

Praying to the Father

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Matthew 6:9a

April 14, 2024

Snapshot:

The Lord's Prayer is the prayer of God's redeemed children.

- I. Prayer begins with the Father's action.
- II. Prayer is a response to God as Father.
- III. Prayer is to the transcendent Father.

Group Challenge

*Anything you want to share from your time in the Word this week?
How can the group be praying for/with you?*

Connecting

What was one thing you gleaned from the sermon?

Study

Point 1: Prayer begins with the Father's action.

REFLECT: Discuss how it is the heavenly Father who first speaks in creation (Genesis 1–2), the Fall (Genesis 3), redemption (Exodus 4:22, 23; Isaiah 63:16; Ephesians 1:4, 5; Galatians 4:4–7), and new creation (Romans 6:3, 4; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 1:3; Matthew 28:19, 20). Why is it important that the Father speaks first? How does understanding this help understand prayer?

RESPOND: How will understanding God's initiation of becoming your Father enrich your understanding of the Lord's Prayer? In what way might this change how you currently pray?

Point 2: Prayer is a response to God as Father.

REFLECT: How is praying as a response to what the Father has done as a starting point different than starting with our thoughts and desires? If prayer is responding to the action of the Father, then what should inform and direct our prayers?

RESPOND: What would it look like for you to emphasize the "our" in "Our Father" when you pray? Take a common prayer you pray (for example: praying for the meal, praying before you read the Bible, praying for the sick); what would it look like to pray this prayer as a response to how the Father has acted, is acting, or has promised to act?

Point 3: Prayer is to the transcendent Father.

READ: Deuteronomy 4:39; Psalm 97:9; Ecclesiastes 5:1, 2; Isaiah 66:1

REFLECT: What does it mean for the Father to be transcendent? What do these verses communicate about God? Why is it important to understand the Father is "wholly other" than us? What happens to our prayers if we lean too heavily on "Father" and neglect "in heaven"?

RESPOND: Our Father is both imminent (close) and transcendent (far above); how will that understanding transform how you pray? How will you grow in your understanding of the transcendence of God?

Memorizing

Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day 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 evil. Matthew 6:9–13ESV

Preparing for next week

Read: Matthew 6:9-13

Ask: questions of the text

Pray: through text, for the pastor as he prepares, for your heart to hear, for the congregation to hear, for all of us to be obedient.