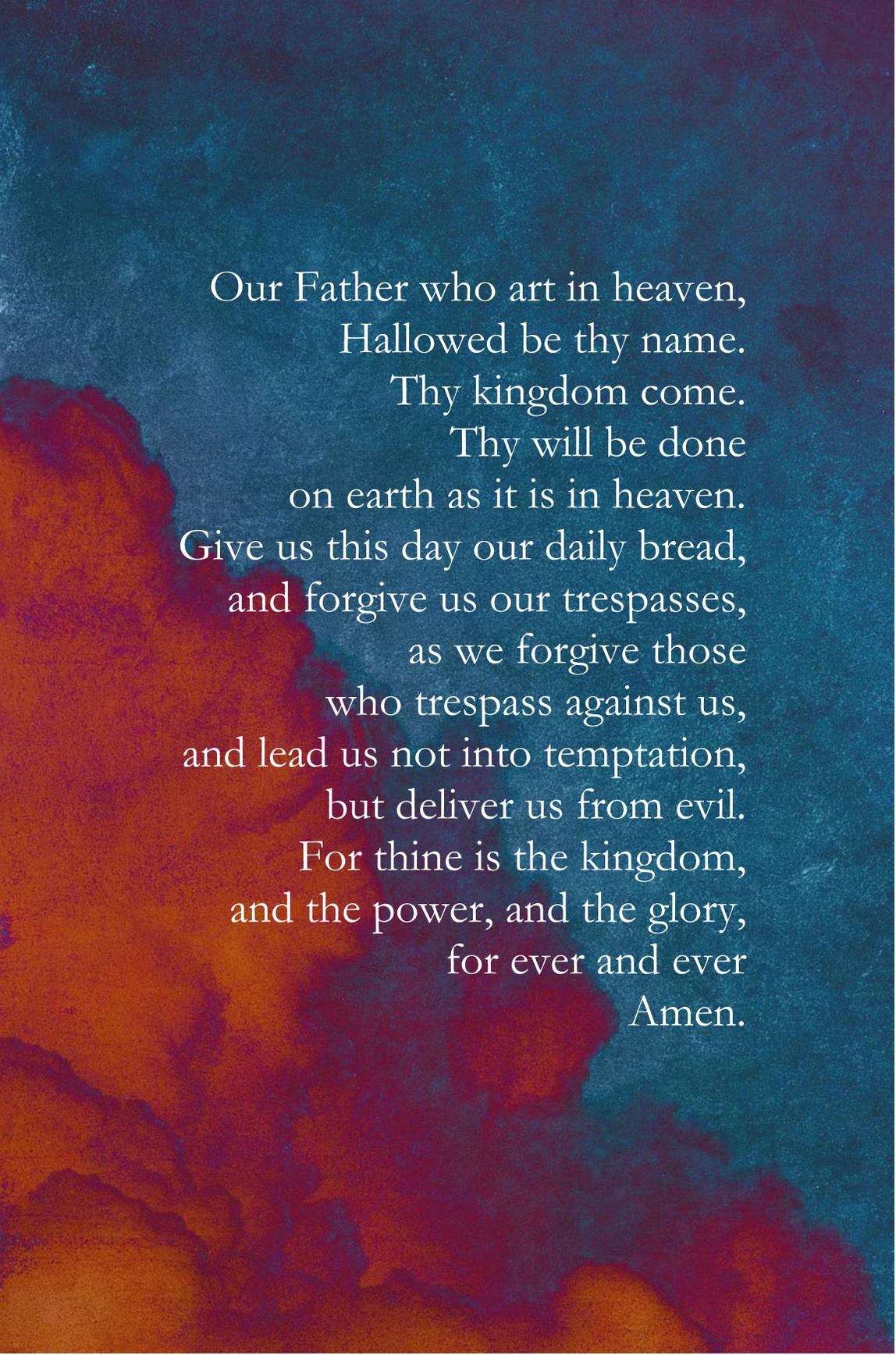


Prayer

THE MASTER'S CLASS

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:





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,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever
Amen.

Prayer

THE MASTER'S CLASS

How to use this booklet

Sermon Notes: Use this portion of the booklet to take notes during the sermon. You can watch a livestream online at <http://www.waiteparkchurch.org/live-stream/> or use our sermon page or youtube channel to stay caught up on messages.

