

E40 Matthew 6 The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:7-14 Verse-by-verse inductive Bible study:

Although in many lessons the writer or teacher decides on a lesson aim (the main teaching he wants the students to get) and application (how he wants the students to apply the Scripture to life), in inductive Bible study we study the Bible verse by verse, asking God what He wants to say to us and how He wants us to apply it to our lives. So, in inductive Bible study, the teacher is not telling the students what the Scripture says. Rather, s/he is guiding discussion so that the students themselves can see what it says under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The questions are suggestions. You may add others as God guides you.

The procedure is simple. The teacher or a designated student reads the passage as a whole to allow the group to see the totality of the message. Then each verse is read separately, and questions are asked to provoke discussion. Do not allow one or two students to dominate the discussion. Encourage everyone to take part by asking some questions to each member directly, and then by asking others if they agree or asking them to add their thoughts. Students should also be allowed to ask questions and make other comments. Thus, each part of the passage is read at least twice. If necessary, individual verses may be read more than once.

- What does Jesus teach about prayer just before giving us “The Lord’s Prayer”? Matt. 6:7
- Who practices “vain repetition”?
- Why? What is their motive or their thinking?
- Anyone listening to such prayers can tell there is repetition. What does the word “vain” imply about this repetition?
- What is the general principle about prayer Jesus is teaching here?
- Can you think of any common prayers that might be called “vain repetition”? Why?
- Why is the prayer of the believer to be different? Matt. 6:8
- How is it to be different?
- What word in vs. 9 shows that Jesus is drawing a contrast between the heathen “vain repetition” way of praying and that which He recommends? Matt. 6:9

- Does Jesus tell us we must pray the exact words He gives, or does He tell us we should pray in the manner He demonstrates?
- Whom should prayer address, according to Jesus?
- If prayer is to address our Father God, whom may it not address (alternatives to whom people often pray)?
- Whom does the pronoun “our” include? (Think of it in contrast to “My Father”, “Your Father”, “His Father”, “Their Father”).
- What does it imply when we address God as Father? (Ideas—personal, intimate, familial, one who has given us life, one to whom we owe everything, one having authority, one who cares for us, one who provides for us, one who loves us.)
- Where is God now? The heathen worshiped many “gods” on this earth. How does Christian prayer contrast?
- Some have thought that God is too far off, too unapproachable to be addressed by us. How does Jesus idea contrast to that thinking?
- What are we to recognize about God’s name?
- “Hallowed” is related to the word “holy”, meaning pure, set apart. Why would it be important to remember this trait of God as we address our prayers to Him?
- In addition, of course, to God’s person, what else about Him is holy?
- Why would it be important in prayer to remember that His name is holy?
- What is the first request Jesus recommends? Matt. 6:10
- What is the second request, which is highly related to the first?
- What does it mean to ask for God’s kingdom to come and His will to be done?

- How does this attitude of submission contrast with the prayers of the heathen? (They are usually self-centered, seeking to manipulate the gods for some special favor.)
- How might it affect your praying to center first on God's kingdom and God's will rather than on your own desires and needs?
- Where has God's kingdom already come, and where should we pray that it come?
- What really is God's Kingdom?
- For what personal needs is the believer encouraged to pray? Matt. 6:11
- Does "our daily bread" include everything we want? Why or why not?
- If we receive "our daily bread" from God today in answer to prayer, what does this imply about tomorrow?
- How much pleading and bargaining is connected with this request for our daily bread?
- What is the "daily bread" needed in your life? In your ministry?
- What is the second personal request? Matt. 6:12
- We ask God to answer this request in proportion to what?
- What other words might describe "our debts"? What are they?
- Why is it important to confess and ask forgiveness for sin when we pray?
- What should we pray to avoid? Matt. 6:13
- From whom should we pray to be delivered?
- How is temptation associated with "the evil one"?
- Why should we seek to avoid temptation?

- How should we conclude our prayer? By thinking about whom and what?
 - At the conclusion of our prayer we remind ourselves once again that it is not ultimately about us, but about what?
 - At the conclusion of our prayer we remind ourselves again that the issues are not temporal, but eternal. Why is this important?
 - We remind ourselves of what God's what? (Three things)
 - How could this change the way we pray?
 - Overall, what principles concerning prayer do you see in the Lord's Prayer?
 - Why is each important?
 - Comparing your own prayer life with those principles, what do you think needs to change most? What plan will you commit to for making those changes?
 - Why do you think this prayer is commonly called "The Lord's Prayer"? What other names could we give it, and why?
 - One thing that strikes me from the context and from my own experience with idol worshiping cultures is that the prayer is largely intended to contrast godly praying that honors God with the ungodly prayers of the idol-worshippers around them. What do you think this prayer has to teach new believers from idol-worshiping cultures?
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