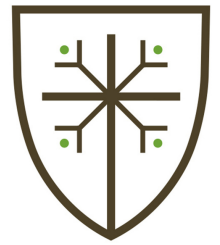


# SERMON NOTES



## The Lord's Prayer *Fall Sermon Series*

September 17, 2023

### SERMON INFO

#### TITLE

Beginning to Pray

#### PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

#### TEXTS

Isaiah 63:15-16; 64:1, 5, 8-9

Galatians 4:3-9

Matthew 6:5-13

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some common ways in which we seek to use God for our own purposes instead of seeking his presence?
2. How does the language of adoption and Tim's explanation of it help us to feel secure in our relationship with God as our Father?

### SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Tim continued our sermon series on The Lord's Prayer. Last week we talked about how not to pray and this week, we shifted to looking at how to begin to pray.

#### The First Words

The very first words of the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father" are the essence of what it means to be a Christian. It is significant that these words aren't "Lord and Master" or "Ruler of the Universe." They are personal and relational. The way Jesus talks about prayer in the first few verses – how not to pray – treat God as transactional. We pray to him to get something in return. We seek to use God. But the way Jesus teaches us to begin prayer is different. Because he knows that physically, psychologically, theologically, and spiritually we were made to desire and seek after the presence of God, to "seek his face continually" as the psalmist says.

#### The Foundation

Occasionally in the Old Testament, but pervasive in the Gospels is the imagery of God as a Father. But the Lord's Prayer is the only time we see Jesus refer to God as "Our Father." The significance of this can often be lost on us because we say it so often, but if we pause to consider what this means, the presumption of calling God "Father" is overwhelming. We are claiming to be sons of God. We are claiming to be like Jesus, with all the rights and privileges that entails. Jesus is telling us that in him, we have a claim to and participation in his own familiarity and intimacy with the Father. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, uses the language of adoption. And in the context into which Paul was speaking, the bond of adoption was stronger even than that of biological children. As Tim explained to us, biological children could be disowned, but not adoptive children. The bond of adoption was permanent, indissoluble. And so too is our inheritance in Christ. As Christians, we not only have things removed from us through the work of Christ, we have things put on. We put on not only the status of sonship but the depth of the relationship. And we've been given the Spirit to help us grow into the feeling and experience of this relationship.

It is hard, sometimes seemingly impossible, to embrace the reality of being brought into the inheritance of Christ. And that is why we pray. We pray "our Father" in order to practice living as sons and daughters. Because in Christ we are each infinitely loved and delighted in. And so, even as Jesus instructs his disciples, pray, believe, and act as if it were so.