

How to Pray
Sermon Based Discussion (November 4, 2012)
Sermon Series: Sermon on the Mount

WARM UP

1. Describe some of your early experiences with prayer. How old were you and what was the occasion?
2. When you hear someone say, "I'm going to go pray now." What would you imagine that involves?

Most people have said a prayer. Perhaps you grew up in a home where your parents modeled prayer. Or maybe you encountered prayer later in life. No matter how short or long our prayer journey, Jesus has more to teach us about prayer.

In this session Jesus teaches a pattern for the model prayer. We will consider the lessons we can learn from this model prayer, and how to apply the lessons to our prayer lives.

INTO THE BIBLE (Matthew 6:9-15)

3. List out the six petitions in this prayer. What observations can you make about them?
4. How does this prayer contrast with the prayers Jesus told us **not** to pray in the previous verses (6:5-8)?

UNDERSTANDING

5. Does v.14 mean that God requires we forgive others as a condition of him forgiving us?

How does this fit with the idea that forgiveness is a free gift (See Colossians 3:12-14)?

DIFFERENCE

6. How does God respond to prayers from people who profess to follow Christ but refuse to forgive someone?
7. Of the six petitions in this prayer, how much of your prayers involve or lack these petitions?
8. There are many lessons about prayer in this passage:
 - Prayer can be short.
 - Pray like God is our heavenly Father.
 - Pray for God's priorities before our needs.
 - Pray like you mean it.Question: what insights about prayer might God want you to take away from this passage?

APPLICATION

9. If you were to commit to praying the Lord's Prayer every day for the coming week, when and where would you pray this?

FOR REFLECTION

Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this:

*Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name. (Matthew 6:8-9, ESV)*