

A top-down photograph of a diverse group of people sitting on the floor, their hands clasped together in a circle. The hands are of various skin tones and are wearing different styles of clothing, including button-down shirts, a patterned sleeve, and a watch. The background is dark, making the hands and the text stand out.

Teach Us to Pray

SPIRITUAL FORMATION GUIDE

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A 10 day period of immersion for spiritual formation
into the Lord's prayer.

Matthew 6:9-14



DAY ONE

As we enter into this 10 day period of immersion for spiritual formation into what is commonly known as the Lord's Prayer, we want to encourage you to engage in the spiritual practice of Lectio Divina. Lectio Divina is a contemplative way of reading the Bible. It dates back to the early centuries of the Christian Church and was established as a monastic practice by St. Benedict in the early 6th century. It is a way of praying the scriptures that leads us deeper into God's word.

SLOW DOWN

READ A SHORT PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE.

CHEW OVER IT SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY.

SAVOUR IT. *As Eugene Peterson writes, "EAT THIS WORD."*

As you begin to practice Lectio Divina, we pray that the Scripture will begin to speak to you in a new way. May it speak to you personally, and aid the union you have with God, through Christ, who is himself the Living Word. May you enter into this time with an attentiveness to the Spirit's presence and guidance.

How do you enter into Lectio Divina?

Allow yourself time to sit in the presence of the Lord. Make sure you are sitting comfortably. Breathe slowly and deeply. Ask God to speak to you through the passage. This is a way of praying that starts with our silence. We often make the mistake of thinking prayer is about what we say to God. It is actually the other way round. God wants to speak to us. He will do this through the Scriptures. So, don't worry about what to say. Don't worry if nothing jumps out at you at first. God is patient. We must learn to listen patiently. He will wait for the opportunity to be heard. Trust that He will give you a word and lead you to understand its meaning.

First reading of the passage:

Listen: As you read the passage listen for a word or phrase that attracts you. Allow it to arise from the passage as if it is God's word for you today. Sit in silence repeating the word or phrase in your head. Then say the word or phrase aloud.

Second reading of the passage:

Ponder: As you read the passage again ask how this word or phrase speaks to your life and why it has connected with you. Ponder it carefully. Don't worry

if you get distracted – it may be part of your response to offer it to God. Sit in silence and then frame a single sentence that begins to say aloud what this word or phrase says to you.

Third reading of the passage:

Pray: As you read the passage for the last time ask what Christ is desiring from you. What is it that you need to do, consider, relinquish, or take on as a result of what God is saying to you in this word or phrase? In the silence that follows the reading pray for the grace of the Spirit to plant this word in your heart.

Lectio Divina is a great practice that will help usher us into a flourishing relationship through the Holy Spirit and fruitful relationship with those whom we will come in contact with.

DAY TWO

Jesus Taught Us To Pray

For Jesus Followers, prayer is one way we access heaven as almost a portal between the two realms. Scripture describes that as Jesus was being baptized he prayed, and heaven was opened (Luke 3:21). Prayer also supports and guides us as we live out our kingdom call in our workplace and in our communities. Often as we are living out our call, we need prayer to guide us and replenish the reservoir of energy and resources we give out. We see in scripture Jesus often went away to pray to be fueled and connected to God. In Mark 6 we see Jesus in a period of great ministry; amazing listeners as he teaches in the synagogue, sending the twelve out to do kingdom work, losing his friend John the Baptist, and feeding the five thousand. After all of this, scripture says, Jesus “dismissed the crowd and after leaving them, he went up to the mountainside to pray.” (6:45-46)

For Jesus Followers, prayer helps us get back on track as life attempts to derail our purpose and destiny. A part of Jesus’ destiny in the earth was to reconcile mankind back to God at Calvary. But before this happened scripture says Jesus became sorrowful, troubled and overwhelmed, so He visited a place called Gethsemane to pray (Matthew 26:36-38).