Small Group Questions: Respond to each question before you meet so that you can be prepared to share when the time comes. In doing so, you won't be caught off guard and you'll be able to offer thoughtful responses.

Family Devotion: Take one night a week in which your family can share and reflect on what we're focusing on as a church. Which night of the week will you meet?

Daily Soul Training: We've created some daily training opportunities that correlate with the sermon. These provide an opportunity for you to put into practice what was preached about on Sunday. Each day will incorporate The Lord's Prayer.

For the next five weeks our church will take an in-depth look at Jesus' teaching on prayer and each week we'll focus on a different component of His prayer that we ourselves would learn to pray more and more like Jesus taught us to.

Goals

During this focus season, we have a number of goals for individuals and as a church, including:

- Forming a habit of regular, private prayer time.
- Memorizing The Lord's Prayer.
- Developing a constant awareness of God's presence.
- Learning to pray specifically and seeing answers to prayer.
- Shaping our church culture to be unified by and empowered by prayer.
- Teaching our small groups to engage in times of spiritually effective prayer.

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Week 1

How to Pray

It always startles me that the disciples never said to Jesus, “Lord, teach us to preach.” They heard the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest man that ever lived, the Sermon on the Mount, and yet not one of them ever said, “Lord, teach me to preach.” They never said, “Lord, teach us to do miracles.”

They did say, “Lord, teach us to pray.”

And I’ll tell you, if there’s any prayer that needs to be prayed in the church of God today, as far as I’m concerned, it is, “Lord, teach us to pray.”

Leonard Ravenhill

I love the game Othello and there’s a tagline on the box that says, “A minute to learn... A lifetime to master!” That’s true of the game Othello but I think it’s even more true of prayer.

Use this week to consider and explore your misconceptions or areas of improvement when it comes to prayer. Keep an open and soft heart. Be open to what God is wanting to teach you through this time and use these next five weeks as an opportunity to grow closer to the Creator of the Universe and to join in God’s work by partnering through prayer.

What could God do in and through you as you commit to prayer? What could God do in and through our Church as we commit to prayer together? Let’s find out.

Family Devotion

READ: Jesus once taught his disciples how to pray and this is what he said to them:

⁹Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us today the food we need,

¹²and forgive us our sins,

as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

¹³And don't let us yield to temptation,

but rescue us from the evil one.

ASK:

- 1) What do you like about Jesus' prayer?
- 2) What's does Jesus say that's hard to understand?

DO:

- 1) Have everyone share one thing they'd like to pray for and then take some time to pray for one another.

Week 1
How to Pray
10/21/2017

Sermon Notes

Suggested Worship Exercise

Glorify God: What's the most recent prayer that God has answered for you, that you're aware of?

- 1) Watch the sermon recap video.
- 2) What's one thing that stood out to you from the sermon?
- 3) What's been your experience with prayer? Talk about whether or not prayer comes easily or naturally for you and how your prayer life has changed over time (if it has).

Daily Training

10/22/18

Pray to The Father

Read The Lord's Prayer and this week as you do, first prepare your heart and mind by posturing yourself before your Heavenly Father. Pray as a child to a Father who loves and cares for you as a Good Father ought to. The Biblical picture of a Good Father is one who:

- Provides (1 Timothy 5:8)
- Disciplines (Proverbs 3:11-12)
- Spends meaningful time (Deut. 6:6-9)
- Is compassionate (Psalm 103:13)
- Is gentle and discerning (Ephesians 6:4)
- Is full of grace (Luke 15:20-24)
- Desires good for you (Matthew 7:9-11)
- Loves (1 John 3:1)

Perhaps you have not had a good father who has loved you – remember that God is a Father to the Fatherless. Allow Him that title in your life and ask him today to begin to reshape what it means for Him to be your Father.

Record your experience below.

Daily Training

10/23/18

“Pray Thus Three Times a Day.”

In one of the earliest church documents outside of the New Testament – “The Didache” instructs the members of its church to pray The Lord’s Prayer three times a day.

Imagine the impact this would have on the lives of most Christians if only we would remember and recalibrate our lives every morning, every afternoon, and every evening to the tune of The Lord’s Prayer.

