

**Lord, Teach Us to Pray CE Class**  
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**Lesson 1**

**What Is Prayer: An Introduction to Learning to Pray the Lord's Prayer**

**1. Some Preliminaries**

**a. Purpose of the Class**

- To enlarge, not only our view of prayer, but our own prayer lives by listening to and learning from the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray, i.e. 'The Lord's Prayer.' This class is meant to serve as meditation on the Lord's Prayer with goal being to we, the people of God, are learning to mimic Jesus' own prayer life.

**b. Outline of the Class**

- **February 14** – What is Prayer: An Introduction to Learning to Prayer the Lord's Prayer
- **February 21** – Hallowed Be Thy Name
- **February 28** – Thy Kingdom Come
- **March 7** – Thy Will Be Done
- **March 14** – Give Us Our Daily Bread
- **March 21** – Forgive Us as We Forgive
- **March 28** – Lead Us Not Into Temptation, but Deliver Us From Evil

- 2. Objective:** To consider, albeit briefly, the nature of prayer and the background or context that lead Jesus to give his disciples what has been traditionally known as the Lord's Prayer. Once this is done we will consider how the Lord's Prayer serves as a lens into the very heart of Jesus' identity and mission, an identity and mission that we now share as result of our belonging to him.

**3. What Is Prayer?**

**a. Prayer is Second Order Speech, i.e. It is always secondary to God's Word**

- Creation and God's Word
- Psalm 27. 8 – *You have said, 'Seek my face.' My heart says to you, 'Your face, LORD, do I seek.'*

Prayer is dialogue, not man's monologue before God...Prayer is a conversation in which God's word has initiative and we, for the moment, can be nothing more than listeners (Hans Urs Von Balthasar. *Prayer*, p. 14-15)

**b. Prayer is the pursuit of the life, light and love of God**

**4. Background of the Lord's Prayer**

**a. Introductory Remarks to Prayer in the Sermon on the Mount ('And when you pray...')**

*Matt.6.5-8*

- Don't pray to be seen others...pray in secret before the one who sees and gives (vv.5-6)
- Don't rely on your many words in prayer...rely upon your Father who knows and cares (vv.7-8)

**b. Jesus' Own Prayer Life and His Disciples' Question (*Now Jesus was praying...one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray..."*) Luke 11.1**

- In light of Jesus' prayer life the disciples realized that their prayer life lacked **depth, intimacy, direction, purpose, confidence and staying power**
- This is the only time the disciple's ask Jesus to **teach** them something

**5. The Prayer**

**a. Traditional Version**

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 debts,  
As we forgive our debtors.  
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.

**b. More Modern Version**

Our Father in Heaven,  
May your name be honored,  
May your Kingdom come,  
May your will be done  
As in heaven, so here upon earth.  
Give us the bread we need now.  
And forgive us the debts we owe to you,  
As we have forgiven the debts owed to us.  
And do not lead us in temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.

**6. The Lord's Prayer: A Lens Through Which to Understand Jesus and His Vocation**

When Jesus gave his disciples this prayer, he was giving them part of his own breath, his own life, his own prayer. The prayer is actually a distillation of his own sense of vocation, his own understanding of his Father's purposes. If we are truly to enter into it and make it our own, it can only be if we first understand how he set about living the Kingdom himself (N.T. Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*, p. 2)

**a. Jesus' Identity and Mission – The Son of God**

- In a unique sense, i.e. Divine (John 1.1-18; Col. 1.15-20)
- As the Messiah, the representative King of Israel (Matt. 3.13-17)
  - ✓ The Freedom Bringer

*Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn Son, and I say to you, "Let my people go that they may serve me"' (Ex. 4.22)*

*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son (Hos. 11.1)*

*And on the third moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt... (the LORD God said), you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex. 19.1,6)*

*Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing (Gen 12.1-2)*

- ✓ The Saving King, David's Greater Son

*I will be a father to him, and he shall be to me a son (2 Sam. 7.14)*

- ✓ The Apprentice Son

*Truly, truly I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing... For as the*

*Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to all whom he will (John 5.19)*

- New Exodus and the Kingdom of God (Col. 1.13-14)
- b. Our Identity and Mission – Addressing God as our Father**
- God’s declaration of Jesus is now his declaration of us by grace through faith (I John 3.1)
  - We are now his Freedom-people (Rom. 8.14-17)
  - We are now his Kingdom-people (Col. 1.13-14)
  - We are now is apprentice children (John 20.21)
- 7. Practical Uses of the Lord’s Prayer**
- a. A Framework for Daily Prayer**
  - b. One Clause a Day Prayer**