
Lesson Overview

Biblical Passage Matthew 6:9-13

Supporting Passage Luke 11:1-4

Memory Verse Matthew 6:9-13

Biblical Truth The Lord's model prayer is an example we can use when communicating with God.

Context One day, the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. In response, Jesus gave them a model prayer to guide them in communicating with God.

Learning Goals • Students will identify the elements found in the Lord's prayer.
• Students will create a prayer based on the elements found in the Lord's prayer.

Prayer Suggestions As you prepare to teach this lesson, pray for those in your group.
• Pray that students will identify the elements found in the Lord's prayer.
• Pray that students will base their prayer life on the elements found in the Lord's prayer.
• Pray that your students will develop a consistent lifestyle of prayer.

Biblical Commentary

Investigation

This passage, commonly known as the "Lord's Prayer," is also recorded in Luke 11. Both Matthew and Luke report that Jesus used the prayer as a time of teaching. Luke placed this account shortly after Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan. This prayer emphasizes important elements of prayer: praise to God for who He is, thanks to Him for what He has done, confession of sin, requests for daily personal needs, and requests on behalf of others.

Importance

This passage teaches that **God Is**. Because **God Is**, He is worthy of our worship and our desire to live in relationship with Him. Just as Jesus addressed God as Father, those who accept Jesus as God's Son are given the privilege of addressing God as Father. As we spend time communicating with God each day, we are better equipped to join Him in His work on earth, increasing His Kingdom and glorifying Him. Because **God Is**, He knows that we struggle with our sinful nature and Satan's temptations. When we ask, He graciously provides the strength we need to resist those influences that would draw us away from Him.

This passage also demonstrates that **People are God's Treasure**.

Interpretation

Matthew 6:9 In Matthew 6:7, Jesus warned against endless babble in prayer. Some thought repetition or using a certain formula would make a person's prayers more pleasing to God or earn a better response to the prayer. Jesus introduced the prayer by saying, "This, then, is how you should pray." Jesus was not prescribing the specific words to use to speak to God. These exact words do not contain special power or influence with God. In that case, a better understanding of Jesus' direction is: "Pray in this way." Jesus gave His followers a pattern for their prayers. Reciting the words of the model prayer is not wrong, but our prayers should include the elements Jesus mentioned whenever we pray.

Jewish prayer tended to use various titles for God, such as Divine Sovereign. No Old Testament Jew ever used "our Father" as a direct address to God. Jesus, however, focused His prayer on the relationship with God and began His teaching on prayer by giving insight into God's nature. He taught His disciples to address God as Father. The Aramaic word for Father (*Abba*) is not a formal term but a highly personal word, full of warmth and affection, similar to our word *Daddy*. Jesus maintained a reverence and awe for His Father, however, by stating that He is "in heaven." This reference affirms God's sovereignty and majesty. His children can also take refuge in His ability to hear all prayers and be present at all times.

Throughout this model prayer, Jesus used the pronoun "our", which points to the connection of all believers in the family of God. Note that whenever Jesus talked about sin in verses 14 and 15, He used "your sin" because He himself was sinless.

Jesus taught us to desire the "hallowed" nature of God's holy name. The word hallowed carries the idea of being holy or different in a positive way—far better than anything we know or can imagine. The verb used here in the original language is actually in the form of a command, one that usually demands an action from someone. When used with God, the command form employs the idea of a request or plea for action. Therefore, this phrase requests that God reveal Himself so that all the earth will acknowledge who He is and glorify Him as holy God and loving Father.

The other verbs in this prayer are also in this same command form: requesting that God bring His Kingdom and complete His will; requesting that He give us daily bread; pleading for forgiveness of our debts; and asking Him to deliver us from temptation.