Prayer is essential for Jesus Followers. If we can learn to live from prayer, our faith and lives in every area will be fruitful (John 15:5). Jesus instructs his followers how to pray in Matthew 6:9-14 when he says:

“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 have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive others, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their debts, your Father will not forgive your debts.”

Notice the priorities of the kingdom:

1. To hallow His Name
2. For His Kingdom to come
3. To do His will on earth as it is in heaven
4. We are able to pray for daily provision
 - a. God allows us to pray for our deepest holistic needs and will empower us to embody the prayer for others.
 - b. As you seek God to meet your daily needs, ask Him to open your heart to be willing to meet the needs of others.

5. We are able to pray for our daily pardon
 - a. As you seek God for his pardon, ask him to empower and motivate you to pardon others.
6. We are able to pray for daily protection
 - a. As you seek God for protection, ask him to protect other believers that you know as well.

Our priorities as followers of Jesus should align with this model. We do not have to pray these exact words, but to notice the kingdom's priorities gives us insight into the heart and mind of Jesus, and what Jesus desires for us all. Spend time praying that God would be honored through your life on this earth as he is already honored in the heavenlies.

Questions:

1. What steps do you need to take to orient your life around promoting God's name, advancing his Kingdom, and living according to His will? (what might be some practical ways to do this?)
2. What would it look like for you to live in light of the full anticipation of heaven coming to earth? How will that affect your daily habits? What does it look like in your workspace, in your home, and on your block?
3. How do you think praying this way for the next 10 days will transform your life?

Enjoy today's artistic expressions:

Jesus Taught Us to Pray

[Spoken Word: Eshon Burgundy - Prayer](#)

[United in the Lord's Prayer Across the Globe](#)

[Our Father \(The Lord's Prayer\) – Jen Norton](#) (Visual Art)

[Prayer Postures](#)

[The Lord's Prayer - Beautiful Soft Instrumental Piano Version](#)

DAY THREE

Our

When you think of the word “OUR”, what comes to mind? What perspective or mindset is established almost immediately? Isn't it interesting that Jesus, in teaching the disciples to pray, chooses the pronoun “our” instead of “my” (greek word: ego)? “My” seems like a more intimate word that could signify possession and closeness but Jesus uses “our.” In the Greek, the transliterated word used is ‘hemon.’ Hemon is the first person plural personal/possessive pronoun that translates to “our.” Hemon is used 408 times in the New Testament. In Matthew 8:17, “hemon” is used to tell us that Jesus is the Messiah the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he says, “He took our infirmities and bore our diseases.” In Mark 11:10, “our” is used as Jesus enters into Bethphage on a donkey and the people proclaim, “Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest”.

Jesus first teaches the disciples, when they pray, to start by saying, “our.” In his first words to the disciples Jesus establishes that prayer is not just about me or I, but us and we. Jesus tells the disciples to pray in community, to not pray as if prayer is solely about them individually. He connects us to the kingdom of God throughout history and reminds us that he rules and reigns over all the earth. What a blessing to call God “OUR” Father! This implies that God does not see one of us more than the other, or pay attention to one of us more than the other, but that “Our Father” is able to be present for all of God's children. Through Christ, we are adopted as children of God. “Our” connects us as brothers and sisters, who all have the same love and access to the things of God. Much of our prayers can become about “me” and my needs, my problems, my bills, my children; yet Jesus challenges my perspective to help me to understand that I am part of a much bigger whole.

Jesus instructs his followers to begin praying “our” Father. How do our prayers shift when we pray to our Father instead of my Father? How does our focus change when our prayers are not just about me, but about our, when we shift from an individualistic prayer life to one that includes our family, our church, our city, our state, our nation and the global church?

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Activity: Take a moment and think about how you normally pray. Write down in what ways you will begin to reflect a more communal aspect of prayer.

Questions:

How would the shift from “me” to “our” impact our prayers and life?

