

ULC Sermon Study Resource

Teach Us to Pray: How to Pray

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Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: When was the first time you heard the Lord's Prayer?

Reading: Matthew 6:5-15

Outline:

- I. Our Posture (v5-8)
 - a. The common theme between both negative examples of prayer in the text is pride.
 - b. We have nothing to offer God, but grace invites a posture of humility for prayer.
Q: *What was wrong with the way the Pharisees and Gentiles were praying?*
- II. Our Content (v9-13)
 - a. Jesus' teaching on prayer says that the central way we address God is as a father.
 - b. We are to pray to God as a child makes requests of their father, appealing to Him according to the promises He has made.
Q: *What does Jesus' teaching to pray to a "Father" reveal about the relationship God desires with us?*
- III. Our Lives (v14-15)
 - a. Jesus invites us to extend the same forgiveness we ask for to others.
 - b. We learn to forgive when we encounter the immense depth of God's grace toward us.
Q: *Why does Jesus insist on us forgiving those who have wronged us?*

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) Have you ever felt you weren't "good enough" at prayer or didn't know how to do it "right"?
- 2) Which petition of the Lord's Prayer resonates the most with you when you pray it?
- 3) What promises do you ask God to be faithful to?
- 4) Do you struggle to forgive others? What makes it so difficult?
- 5) Where have you encountered the depth of God's grace toward you?

Suggestions for further study:

- Deuteronomy 7:1-11 **Q: *How is God's faithfulness on display in this passage?***
- Psalm 103:1-14 **Q: *What words of this passage could be used in prayer, appealing to God's nature and promises?***
- Matthew 18:21-35 **Q: *Have you ever acted like the unforgiving servant?***

Closing Prayer: *"Gracious God, we come to you solely because of your mercy. We come to you recognizing there's nothing we can ever offer you to have you hear our words. So Lord, we humbly ask to have you hear our prayers; that for the sake of your son Jesus you would hear us, that we would learn from you and from your Word how to pray rightly. Lord, as we pray and call upon you as our kind and merciful Father, work in us by the power of your Spirit to show mercy, extend forgiveness, give and be generous as you have. Lord, make us into a people that reflect to the world the kind of God you are in both our prayers and in our lives. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen."*