Matthew 6:10 Jesus also taught His disciples to pray for the coming of God's Kingdom. This Kingdom refers to God's rule throughout the earth and His authority over every person. The coming of God's Kingdom was a common element in Jesus' teaching (Lk. 4:43, Acts 1:3). There is a sense in which God's Kingdom is past, present, and future. It was inaugurated with the coming of the King (Jesus) during His time on earth. It continues to come as people accept His reign over their lives when they confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. His Kingdom will come in all its fullness at the end of time, after the final judgment, when God has done away with all His enemies and rules over a new heaven and a new earth (2 Pet. 3:13, Rev. 21:1).

Praying for God's will to be done on earth indicates that the one who prays strives to be surrounded by God's holiness and His Kingdom. At that point, one can pray for God's will to be accomplished on earth because he or she is willing to do God's will as He has revealed it in His Word. The phrase "as it is in heaven" shows that God's Kingdom is complete and His will is already fully accomplished in heaven. One day this will be true of earth as well.

Matthew 6:11 The final portion of Jesus' prayer focused on our personal needs. First, Jesus referred to basic, physical needs. "Bread" is a general reference to having our necessary **daily** physical needs met. To pray for "our daily bread" is to acknowledge that God provides for physical needs and cares for the physical bodies of humanity because of His love. By instructing His disciples to ask for their needs daily, Jesus teaches that they were not to worry about the future but to depend upon God each moment.

Matthew 6:12 Second, Jesus demonstrated our need to ask for God's grace by forgiving "our **debts**". In Luke 11:2-4, the idea of this debt is recorded as "sin." The word **forgive** carries the idea of canceling a debt that one owes. God requires death as payment for sin, and this debt can only be forgiven or cancelled by God as a result of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. To pray for God's forgiveness of our sins is an acknowledgement that we can do nothing to get rid of our sin. Only by God's grace can we be forgiven and cleansed of the sin that makes everyone offensive to our holy God.

Asking God to forgive our sins assumes that we have already forgiven those who have sinned against us ("our debtors"). Jesus' parable about the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18:21-35 is a reminder that God expects us to give forgiveness in the same way in which we have received it. Likewise, Jesus' words at the end of the model prayer (Mt. 6:14-15) emphasize that we who have been forgiven must also be forgiving.

Matthew 6:13 The word translated as "temptation" can be used in a negative sense of something that entices a person to sin. It can also be used in a positive sense about something that tests a person in order to try his or her

faithfulness (in which case it could be translated as "trial" or "test"). The Bible is clear that God does not tempt people in the negative sense (Jas. 1:13), yet He does allow His children to be tested (Job 1:8, 1:12).

In Jesus' model prayer, the word probably refers to temptation to sin. A better understanding of the word lead would be the plea for God to help us flee from succumbing to temptation. Here, the petition is that God would keep us from being enticed by temptation and falling prey to it. Because believers are prone to sin, we can easily give in to it if God doesn't protect us from such evil.

This temptation that leads to destruction comes from "the evil one," that is, the devil. Jesus taught His disciples to pray that God would "deliver" them from the tempter. The word deliver can mean "spare," "preserve," or "save." Jesus was most likely teaching His disciples to pray that God would rescue them from Satan's clutches.

The last part of the model prayer is a doxology that is not in the oldest and best scriptural manuscripts. Still, it provides a fitting conclusion to the prayer, for it focuses on God and His "kingdom... power and... glory." Though Satan is called the "prince of this world" (Jn. 12:31, 16:11) and "holds the power of death" (Heb. 2:14), this world belongs to God. He alone is omnipotent. He alone is worthy of honor and glory. One day God the Father will destroy Satan and all those who follow him, and God alone will reign "forever" over His Kingdom without anyone to oppose Him.

Implications

Just as our relationships with family and friends can fall into a rut when we don't dedicate the time, energy, and intimate conversation necessary to nurture them, our relationship with our heavenly Father will suffer if we fail to maintain an ongoing dialogue in prayer. Because **God Is**, all those who have been adopted into His family are given intimate access to Him through prayer. If we will focus on the elements Jesus included in the model prayer that He taught His disciples, our prayer lives will be richer and our relationship with our Father will be stronger.