Experiment with this today as you go throughout your day. Pray the words thoughtfully – don’t rush through the process but quiet your heart and cease your work and sit in the presence of God while you pray.

And consider: Could a simple practice be life-changing if you were to commit to it?

Record your experience below.

Daily Training

10/24/18

Enjoy Prayer

Philip Yancey Reminds us:

“I have come to see prayer as a privilege, not a duty. Like all good things, prayer requires some discipline. Yet I believe that life with God should seem more like friendship than duty. Prayer includes moments of ecstasy and also dullness, mindless distraction and acute concentration, flashes of joy and bouts of irritation. In other words, prayer has features in common with all relationships that matter.”

We’re not the only ones to enjoy prayer – God “delights in the prayers of the upright.” (Proverbs 15:8) On other occasions we’re told that prayer is like incense before God (Ps. 141:2; Rev. 5:8).

Today, pray The Lord’s Prayer with a smile on your face and meditate on the parts that bring you joy.

Record your experience below.

Daily Training

10/25/18

Prayer as a Response to Scripture

The Bible is God’s word and so it makes sense that as we enter into prayer – it ought to be near.

Pastor Tim Keller believes that prayer should always start with scripture.

We should listen, study, think, reflect, and ponder the Scriptures until there is an answering response in our hearts and minds. It may be one of shame or of joy or of confusion or of appeal—but that response to God’s speech is then truly prayer and should be given to God. If the goal of prayer is a real, personal connection with God, then it is only by immersion in the language of the Bible that we will learn to pray, perhaps just as slowly as a child learns to speak.”

Immerse yourself in the language of scripture by reading The Lord’s Prayer several times until you sense that you’re being moved to prayer. Then pray accordingly. Here are some other suggested passages:

- Ephesians 2:1-10
- Psalm 139
- Colossians 1:15-23

Daily Training

10/26/18

Pray the Scriptures

Similarly, to yesterday's activity – we want scripture to shape our prayers. Today, use The Lord's Prayer as an outline to your own. Read the prayer and then allow each sentence or every few words to operate as a heading or a category for your own prayers.

Praying the scriptures is an ancient and biblical practice found in the Old Testament (Neh. 9), in the habits of Jesus (Matt 27:46; Mark 15:34), and in the practice of the early church (Acts 4:24-26).

Consider the various things that Jesus prays for and about within The Lord's Prayer and allow it to serve as a structure for your own prayer. Here's an example of what that might look like:

“Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.”

- **Praise God for His Attributes**

“Your kingdom come, your will be done...”

- **Petition God for His power to be at work**

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

- **Lift up your personal daily needs for the day**

“Forgive us our sins as we forgive...”

- **Confess your sins**

“Lead us not into temptation but deliver us...”

- **Ask God for protection**

Daily Training

10/27/18

Pray for Another

It's easy for us to focus inwardly but we recognize that The Lord's Prayer was something the Church was to pray together (as well as privately).

Today, pray The Lord's Prayer as you've been doing but use it to pray for one other person specifically. You can ask God to bring someone specific to mind or you may already have someone in mind.

Ask God to be their Father, to bring His kingdom and to do His will in their life, to provide for them their daily bread, to help them see their forgiveness in Him, and to protect them from evil.

As you do this, picture the person you're praying for in your mind and allow God to prompt you to pray for them for other concerns as well.

Record your experience below.

Week 2

Devotion

“For he loves thee too little who loves along with thee anything else that he does not love for thy sake, O Love, who dost burn forever and art never quenched. O Love, O my God, enkindle me! Thou commandest continence; give what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.”

(Augustine, Confessions, XXIX).

Augustine says that whoever loves anything without loving it for God’s sake (or without recognizing that it’s a gift from the one who made it)... such a person loves God too little. He then calls God “O Love” who burns forever and is never quenched. Then He asks God to help him to burn with love. In doing so Augustine believes that he’s also asking for self-control (continence). Why?

Because all sin could be referred to as “loving something more than God” or loving something more than it ought to be loved. All sin, for Augustine, could be boiled down to a disordered love. When things that we love have their proper place – they cause us to love God more.

