



---

## OUR FATHER (MATTHEW 6:9-13)

### INTRODUCTION

- What type of relationship have you had with your father throughout your life? What do you hope to change or do similarly as you parent your own children?
- How has your relationship with your earthly father influenced your view of God as your heavenly father?

It is inevitable that our view of fatherhood is shaped tremendously by our relationship with our earthly father. This is true whether one has had a very good relationship with their father or if they have never met their earthly father. Fathers learn much about parenting from their own experiences (or lack thereof) with their fathers. The Bible continually describes God as our true Father in heaven. Yet, this is an obstacle to many people who have experienced poor relationships with their early fathers. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus called His followers to approach God as their true and perfect Father.

### DISCUSSION

> *Read Matthew 6:9-13.*

- What are the implications of calling God "Father" when we pray?
- Any time you describe God, because God is perfect in all that He does, you can put the word "perfect" in front of His name. When we do this, the Lord's Prayer begins with these words, "Our [perfect] Father." How would you describe the perfect Father?
- How has God revealed Himself to you as Father?
- What attributes of God as Father are most important to you? Why?
- What does each aspect of the Lord's prayer reveal about God as Father?
- How does praying to God in the same way Jesus did in the Lord's prayer help you to view Him as a perfect Father?
- Which do you currently need to see God the Father as: holy, the King, provider, or protector? Share why as you are comfortable.
- How does it comfort you to remember that God the Father is holy, the King, your provider, and your protector not just now but forever?

## GOING DEEPER

- Reflect on how God must feel about you that He longs to meet your daily needs and that He sent His Son to die on the cross so that your sins would be forgiven, you would be freed from shame, and that you would be with Him in heaven for all eternity.
- If you are a father, what attributes of God as Father are most challenging for you to emulate? How might you seek to grow in these areas?
- Jesus and Paul used the word *Abba* which can be translated “Daddy” to describe God the Father. Where do you need to see God not just as holy, the King, provider, and protector but also as your loving daddy?

## APPLICATION

- How might knowing God the Father’s desire to be with you in prayer fuel your prayer life this week?
- What single step can you take to make room for prayer each day this week in your schedule?

## COMMENTARY

### **Matt. 6:9-13**

Matthew 6:1-18 turns to the theme of true versus hypocritical piety. In three closely parallel examples, Jesus treated the practices of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. In each case the motive for correct religious behavior must be to please God rather than fellow humans. In the middle of the second of these topics, on prayer, Jesus gave the classic disciples’ prayer, which has come to be known as the Our Father or the Lord’s Prayer. In it He models all the elements of proper prayer in an appropriate sequence. He presented elements such as praise and adoration, leaving room for God’s sovereign will to override ours; appeal for kingdom priorities to be manifest on the earth; personal petition and pleas for forgiveness contingent on our practice of forgiving others; and prayer for strength to avoid the tempter and his snares.