That is not prayer at all. It’s a chant. Jesus dismisses such tactics as praying the way Gentiles pray, which was not proper. Jesus says that the use of meaningless repetition in place of true prayer is the mark of unbelief.

Prayer is, by definition, a form of communication with God, a conversation that we initiate with the Creator of the Universe. It’s a conversation that comes from the heart based on faith in Jesus Christ. The message is the thoughts of our heart. Jesus acts as our intercessor, and for those who

have no faith in Christ, they do not have an intercessor before the Father. They know about God, but they do not know God. As a result, because they have no faith, God does not even hear the prayers of unbelievers. They are without wisdom and understanding, trying to find a God they do not know. As a consequence, they hope to use repetition of words in order to impress God with their efforts. But Jesus says that God is not impressed with their chanting. So, Jesus is warning us not to pray that way. He wants us to establish a relationship with Him built on faith in Jesus Christ. Then and only then will our prayers be effective and connect with God.

3. Look at the Lord's Prayer in your Bible—Matthew 6.9ff. What do we learn about prayer?

Our Father which art in heaven means we're praying to our father who is in heaven. We start the prayer out this way, so we know that we're praying to God our father and we're not alone. God likes it when we call him father and he wants us to talk to him like we talk to our own father. God is our loving father, and we are his special children.

Hallowed be thy name is next and it means holy is your name. Even though God wants us to call him our father, he is still God. It's sometimes really hard to understand who God is and what he's like. How did he make us? How is he perfect and never makes mistakes? God just wants us to remember that we need to treat him super special because he is God and when we pray to him, we need to be respectful.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. If we think about where God lives, we know it's pretty great. The Bible says that in heaven there will be no more crying, God will live with us, and there will be no hunger or hurt there.

This part of the prayer says let your kingdom come. Let your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. This means we are praying that people would live in peace and love with one another the way it is in heaven. It reminds us that we should be living the way God wants us to everyday.

Give us this day our daily bread means give us today all that we need. Keep in mind that these are things that we can't live without. We don't need video games and princess dolls those are the things that we want, we need food, water, and shelter.

Even though we pray for things we need, that doesn't mean we'll get them. There are still people with no food in many parts of the world but that doesn't mean we stop praying for these things. When we ask God for things that means we trust Him, and we'll leave the decision to God.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. This next part of the prayer is asking for forgiveness for our mistakes. Forgiveness means that we are sorry for something we've done, and we don't want to do it anymore. But we also need to forgive people who have done wrong to us. Sometimes others hurt us very badly, so we need to ask God to help us forgive them because it's really hard or we don't want to. If we forgive others, God will forgive us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Is it sometimes tempting to do something you're not supposed to? This part of the prayer is really neat because it asks God to help us to know the right thing to do. To protect us against the evil that is in the world and keep us away from it. http://www.dltk-bible.com/cv/lords_prayer.htm

4. What is the significance of the word “name” in this part of the prayer?

God's name is only fully hallowed when he is worshiped for ordering all things for his people's ultimate good (cf. Romans 8:28), and also for the truth and trustworthiness of his written Word, which every believer should prize as “a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105). “You have exalted above all things your name and your word,” says the psalmist (138:2, margin), and so responsively must we. God's name—meaning, God himself—is dishonored if his children live in fear, as if their Father had lost control of his world, or in uncertainty, as if they dare not follow their Elder Brother's example and receive the teaching and promises of the Bible as instruction from the Father himself. There is, unhappily, widespread failure today to hallow God's name in these ways. — J. I. Packer, *Praying the Lord's Prayer* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 44.

5. In another place we are taught to pray in the name of Jesus. What does it mean to pray in the name of Jesus?

Prayer is the privilege of communication between a child and the Father. It's not a human right. Not a nonnegotiable demand. It's a privilege—a privilege made possible only by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. We have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh. (Heb. 10:19–20) We should never go into the presence of God without remembering that we enter by virtue of His death on the cross, His Resurrection from the grave, and His ascension into heaven.

That's why we pray "in Jesus' name." Those words mean something. They are not the equivalent of a stamp on a letter that guarantees delivery just because we happen to put it there. Our postage was paid at a demanding price before there was ever a "Dear God" at the top. We may not say the words "in Jesus' name" till the end of our prayer but praying in His name should be the attitude of our heart from the beginning.

Yet there's even more to it than that. Jesus is not merely the doorkeeper. He is not an usher who points down the hallway and tells us it's OK to go in and see the Father—though that would be unbelievable enough. The Bible says that He actually goes in with us, praying for us: He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (Heb. 7:25) — [**The Prayer of Jesus: The Promise and Power of Living in the Lord's Prayer**](#) by Ken Hemphill