Our souls were made to love yet too often we miss the one love that could truly satisfy us and only when we find satisfaction in God will all other things take their rightful place.

The Lord’s Prayer then, begins with devotion – a kindling of our love for God.

Family Devotion

READ: When Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray he begins his prayer by saying a few things about God. This is what Jesus' prayer says:

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need,

¹² and forgive us our sins,

as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

¹³ And don't let us yield to temptation,

but rescue us from the evil one.

Jesus calls God "Our Father" and Jesus also points out that God is "in heaven." When Jesus does this, he's pointing out things that He likes about God that we can be thankful for.

Jesus reminds us that God loves us like a Father and God sees us as His children. When Jesus says that God is in heaven, he's reminding us that God is perfect and good.

ASK:

What are some things you like about God? Have each person make a list.

DO:

Say a prayer together, telling God the things you like about Him.

Week 2
Devotion
10/28/2018

Sermon Notes

Daily Training

10/29/18

Practice Gratitude

“Being joyful isn't what makes you grateful. Being grateful is what makes you joyful.”

(Ann Voskamp)

⁶So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

(Colossians 2:6-7)

When we practice gratitude we also practice rightly ordering our love, shifting our perspective, and humbling ourselves.

Read The Lord's Prayer and use it as an outline to create a prayer of thankfulness.

“Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.”

- **Thank God for who He is.**

“Your kingdom come, your will be done...”

- **Thank God for the way He's working in your life.**

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

- **Thank God for the things He's given you today**

“Forgive us our sins as we forgive...”

- **Thank God for forgiveness**

“Lead us not into temptation but deliver us...”

- **Thank God for his protection**

Daily Training

10/30/18

Never Be Lacking in Zeal

Paul instructs the Romans to

¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

(Romans 12:11)

Paul, and the Holy Spirit inspiring him, knows something we might not – our passion, our zeal, our desire for God is a flame that can be nurtured and fed.

Many couples recognize the importance of scheduling a date night with their spouse (who they can see); why shouldn't we be all the more intentional to nurture our love for God (who we can't see).

Read The Lord's Prayer and brainstorm a list of characteristics it reveals about God – then tell God the things on that list that you love the most about Him.

Daily Training

10/31/18

Poor In Spirit

In Matthew 5:3 Jesus says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.” It’s the first Beatitude and many agree that without it you simply won’t be able to cultivate the other attributes that Jesus describes.

The New Living Translation more clearly says what this verse implies: “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for Him.” You see, each of us is spiritually impoverished but Jesus says we’re blessed when we realize it. We’re blessed when we’re aware of our own inability to redeem ourselves.

Why? Because it’s only then that we can put God in His proper place – as Lord of our lives.

Read The Lord’s Prayer and ask God to help you identify your need for Him – what are some things in The Lord’s Prayer that you can’t do on your own? As you read and pray, write down a list of needs or requests that you know you need God for. Then pray to God concerning those things – acknowledging your need for Him.

Daily Training

11/01/18

Holy Affections

Jonathan Edwards, an American Pastor and Theologian from the 18th century lists 10 holy affections in His work, “Religious Affections” and invites us to embrace them saying:

“A person who has a knowledge of doctrine and theology only – without religious affections – has never engaged in true religion. Our religion takes root within us only as deep as our affections attract it.”

Here’s his list:

- 1) Fear (Deut. 10:12)
- 2) Hope (1 Cor. 13:13)
- 3) Love (Matthew 22:37)
- 4) Hatred (Proverbs 8:13)
- 5) Desire (Psalm 42:1-2)
- 6) Joy (Psalm 37:4)
- 7) Sorrow (Matthew 5:4)
- 8) Gratitude (Colossians 3:16)
- 9) Compassion (Psalm 37:21)
- 10) Zeal (Titus 2:14)

Pray The Lord’s Prayer. Which “Holy Affection” stands out to you as you pray? Take note of it and ask God to be working on developing that affection in your life for the remainder of the week.

Daily Training

11/02/18

A Heavenly Father

Read The Lord's Prayer and then meditate on Psalm 139 – the God to whom David writes about is the same One to whom we pray and the same One to whom Christ prayed.