Through prayer, God will reveal to us how we can hallow His name, helping to spread the reputation of His faithfulness throughout the earth. Through prayer, God will show us how we can be involved in the mission of building up His Kingdom. Through prayer, God will reveal His will, not only for our individual lives, but also for the church. Through prayer, we can confess our neediness to God: our reliance on Him for our physical needs and our desperate need for forgiveness. Through prayer, we can draw on God's strength to overcome temptation. We will grow spiritually and the church will advance as we call out to our Father and respond to Him in prayer.

Teaching Plan

Connect

Review Questions

(5–8 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will answer five review questions from the previous lesson.

Print one copy of the “Review Questions” activity sheet for your use.

After greeting students, use the review questions to test what they can recall from the previous lesson as well as to provide context for today’s lesson.

Master Teacher Option: Power of Prayer

(10 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will discuss a quote from Corrie ten Boom about the importance of prayer.

Provide a dry erase board and marker.

Write the following quote from Corrie ten Boom on the dry erase board: ***“Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?”***

Invite students to compare and contrast the purpose and importance of the steering wheel and the spare tire when it comes to the daily operation of a vehicle. Instruct students to break up into groups of three or four. Lead groups to discuss the following questions:

- **Would you rather depend on the steering wheel or the spare tire? Why?**
- **When is prayer similar to the steering wheel of a car?**
- **When is prayer similar to the spare tire of a car?**
- **Which role does prayer play in your life?**

Bring students back together to share what they discussed. Conclude by saying: **Jesus stressed the importance of prayer when He taught His disciples to pray.**

Explore

Master Teacher Key Study: Learning to Pray

(15-20 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will study Matthew 6:9-13 to identify the elements found in the Lord's prayer.

Print one copy of the Master Teacher Key Study for your use. Provide a copy of the Student Worksheet and a pen for each student.

Learning Goal: Students will identify the elements found in the Lord's prayer.

Pass out pens and copies of the Student Worksheet. Then, use the Master Teacher Key Study to teach Matthew 6:9-13.

Transform

Deeper Discussion

(10 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will discuss how elements found in the Lord's Prayer can help them develop their prayer life and relationship with God.

Learning Goal: Students will create a prayer based on the elements found in the Lord's prayer.

Invite students to read Matthew 6:9-13 aloud together. Then, use these questions to lead students to discuss how the elements found in the Lord's Prayer can help them develop their prayer life and relationship with God:

- **What aspects from your relationship with your earthly father help you better relate to your heavenly Father in prayer?**
- **How can the Lord's model prayer help us to rise above a self-centered style of praying?**
- **Describe a time when your desires changed because you prayed for God's will to be done.**
- **How has prayer enabled you to forgive someone or avoid temptation?**
- **If someone asked you to teach him or her to pray, how would you respond?**

Point out that it can be easy to get so caught up with everything going on in our lives that our prayers become self-focused. Note that when we have a test, are stressed, feel overwhelmed, or are just too busy, it can be difficult to remember to worship God and be thankful for the blessings in our lives. Lead students in prayer asking God to help students spend quality time with God, especially when they feel overwhelmed.

Master Teacher Option: Missing Elements

(10 minutes, easy set-up)

Students will discuss which elements of the Lord's model prayer are currently missing from their prayer

lives.

Provide a dry erase board, marker, paper and pens.

Learning Goal: Students will create a prayer based on the elements found in the Lord's prayer.

Lead students in listing on the dry erase board the elements of the Lord's model prayer. (*Hallowing God's name, the coming of God's Kingdom, God's will being accomplished, provision of daily bread, forgiveness, and strength to overcome temptation.*) Pass out paper and pens to each student or instruct them to use the back of their worksheets. Encourage students to consider their own prayer life and acknowledge elements of Jesus' model of prayer that are missing.

