

# Small Group Guide: Praying the Journey

**Sermon Series:** Wilderness Experience

**Text:** Matthew 6:9-13 (The Lord's Prayer)

## Opening Prayer & Ice Breaker (10 minutes)

**Ice Breaker Question:** Share about a time when you felt like you were in a "wilderness" season of life. What did you learn during that time?

## Sermon Summary (5 minutes)

This message explores the parallel between the Lord's Prayer and Israel's wilderness journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. Jesus teaches His disciples to pray by reminding them of how God worked in their nation's history—delivering them, providing for them daily, forgiving them, and leading them through trials to their inheritance.

## Key Takeaways

1. **Our identity begins with "Our Father"** - We pray as adopted children, not slaves
2. **Daily dependence on God** - Like manna, we need fresh encounters with God each day
3. **Forgiveness flows both ways** - Receiving God's forgiveness and extending it to others
4. **God trains us through trials** - The wilderness isn't a detour; it's curriculum
5. **We fight from victory, not for victory** - We're entering an inheritance already purchased

## Discussion Questions

### Part 1: Delivered to Belong (20 minutes)

1. **Read Exodus 14:30-31 and Romans 8:15**
  - What does it mean to you personally that God is your "Abba Father"?
  - How does viewing God as Father change the way you approach prayer?
2. The pastor mentioned that many believers "pray like slaves" rather than as children of God.
  - What does praying like a slave look like in practical terms?
  - What keeps you from coming "boldly to the throne of grace"?
3. **Identity Check:**
  - Where do you find your identity—in your failures and flesh, or in being a child of God?
  - How can we remind ourselves daily of whose we are?

### **Part 2: Trained to Trust (20 minutes)**

4. **Read about the manna provision (Exodus 16:4, 16-20)**
  - Why did God only allow them to collect enough for one day?
  - What does "give us this day our daily bread" mean for your spiritual life?
5. The sermon emphasized daily dependence on God through His Word.
  - How consistent is your daily time with God? What gets in the way?
  - What would it look like to "collect manna" every morning in your current season?
6. **The Bitter Waters of Marah (Exodus 15:22-25)**
  - The pastor said many can believe they're forgiven but can't forgive themselves. Can you relate?
  - What "bitterness" might you be holding onto—against yourself or others?
  - How does the cross (the tree thrown into bitter waters) bring healing?

### **Part 3: Destined to Reign (15 minutes)**

7. **Read about the Amalek attack (Exodus 17:8-13)**
  - How does the enemy attack us at our weakest points?
  - What role does prayer play in spiritual warfare, based on this story?
8. The sermon ended with "Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever."

- How does remembering who God is help you face current trials?
  - What does it mean that we're "praying for a kingdom we didn't build and can't lose"?
9. **The Transformation Picture:** The pastor described the Spirit above our mind, transforming our thinking rather than letting flesh control us.
- What areas of your life are still being controlled by "flesh thinking" rather than Spirit thinking?
  - What practical steps can you take to "go to that higher place"?

## Personal Reflection Questions (10 minutes)

Take 3-5 minutes of silence for personal reflection:

- Which part of the Lord's Prayer do you most need to focus on this week?
- What "wilderness curriculum" might God be teaching you right now?
- Is there unforgiveness (toward yourself or others) that's creating bitterness in your soul?

## Practical Application (10 minutes)

### This Week's Challenge: Pray Through the Journey

**Daily Practice:** Each day this week, slowly pray through the Lord's Prayer, pausing at each section:

- **Monday:** "Our Father" - Meditate on your identity as God's child
- **Tuesday:** "Thy kingdom come" - Surrender areas where you want control
- **Wednesday:** "Give us this day our daily bread" - Spend extra time in God's Word
- **Thursday:** "Forgive us our debts" - Examine your heart; confess and receive forgiveness
- **Friday:** "As we forgive our debtors" - Pray for someone who hurt you; release them
- **Saturday:** "Lead us not into temptation" - Identify your weak points; ask for strength

- **Sunday:** "Thine is the kingdom" - Worship God for who He is and what He's done

### **Accountability Questions:**

- What "manna" (insight from God's Word) did you collect this week?
- Where did you see God's faithfulness in your wilderness?

### **Closing Prayer (5 minutes)**

#### **Prayer Focus:**

- Thank God for being our Abba Father
- Ask for daily dependence on Him (fresh manna)
- Confess areas of unforgiveness or bitterness
- Pray for victory over the enemy's attacks
- Declare that His is the kingdom, power, and glory

**Pray together:** Have each person pray one line of the Lord's Prayer, pausing between each to let it sink in.

### **Additional Resources**

#### **For Further Study:**

- Exodus 13-17 (The wilderness journey)
- Hebrews 3-4 (Entering God's rest)
- Romans 8 (Life in the Spirit)
- Philippians 4:4-8 (Whatever is true, noble, right...)

#### **Memory Verse for the Week:**

*"For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!'" - Romans 8:15*

### **Leader Notes**

- Be sensitive to those struggling with the concept of God as Father due to difficult earthly father relationships
- Allow space for confession and prayer regarding unforgiveness

- Emphasize grace—we all struggle with flesh vs. Spirit
- Celebrate testimonies of God's faithfulness through wilderness seasons
- Consider having communion together as a group if appropriate