

7/27/25  
7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
For Group Meetings from July 20<sup>th</sup> – July 26<sup>th</sup>

**OUR MISSION:** As a missional congregation we *celebrate* Christ's presence, *invite* people into a growing relationship with Jesus, and *equip* them to *serve* in a broken world.

**Prayer of the Day:** Almighty and ever-living God, you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and you gladly give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us your abundant mercy. Forgive us those things that weigh on our conscience, and give us those good things that come only through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

### **BIBLICAL EQUIPPING TOGETHER**

**Share:** How did last week's scripture (John 14:1-7) work in your life this week?

**Mission:**

- What was most satisfying about your ministry last week?
- Where do you see God at work?
- How did you participate in God's missional activity?
- How did inviting go last Sunday?

**Hear:** Luke 11:1-13

**Explore Questions:** (Use these or develop your own.)

1. What does the example of God as father in these verses teach us about the character of God?
2. How does the prayer in these verses also describe what Jesus is seeking to accomplish?
3. What is the main point Jesus is trying to get across in the parable in verses 5-8?

**Connect Questions:** (Use these or develop your own.)

1. What aspects of the Lord's prayer do you gravitate toward most naturally when you pray?
2. What are some practical ways you can rely on God rather than yourself?
3. Talk a little about your prayer life. Do you have a similar routine each time you pray? Do you find it difficult to make time to pray? What type of things do you pray for?

**Memorize this verse:** "For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened" (Luke 11:10) What doors has God opened in your life?

### **BIBLICAL EQUIPPING APART:**

**Obey:** During this week follow through on your intentions.

**Meditate:** Meditate on Psalm 138. How does this speak into your life?

**Reflect:** What have I learned in my week of living with this text? What can I share with my group when we next meet?

## Notes for ChristCare leaders:

When I think of prayer, I often think of it as a rather passive activity. Not passive in the sense that I don't believe what I pray or don't care deeply about what I'm praying about. What I mean is that it can be passive in the sense that I assume prayer is, well, all about praying – you know, praying and then waiting around until God answers or doesn't answer. But what if that's not the case at all? What if prayer isn't simply a petition I send to God but rather is part of a more active and full relationship with God. Prayer, from this point of view, is less like putting a message in a bottle – or, for that matter, in an envelope or email – and setting it adrift in the sea and more like the regular conversation we have with others with whom we are in relationship.

I've wondered about this before, particularly when reading Paul's appeal to Timothy to "pray without ceasing." I don't think the Apostle meant spending all day sitting with your hands folded and eyes closed. Instead, I think Paul imagined our whole lives – our thinking and acting and very being – offered to God as a prayer. With regard to this week's story from Luke's Gospel, what occurs to me is the importance of how we translate one particular word: *anaideia* in the Greek, which most translations render as "persistence" (11:8). But a better translation might be "shameless." Our prayers to God ought to be bold, audacious, and unfailingly confident. So the question I am pondering this week is how would we act if our prayers were offered to God confidently, trusting that God will respond so much more generously than any earthly parent? Perhaps I wouldn't just sit back and wait for God to answer but would start moving, get to work, actually start living into the reality of what I've prayed for. So rather than pray for someone who is lonely, maybe I'd go visit. Rather than pray for an end to homelessness, I would work towards more affordable housing. Rather than pray for an end to hunger, you might partner with an organization that works to end food deserts. And so forth.

I know this doesn't answer all of our questions about prayer, and it certainly doesn't ease the pain of when we feel our prayers are not heard. But it does invite us to imagine that as we live into the future we pray for, we are in fact praying shamelessly. As we work for the dignity and rights of others, we are praying shamelessly. As we comfort those in need, visit those who are imprisoned, feed those who are hungry, we are praying shamelessly. And perhaps being used by God as to answer another person's – or even our own! – prayer. At times prayer is words we say alone in moments of thanksgiving or desperation. At times prayer is words we share with others, gathered in the sanctuary or around a hospital bed. And at other times prayer is action and work as we try to live into and even bring about those things we've prayed for. All of this can be praying shameless, praying confident that the God who came in Jesus understands our hurts and disappointments because that God took them on. Because God in Jesus not only endured the life we lived, but died the death that awaits us, and was raised again to show that even death does not have the last word and that all things are possible for God. So let's get started praying... and let's do it shamelessly.

**Thanks be to God,**

Pastor Thadd ([tbook@desertcross.org](mailto:tbook@desertcross.org))

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### *Traditional version:*

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us  
from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power,  
And the glory, forever and ever. Amen

### *Contemporary version:*

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those  
Who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial  
And deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the  
power, and the glory are yours,  
Now and forever. Amen