Consider who is included in your “our”. Why is it important to reflect on this?

What do we miss out on when we pray “my” instead of “our”?

Enjoy today’s artistic expressions:

Our

[Our Father in Heaven \(The Lord’s Prayer\) -Eric Wyse \(IWS\)](#)

[Lord’s Prayer \(American Sign Language\)](#)

[Padre Nuestro \(Spanish\)](#)

[Notre Père - Our Father \(French\)](#)

[JooGiDoMoon-The Lord’s Prayer \(Korean\)](#)

DAY FOUR

Father

After establishing the community and inclusive beginning of prayer, Jesus teaches his followers to come to God as Father. Jesus is not establishing that God is a man or male. Jesus, using the term Father or “Abba”, speaks more to the position of God in a context where men were understood to be greater (patriarchal culture), and the intimate relationship with which we are to approach God. Jesus is also establishing that this is the same God who has been with Israel from the beginning. The first passage where God presents himself as the father of Israel is Exodus 4:22-23. It happens after God calls Moses and commissions him to deliver the Israelite people. After a long dialogue at the burning bush, the Lord appears again to Moses in Midian and tells him to go to Egypt and do wondrous signs in front of Pharaoh. God tells Moses ahead of time what will happen, revealing himself as a father and the Israelite people as his son.

In Deuteronomy 1:31, Moses uses a metaphor in which he portrays God as the father of Israel. He says, “... and in the wilderness. There you saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place.” The context of this verse is the first speech of Moses where he retells the journey of Israel through the desert and reminds them how they rebelled against Yahweh when it was time to enter and conquer the promised land. God is addressed as Father, not just because He is Israel’s Creator, but because He is her Redeemer. It is within the covenant context that God is considered Father.

As Christ followers, we get to call God our Father, because Jesus is our elder brother. Jesus constantly refers to him as Father (John 5:17-18) and places God in the context of family. What a great privilege to call God, Father. He wants to be known as our Father. Not all of us have great relationships with our earthly father, however God is a good, good father ([GOOD GOOD FATHER](#)), who is present in every aspect of creation. Know that you are loved and valued by God! We need to remind people that God is a good Father, and no matter what is happening with us, in our communities and in this world, our Father is present and working.

Activity: Meditate on and memorize Galatians 4:6-7 “Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying “Abba, Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.”

Questions:

What are some of the implications of knowing God as Father? Why is it important to view God as Father?

How could we demonstrate our familial relationship to one another?

How would you describe your relationship with your earthly father? What can you learn about God and your relationship with him from a healthy parent-child relationship?

Enjoy today's artistic expressions:

Father

[The Lord's Prayer - Praise Academy of Dance Jamaica](#)

[Our Father · Fred Hammond · Radical For Christ](#)

[Our Father in Heaven \(The Lord's Prayer\) · Eric Wyse \(Devotional Piano\)](#)

[Baba Yetu \(Swahili\)](#)

DAY 5

Who is in the Heavens

What ideas or thoughts come initially when you hear or think of heaven? For most, the initial thoughts go to the place we go when we die. But this would not have been the first thought in the minds of the original hearers. They had a much more comprehensive view of what is meant when speaking of the heavens.

Heaven could be understood on 3 levels:

Atmosphere – space/air around us (Genesis 1:1 hebrew word: shamayim)

Celestial - You can see, but you couldn't get to. This was a place where the birds flew, clouds exist, the sun and moon, space, this is the second heaven. (Genesis 1:6 hebrew word: raqia)

Place beyond the 2nd heaven where God dwells. This transcendent place of the Transcendent God. 2 Corinthians 12:2

When we pray, remember we pray to our Father in the heavens. Jesus is teaching us a profound truth here and it's easy to miss it. God is present in all the heavens. God wants to help us re-shape our thinking about heaven. God is right here in the air that we breathe (Genesis 2:7). He is both immanent and transcendent. Heaven is the place where God reigns from but it is not the only place God reigns (Psalms 24:1). When we pray and go back to our initial thought of what does "in heaven" mean – subconsciously, are we thinking, our Father is far away? Jesus wants to remind us that God is present right now in the air we breathe, in the earth around us, in the spaces we occupy, in the communities we build, in our homes, and in the vocations we occupy. God is present and available to us right now (Psalms 46:1, Hebrews 4:15). God has come to reign and be with us right here in the moment.