As you do this, take note of the things this Psalm has in common with The Lord's Prayer. What themes are similar? What's different? How does each prayer shape your faith and your picture of God?

Reflect in the space below.

WEEK 2 – DAILY TRAINING

Daily Training

11/03/18

Sacrifice & Surrender

The first time the word “worship” is used in the NIV it’s synonymous with the word “sacrifice.” In fact, all throughout scripture worship and sacrifice go hand in hand.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

(Romans 12:1)

Thomas Oden defines love as a paradox between desiring to possess something and wanting what’s best for the object of our love regardless of the cost.

Love requires sacrifice. Love requires surrender. Love causes us to give up what we want for the thing that we want the most. Rightly ordering our love towards God and away from lesser things (or even harmful things) can be a painful process. Yet it’s one that God is constantly calling us to do – for our sake.

Read The Lord’s Prayer. What is God calling you to give up? What would you need to surrender or sacrifice in order to live a life that faithfully and genuinely reflects The Lord’s Prayer?

Week 3

Petition

“Love loves to be asked for what it longs to give.”

(Unknown)

A plethora of questions arise when we talk about prayer. Does God change his mind? Does God bend His will to us? Is prayer really only able to change my inward life and not my outward circumstances? Does God need me to pray? If God knows my thoughts and my requests – why should I pray? Does praying for the same thing multiple times help? Is the key to prayer finding the right combination of words? How come some people seem to have their prayers answered more often? What’s happening when I pray for others? Can I pray for an “unspoken”?

The truth is – prayer is conditional but not necessarily predictable or mechanical. Meaning that there are things that increase the effectiveness of our prayer life and there are things that decrease the effectiveness of our prayer life. The sooner we accept that, the sooner we can experience a deeper and more fruitful spiritual life.

Join us this week as we thoughtfully reflect on what it looks like to bring our requests before God in a biblical and effective way – according to Jesus, the Master Teacher.

Family Devotion

READ: When Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray he also taught them certain things to pray for. Listen for the kinds of things Jesus tells us to pray for in this prayer.

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need,

¹² and forgive us our sins,

as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

¹³ And don't let us yield to temptation,

but rescue us from the evil one.

ASK:

What are some things Jesus tells us to pray for?

What are some things in your life that you can pray for? Make a list and see which ones line up with what Jesus told us to pray for.

DO:

Say a prayer together, and ask God for the things on your list.

Week 3
Petition
11/04/2018

Sermon Notes

Suggested Worship Exercise:
Say The Lord's Prayer together.

- 1) Watch the sermon recap video.
- 2) What stood out to you from the message?
- 3) What kinds of things do you pray for most often and how does this align with the priorities of The Lord's Prayer?

Daily Training

11/05/18

Experiments in Prayer

Agnes Sanford wrote an article on “experiments in prayer” which can be found here:

<https://renovare.org/articles/experiments-in-prayer>

In it, she encourages us to pray for specific requests (not in order to test God but to increase our faith in God).

Let us choose one of the very simplest of prayer-experiments, remembering always that it must be tangible; that is, it must be something that we can put the finger on and say either “This has been done,” or “This has not been done.”

How strange it is that people who fear to do this do not hesitate to pray for the most difficult objectives of all, such as the peace of the world or the salvation of their souls! If they have so little confidence in prayer that they do not dare to test their powers of contacting God by praying for an easy thing, it is probable that their cosmic intercessions are of little force.

Read The Lord’s Prayer and consider something specific to pray for.

Daily Training

11/06/18

Top 10 Most Wanted

In a prayer journal, on a back page of a Bible, or on your phone – create a list of 10 people that you know personally are not believers that you'd like to see come to faith.

Many pray for their top 10 list daily and as people come off their list, they add others to it.

What could be more in line with God's will than to pray for others to come to know Him?

Choose people that you know, that you're willing to talk to, and who are willing to share with you.

As you create your list and pray for your list, I would encourage you to follow-up with them and be in relationship with them so that you can update your requests as time goes on.

Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

Romans 10:1

Read The Lord's Prayer and pray to God about the people on your list – asking for His Kingdom to come into their lives.

Daily Training

11/07/18

Prayer Group

Read The Lord's Prayer and identify how many times it uses these words:

Our _____
Us _____
We _____
I _____
Me _____

It's clear that The Lord's Prayer was originally written to be a group prayer – in fact, the Bible is saturated with examples of group prayer.