Instruct students to list ways they can deepen their prayer lives. After a few moments, allow students to share their ideas, encouraging students to add to their lists suggestions from other students they haven't thought of.

Instruct students to silently pray the prayers they wrote earlier. Allow a minute or so for students to pray, and then conclude by praying that students would desire to deepen their prayer life, which would deepen their relationship with God.

Take Home Activity

Family Devotion

(10-15 minutes at home, easy set-up)

Distribute copies of the Family Devotion to students and encourage them to share the devotion with their family.

A copy of the Family Devotion will be included in your lesson PDF download.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

(5-8 minutes, easy set-up)

*Use these questions to review the content from Lesson 25: "The Good Samaritan"
The correct answer for each question is printed in bold, italic font.*

1. Jesus told the Parable of the Good Samaritan in response to what question?
 - a. What must I do to inherit eternal life?
 - b. Which Laws are most important?
 - c. *Who is my neighbor?***
 - d. What is the greatest Law?

2. Who asked the questions leading to the Parable of the Good Samaritan?
 - a. Earl
 - b. *An expert in the Law***
 - c. Peter
 - d. Nicodemus

3. Where was the man who was traveling from Jerusalem robbed in Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan?
 - a. At a Super Bowl party
 - b. Nazareth
 - c. *Jericho***
 - d. Antioch

4. Who passed by the beaten man in Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan?
 - a. Another Jew
 - b. *A priest and a Levite***
 - c. A Pharisee and a Sadducee
 - d. Caesar

5. What was Jesus' point in telling the Parable of the Good Samaritan?
 - a. Don't hate Samaritans
 - b. Be careful of robbers on the road to Jericho
 - c. Don't leave people to die on the road.
 - d. *Those who are in need are your neighbors.***

LEARNING TO PRAY

(15-20 minutes, easy set-up)

Use this outline and any of the corresponding activities to share the Biblical Truth with students.

Introduction: During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught His disciples how to communicate with God through prayer. The Lord's Prayer, as our passage from Matthew is commonly called, is well known throughout the world, even among those who don't profess a relationship with Christ. Because this prayer is so familiar, we have a tendency to speak the words without thinking about their meaning. Jesus taught that such vain repetition does not honor God.

1. When we pray, we acknowledge our relationship with God (Matthew 6:9).

Biblical Background: Jesus taught His disciples that even though the Father is transcendent, He is also approachable and expects them to communicate with Him in prayer. Jesus taught His disciples to pray in a way that esteemed the Father's name (v. 9). Jesus taught His disciples that because God Is, those who come to Him through faith in Jesus Christ are adopted into His family and can rightly call Him their Father.

Illustration: Think about the way children are taught to pray. Often, they're taught part of the prayer that begins, "God is great, God is good." Those words, while used with children, resonate with a deep understanding of who God Is: He is the one sovereign (great) God who created the world and who provides everything we need to sustain life (good). The catch is helping children understand that praying to God is so much more than memorizing a few words.

Application: Just as our relationships with family and friends can fall into a rut when we don't dedicate the time, energy, and intimate conversation necessary to nurture them, our relationship with our heavenly Father will suffer if we fail to maintain an ongoing dialogue in prayer.

2. When we pray, we express a desire that God would be glorified (Matthew 6:10).

Biblical Background: Jesus taught His disciples to embrace the priorities of the Kingdom of God. Jesus taught His disciples to carry out the will of God in the world (v. 10).

Illustration: John Piper defined what it means to glorify God: "'Glorifying' means feeling and thinking and acting in ways that reflect his greatness, that make much of God, that give evidence of the supreme greatness of all his attributes and the all-satisfying beauty of his manifold perfections."

Application: Through prayer, God will reveal to us how we can hallow His name, helping to spread the reputation of His faithfulness throughout the earth. Through prayer, God will show us how we can be involved in the mission of building up His Kingdom.