Reflect on this truth: God is present right now in the air that you breathe.

Activity: Take a moment to breath in and out, celebrate that God is present and is as close as the air you breathe.

Questions:

What are the implications of this truth? How does knowing this make you feel?

Are you familiar with practicing His presence? [The Practice of the Presence of God](#)

How can we be more attentive to this truth?

In what ways can you begin to live like God is present in the air that you breathe?

Enjoy today's artistic expressions:

Who is in the Heavens

[The Lord's Prayer - Hillsong Worship](#)

[The Lord's Prayer - TD Jakes and The Potter's House Mass Choir](#)

[The Lord's Prayer with Congregational Participation through Movement](#)

DAY SIX

Hallowed be the name of YOU

Holy is Your Name. Distinct. Separate. Unique. What comes to mind when you hear this phrase?

Who are the most important names in our city and country? Those whose names carry authority, importance and power. What names come to mind? In the Hebrew world, a person's name meant to connect to their authority, purpose, destiny and what they were meant to accomplish in the world. We see in scripture times when God changes someone's name to show them that their name is connected to their destiny: Abram is changed to Abraham, Jacob is changed to Israel, Simon bar Jonah is changed to Peter, and Saul is changed to Paul.

God's name, unlike our name, is unique in every way. It is hallowed and holy. "Hallowed be the name of You" is pregnant with political implications. Jesus is setting up his own polity and way that the world should work. In declaring God's name as holy, Jesus is claiming a position of Kingship (authority). At this time in history, the name of Caesar would have been one of the most important, unique and authoritative names on the planet. But here, Jesus is establishing an alternative understanding for his hearers that it is not Caesar who has the ultimate authority and importance, but it is Our Father.

For the follower of Jesus, ultimate authority rests in God's name (authority, Kingship). His name is powerful. The Father has all authority, far greater than that of Caesar, any political party, or any force that attempts to come against us. When we experience fear of other forces in the world, we can find comfort in knowing that our Father has all authority. Because we are in the family, we don't have to bow our knee to any force that comes our way, whether politically, economically, temptation, or forces of violence in the world! Our Father has all authority!

Activity: Take a moment and think about all the places, struggles, and situations that are attempting to present themselves bigger than God in your life. As those places come up, speak out loud, in your mind (or both) say to yourself, "God has authority over this and God has given me authority over this."

Questions:

How would knowing this truth change the way you pray for yourself and for others?

How would it change what you prayed about?

Do you trust that God has ultimate authority over all things?

What are the implications of trusting that God has ultimate authority over all things, in your life?

Enjoy today's artistic expressions:

Hallowed be the name of YOU

[The Lord's Prayer | Psalmist Raine](#)

[Children Pray the Lord's Prayer\(from Zonderkidz\) - Children](#)

[The Jesus Storybook Bible – The Lord's Prayer paraphrased by Sally Lloyd-Jones - Children](#)

[Lord's Prayer · Dr. F. James Clark and The Shalom Church \(City Of Peace\) Mass Choir](#)

DAY SEVEN

Thy Kingdom Come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

Repent because the Kingdom has come was a key message in the teaching of Jesus (Matthew 4:17). **Jesus came to bring the reign of God to us.** Let's sit with this thought, consider what the implications might be, and pay attention to it. Jesus came to bring the reign of God to planet earth. This is different from thinking about how Jesus can get us to heaven. Jesus' rule on earth means we do not have to escape earth to experience heaven, but through Jesus we can experience moments where Shalom is present. Shalom, meaning more than peace but wholeness. We are meant to experience the journey of joining Jesus in the mission of the renewal of all things including becoming whole persons (inner, physical, relational), whole communities (social, cultural), and a whole creation (stewardship and creative).