How often do you pray with others? Maybe you're part of a small group or a prayer group or maybe your family prays together often...

Use the space below to write down your plan for praying with others.

Daily Training

11/08/18

Prayer Journal/Prayer List

Use these two questions as a quick litmus test:

- What are you praying for?
- What can others pray for you for?

If you don't have readily available answers to these questions – it's probably because you don't have a prayer list.

When people don't have prayer requests it's not because their lives are perfect – usually it's because they haven't spent enough time with God to know their needs.

A prayer journal OR a simple prayer list is a great way to know what you're praying for (for others and for yourself).

Create a simple prayer list. Put a piece of paper in your Bible, start a “note” on your phone, or use a page in your journal but keep a list of things that you're regularly praying for an update it occasionally.

Daily Training

11/09/18

Prayer Partners

Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.

Matthew 18:19

Who is praying with you?
Who is praying for you?

If you think your prayers aren't worth involving other people either...

- 1) You're right and you need to start praying for and desiring different things and then recruit prayer partners.

Or...

- 2) You're wrong and you need to start recruiting prayer partners!

Partner with people in prayer. Some create an email list, or a Facebook group, or a text group, or update their small group. Some simply email a close friend regularly with their prayer.

Choose what option you think is best and get started today. Your list will change over time so start slow. Maybe structure your first prayer requests according to The Lord's Prayer.

Daily Training

11/10/18

Say Your Prayer Out Loud

If you find it difficult to focus in prayer, you're in good company. Often it can be hard to stay on topic and even easy for us to forget that we had been praying. One moment we'll be saying, "Heavenly Father." And the next minute we'll be thinking, "wait a second, aren't I supposed to be praying?" Praying out loud helps us to make our thoughts concrete and it also helps us to stay on track.

Praying out loud when we're alone also helps us to build confidence when we're praying out loud with others.

Lastly praying out loud makes our faith stronger by making our faith more tangible – how many times have you imagined what you might say to God when you see Him for the first time? When you do this... are you normally using an "inner prayer voice" or do you picture yourself speaking to Him audibly? Praying out loud will often subconsciously help us to experience a closeness/reality of God that we otherwise wouldn't. It's also most likely the most common way that the early Church prayed.

Start with The Lord's Prayer and then continue with your own words.

Week 4

Confession

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

(1 John 1:9)

The Lord's Prayer has an unsettling proposition: Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Do I need to forgive in order to be forgiven? If I don't forgive, will I not be forgiven? If so... is salvation really "through faith by grace alone"?

Interestingly enough – forgiving others is the only action that's mentioned of the one who is praying. In other words, the chief work of a praying person is forgiveness.

One Church Father said that we are never closer to God than when we forgive. Another way to understand it is that the Christian looks most like God during his act of forgiving one who has wronged us. What a beautiful idea.

This week – let us explore how it is that we can most look like God as we confess our own shortcomings and sin as well as begin to forgive others.

Family Devotion

READ: When Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray he also taught them the importance of forgiveness. Forgiveness is when we don't hold onto our negative feelings about someone when they hurt us. It doesn't mean we ignore the pain or pretend it didn't happen but it means we work to love the person who has hurt us and learn to move forward.

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us today the food we need,

¹²and forgive us our sins,

as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

¹³And don't let us yield to temptation,

but rescue us from the evil one.

ASK:

What is a sin?

What are some ways you sometimes hurt others?

What are some ways that others sometimes hurt you?

DO:

Say a prayer together, asking God to forgive you AND asking God to help you to forgive others who have hurt you or who will hurt you.

Optional: consider visiting the Children's Museum in St. Paul which has an exhibit on love, forgiveness, and emotion.

Week 4
Confession
11/11/2018

Sermon Notes

Suggested Worship Exercise:
Say a prayer of confession together.

- 1) Watch the sermon recap video.
- 2) What's one thing that stood out to you from the sermon?
- 3) What's been your experience with sin and repentance? Are you more prone to obsessing over sin or are you more prone to excusing sin and taking it too lightly?