3. When we pray, we express our physical and spiritual needs (Matthew 6:11-13).

Biblical Background: Jesus taught His disciples to rely on the Father to supply their daily physical needs (v. 11). Jesus taught His disciples to ask the Father for forgiveness of their sins and to extend forgiveness

to others who have sinned against them (v. 12). Jesus taught His disciples to seek the Father's help in overcoming temptation (v. 13).

Illustration: In the *Christ* journal, C. Gene Wilkes observed: "Only one request in the [Lord's] prayer is about physical things, and it is limited by daily amounts. All the other requests deal with the spiritual realm and our relationship with God as His children."

Application: Through prayer, we can confess our neediness to God: our reliance on Him for our physical needs and our desperate need for forgiveness. Through prayer, we can draw on God's strength to overcome temptation. We will grow spiritually and the church will advance as we call out to our Father and respond to Him in prayer.

Conclusion: Studying the Lord's Prayer should prompt us to evaluate our prayer lives. Do we simply treat our heavenly Father like Santa Claus, presenting Him with a list of our wants? Or do we pray with God's will in mind, seeking His glory in the world and our lives? As we pray, we would be wise to follow Jesus' model, approaching our Father with the honor He deserves and seeking first and foremost His Kingdom and His righteousness.

LESSON 26

LEARNING TO PRAY

Biblical Passage: Matthew 6:9-13

Memory Verse: Matthew 6:9-13

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."

1. When we pray, we acknowledge our _____ with God (Matthew 6:9).
2. When we pray, we express a desire that God would be _____ (Matthew 6:10).
3. When we pray, we express our _____ and _____ needs (Matthew 6:11-13).

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What aspects from your relationship with your earthly father help you better relate to your heavenly Father in prayer?
- How can the Lord's model prayer help us to rise above a self-centered style of praying?
- Describe a time when your desires changed because you prayed for God's will to be done.
- How has prayer enabled you to forgive someone or avoid temptation?
- If someone asked you to teach him or her to pray, how would you respond?

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Using the Lord's Prayer as a template, write your own prayer.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT . . .

"First, *Thy* name, *Thy* kingdom, *Thy* will; then, give *us*, forgive *us*, lead *us*, deliver *us*. The lesson is of more importance than we think. In true worship the Father must be first, must be all."—*Andrew Murray*

LESSON 26

LEARNING TO PRAY

CHRISTOS
STUDENT EDITION

Biblical Passage: Matthew 6:9-13

Maybe it's not a stretch to think that if many people today have difficulty praying, especially out loud, then so did Jesus' disciples. Maybe this is because the disciples felt like they had such a high standard to meet in praying like the religious leaders of their day. Your children and teens may feel the same when they hear pastors, deacons, or adult leaders and teachers pray in church.

Read Matthew 6:9–13. In the context of His teachings on the Kingdom of God, Jesus wanted His disciples to know how to speak to the Father. It's important to realize that the Kingdom teachings were all about the things that were important and a part of the heavenly realm of God. That means that Jesus had to reprogram the thinking of men and women in His day. He wanted them to understand how to live in a right relationship with the Father—on His terms, not the world's terms.

The way we help our children understand how to live in a right relationship with God is for them to see us living that kind of right relationship. Sure, we make mistakes, and our kids need to see us acknowledge those mistakes and confess them to the Lord, asking for forgiveness. When they see us on our knees before God in prayer, they will know our hearts and learn to know His heart. Jesus not only gave His disciples a model prayer, He lived that model in front of them in the way He related to His Father. He taught us to do the same. We, in turn, have the privilege of teaching our children.

CONNECTION QUESTIONS:

- When you think about all the toy cars and trains you've played with, how are the toy models like the real thing? How are they unlike the real thing?
- Why did Jesus intend for the prayer to be a model prayer and not a prayer that we recite each time we talk with God? What are some important things Jesus taught us to keep in mind as we pray to God?
- What is Jesus looking for in prayer? How will your prayers change because you understand Jesus' model for prayer?