Jesus also came to give us a foretaste of the Kingdom. The rule and reign of God is active and present in this moment. We get to enjoy Kingdom foretastes in Jesus in the here and now. This is not just a personal invitation. Just like shalom has a communal aspect to it, so does the foretaste of the kingdom Jesus wants us to see. Your Kingdom Come – it's already in existence so he's telling us to invite it into every part of our lives. We can pray for what is there, to be present and active here.

Jesus wants the kingdom to be fully present in every aspect of our lives. When we pray, "your Kingdom come," we are asking God, "may it be in this moment exactly the way You want it to be." We are yielding the authority of our lives to God, trusting and believing that his Kingdom purpose will be established in our lives.

Activity: Think about the areas in which you struggle to yield to the authority of God. Once you have them written down, pray about why this is a struggle, so you can ultimately yield it to God.

Questions:

What could wholeness look like in these various realms (whole person, whole communities, whole creation)?

What areas of your life do you need to invite the Kingdom to come (family, marriage, kids life, our own hearts, neighborhood, city, church, world etc.)?

What would it look like for you to invite the Kingdom to come in your life every day?

What would it look like for the Kingdom to come in your community?

Enjoy today's artistic expressions:

Thy Kingdom Come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

[The Lord's Prayer | Jubilee Worship](#)

[Thy Kingdom Come - Jonathan Butler, Kirk Whalum, George Duke \(Jazz\)](#)

[Our Father | BJ Putnam](#)

[The Lord's Prayer · Richard Smallwood \(Piano\)](#)

DAY EIGHT

“Give us today our daily bread”

There is a slight shift that occurs that if we are not careful we might miss. Jesus shifts his disciples from praying with a vertical focus to a horizontal focus. Jesus turns the attention of his disciples from how we commune with heaven, to how we commune and pray across our horizontal spectrum. Try to imagine, “give us today our daily bread,” in light of not knowing where your next meal may come from. Jesus was a peasant and many of his followers were. Consider there is no refrigerator, pantry, deep freezer, bank account, nor credit cards, as we know them. These followers of Jesus had forsaken their careers to follow Him. In light of this, Jesus instructed them to look to God for their daily needs.

A practical way this was carried out within this growing community of followers who were forming around Jesus was the radical way they would share their possessions with one another. They understood that God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, He will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in them. They would radically share. This same community presence is what Jesus is asking his followers to pray for. As God gives to us, we are to give to others.

We can ask God to use us to be the answer to this prayer for those in need. How do we keep our eyes and hearts open for these individuals. Jesus asks us to not only pray for our needs but to help those who do not have, so that we all can have daily bread. The disciples are not praying, “give me my daily bread” but are praying, “give us our daily bread.”

Activity: Think about areas where God could be using you to provide “bread” for your community. Pray bold prayers – “show me who needs bread and I will take it to them.”

Questions:

Do you ever worry about where your next meal will come from? This may be difficult for us to imagine.

What are some daily necessities you have?

How can we share them with those in need?

Enjoy today's artistic expressions:

Give us today our daily bread

[The Lord's Prayer - Citizen Way](#)

[The Lord's Prayer \(Duke Ellington Sacred Concert\) – Traditional Jazz](#)

[You Are My Daily Bread · Fred Hammond](#)

DAY NINE

Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors

Notice the use of financial language in this portion of the prayer. This has to do with our pocketbooks. Early Christians were known as debt forgivers. In Matthew 18, Jesus teaches his disciples about forgiveness of debts just as He, the righteous King, has forgiven our debts. God has forgiven me my debt. Injury and trespass is often where we first go to in our thinking of this phrase of the prayer, however forgiving people who owe you money -that is a major Christian witness. For many of us, forgiving financial debt is very difficult, but we all would be ecstatic if we received a call from our largest creditor letting us know that we no longer owe them anything and we get to keep the house, the car, or whatever we purchased on our credit card. Jesus instructs his disciples to pray, “as we forgive others, forgive us.”