- 4) Keith said that “Grace is assertive.” It seeks to reconcile, seeks to forgive, and seeks to be forgiven. What’s hard about that for you?

- 5) Who do you need to forgive? Who do you need to ask forgiveness of?

- 6) **HOMEWORK:** Report back to your small group this week about an experience that you’ve had either forgiving someone or asking for forgiveness from someone.

Daily Training

11/12/18

Examen

This practice comes from St. Ignatius and sometimes has 5 simple steps and it done at the end of the day. It's a prayerful review of how your day went and is best practiced daily.

Become aware of God's presence.

Quiet your heart and enter into a prayerful attitude – recognizing who you're talking to and invite the Holy Spirit to lead your time. Recite The Lord's Prayer.

Review the day with gratitude.

Think of all the things you did today that you're thankful for – starting with when you first woke up and working your way up to now.

Pay attention to your emotions.

Think about how you feel as you worked through the day with God – are there things you were happy for? Ashamed of? Mad about? Confess when appropriate.

Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.

What stood out to you the most from this review of the day? How can it guide your prayers?

Look toward tomorrow.

The 24 hour period is a gracious “reset” on our attitude, our perspective, and our mood. Take advantage of that by looking forward to the morning!

Daily Training

11/13/18

The Joy of Self Denial

John Calvin has a writing called “The Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life.” And in it he shares:

If we are not our own, but the Lord’s, it is clear to what purpose all our deeds must be directed. We are not our own, therefore neither our reason nor our will should guide us in our thoughts and actions. We are not our own, therefore we should not seek what is only expedient to the flesh... We are God’s own; therefore let every part of our existence be directed towards him as our only legitimate goal.

Christians asceticism (the extreme denial of pleasure for religious reasons) it’s heresy – Paul speaks against it in Colossians 2. Yet fasting for a time is a thoroughly Christian practice and fasting from pleasurable activities that we may not be ruled by our desires but instead exercise self-control is a thoroughly Christian notion. (1 Corinthians 7:5)

Today or tomorrow – fast from creature comforts and indulgence. Ask God to teach you the joy of self-denial. Pray The Lord’s Prayer and consider it’s implications (what does Jesus want your desires to be focused on?)

Daily Training

11/14/18

Accountability Partner – Lite

Confession is both something we do with others and something we do between us and God. While many Christians would like for it to be otherwise – confession and accountability with another human being can be a powerful and freeing experience. Even God saw the importance of coming to us “in the flesh.”

Anything said between you and God is still hidden in secret and covered by darkness. Confessing our sins to one another allows our sin to be exposed and allows for true healing to begin.

Accountability partners can also “hold us accountable” for the goals that we make as we pursue God.

This week – begin some form of “accountability” by inviting someone to help hold you accountable for something that you’re struggling to do as well as you’d like. Maybe that’s accountability for doing something good or maybe it’s accountability for not doing something bad.

Daily Training

11/15/18

10 Commandments

- 1) I am the Lord your God
- 2) You shall not make idols
- 3) You shall not misuse God’s name
- 4) Keep the Sabbath Holy
- 5) Honor your father and mother
- 6) You shall not kill
- 7) You shall not commit adultery
- 8) You shall not steal
- 9) You shall not lie
- 10) You shall not covet

One particular Jewish tradition teaches that if you obey the first 9 commandments – the last one is a promise.

Jesus takes these further and adds that not only should we not commit adultery but we also shouldn’t lust and not only should we not murder but we also shouldn’t hate.

Pray The Lord’s Prayer. Meditate on each of these 10. Ask God to reveal your guilt – accept His forgiveness and ask Him to help you to follow Him.

Daily Training

11/16/18

The Scriptural Stations of the Cross

Traditionally done on Wednesdays and Fridays – the Stations of the Cross is a series of reflections that help us to experience and meditate on Jesus' suffering as well as the cost of our sin.