When we consider the amount of forgiveness God has given to us, how can we not forgive others? God our Father has brought us into a new community, is showing us His kingdom, gives us bread everyday, and forgives our debts. This should motivate us to forgive.

Jesus’ teaching is deeply rooted in forgiveness and grace, and our forgiveness is deeply connected to our practice of forgiving. Forgiveness for Jesus’ followers is not something we do as an act of weakness, but an act of mercy. From the beginning of the Bible we see God’s mercy towards us. Paul says the wages of sin is death however God did not allow Adam to experience immediate death when sin entered the world. In His mercy, God kicked Adam and Eve out of Eden and then restored us all with the second Adam. Where grace forgives, mercy exchanges what we should have received with God’s love. And this is the same way we should continue in God’s kingdom way, by forgiving and being merciful towards others.

Activity: Take a moment to consider, is there a financial debt I can forgive? Spend time today thinking about how forgiving yourself and others will be a witness to the God who forgave you.

Questions:

Who do I need to forgive?

Who do I need to make amends with and gain forgiveness?

What would a community that fully embraced forgiveness (in all areas of life) look like?

Enjoy today's artistic expressions:

Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors

[The Lord's Prayer \(Dance\)](#)

[Our Father in Heaven - Shai Linne \(Jesus Kids\)](#)

[St. James Choir - The Lord's Prayer](#)

DAY TEN

“Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil”

Praying about our struggle, or our sin in life, is often our default prayer. When we do this, change the words of Jesus from, “lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil,” to “lead me not into temptation but deliver me from evil.” Though we can go to God about our individual issues, Jesus instructs his followers to pray for the “us” which includes “me.”

There are many temptations around us, but for Jesus followers, the ultimate temptation is to forget what we’ve just prayed for and the authority of who we pray to. We often pray this prayer, sometimes out of rote memory, which it was never intended for, so we pray the prayer and yet live as though we never prayed it.

Review each aspect of the prayer and ask God:

- Deliver me from the temptation of individualism and my personal pursuit of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. American rugged individualism has shaped us more than the ethic of the kingdom. We fight the temptation of me-centered living. Deliver me from self-centered focus.
- Deliver me from the temptation of the absence of closeness, aloneness, or lack of His presence. Don’t let me drift into ever thinking that You are not present.
- Deliver me from believing You aren’t powerful and that You can’t do anything about my circumstances.
- Deliver me from the temptation to believe that darkness is winning and Your kingdom is not manifesting itself in the earthly realm. Deliver me from the thinking that Jesus was wrong when He said that the Kingdom has come. Don’t let me lose sight that Jesus is renewing all things. Help me to remain optimistic because God is redeeming planet earth.
- Deliver me from the temptation of lack or even complacency when people are hungry in the world. Help me be Your hands and feet.
- Thank You for forgiving me! Don’t let me fall into temptation. Don’t let me live life full of envy and jealousy, and an unwillingness to forgive when I openly receive forgiveness and mercy from You.

Help us recalibrate for a Kingdom mindset.

Activity: Write down each aspect of the above pray and replace the “me” statements with “us” statements.

Questions:

What ways would changing from “me” prayers to “us” prayers benefit your prayer life?

What are the temptations you pray against, for yourself?

What evil do you believe God has called you to pray and take authority over?

Enjoy today’s artistic expressions:

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

[The Lord's Prayer Artist Proof – He Qi \(Visual Art\)](#)

[THE LORD'S PRAYER - Ntokozo Mbambo \(Thine is the Kingdom\)](#)