- 1) Jesus in the Garden (Matthew 26:36-4)
- 2) Jesus is betrayed and arrested (Mark 14: 43-46)
- 3) Jesus is condemned (Luke 22: 66-71)
- 4) Jesus is denied by Peter (Matthew 26: 69-75)
- 5) Jesus is judged by Pontius Pilate (Mark 15: 1-5, 15)
- 6) Jesus is crowned with thorns (John 19: 1-3)
- 7) Jesus bears the cross (John 19: 6, 15-17)
- 8) Simon helps Jesus carry the cross (Mark 15: 2)
- 9) Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem (Luke 23: 27-31)
- 10) Jesus is crucified (Luke 23: 33-34)
- 11) Jesus speaks to the repentant criminal (Luke 23: 39-43)
- 12) Jesus speaks to his mother (John 19: 25-27)
- 13) Jesus dies on the cross (Luke 23: 44-46)
- 14) Jesus is placed in the tomb (Matthew 27: 57-60)

Take the time to read through and meditate on these stations. Even two minutes on each passage will take you 28 minutes. Afterwards, acknowledge to God the cost of your sin and thank Him for how much He loves and cares for you. Pray The Lord's Prayer in a new light.

Daily Training

11/17/18

Forgiving Others

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Ephesians 4:32

Read The Lord's Prayer. At first, Jesus' words sound like an equal exchange: Forgive us as we forgive. Yet the sins that others commit against us imperfect, finite, human beings pales in comparison to the sin that we commit against our perfect, infinite, Heavenly Father.

Additionally, we are only able to forgive because we've been forgiven. It is not that God only forgives us if we can forgive others but the opposite – God forgives us and it compels us to forgive others. In so doing, we show our faith and so we can be confident in our salvation.

These words appear trite in the face of tragedy and great loss. "Easy for you to say." Let us look to Christ as our example who was mockingly tortured by those He loved and came to save, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Pray The Lord's Prayer and then ask God to help you forgive or commit to beginning the process of forgiving someone who has hurt you.

Week 5

Warfare

A special note: This Thursday is Thanksgiving. Your group might not be able to meet this week OR you might miss the sermon. We encourage you to listen to the message online if you miss it and we encourage your group to the small group questions the next time you meet. Continue to do the Daily Soul Training.

Jesus' prayers also involved praying for protection from temptation and Satan. Christians have three enemies: Our fallen nature, the fallen world, and fallen spiritual creatures. This week we explore what it's like to take these battles seriously – particularly the third one.

Enemy-occupied territory—that is what this world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed, you might say landed in disguise, and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage. When you go to church you are really listening-in to the secret wireless from our friends: that is why the enemy is so anxious to prevent us from going. He does it by playing on our conceit and laziness and intellectual snobbery. I know someone will ask me, 'Do you really mean, at this time of day, to re-introduce our old friend the devil-hoofs and horns and all?' Well, what the time of day has to do with it I do not know. And I am not particular about the hoofs and horns. But in other respects my answer is "Yes, I do."

- C.S. Lewis

Family Devotion

READ: When Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray he also taught them to ask for help against “The Evil One.” Jesus teaches us that there’s an evil power in this world that seeks to harm us but He also teaches that God can and will protect us.

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need,

¹² and forgive us our sins,

as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

¹³ And don’t let us yield to temptation,

but rescue us from the evil one.

Teach:

“The Evil One” that Jesus speaks of is an angel who disobeyed God a long time ago and continues to go against God. The Bible teaches us that Satan is strong but that God is much much stronger and so we have no reason to be afraid.

Ask:

How does this make you feel? What questions do you have?

Do:

Say a prayer together, asking God to protect your family and thanking Him for the power that Jesus gives you over the Evil One.

Week 5
Warfare
11/18/2018

Sermon Notes

- 4) How should the truth that there is a spiritual battle currently taking place impact the way we live and pray?

- 5) What's been your favorite part of this Focus season and what's one thing you'd like to continue focusing on even after the season ends?

- 6) **HOMEWORK:** take time this week to pray "spiritual warfare prayers" over each individual in your small group.

Daily Training

11/19/18

Life Inventory

This practice is often done in Deliverance Ministries as well as Recovery Ministries like Celebrate Recovery. Regardless, when done right, it can be a difficult but beautiful experience. Get ready to write.

Today we're going to create a list of memories, events, and sins from your past life.

Start by dividing your life into 5 stages

1. **Childhood**
2. **Teens/Adolescence**
3. **College/Young Adult**
4. **Adulthood**
5. **Senior Adulthood**

First Recite The Lord's Prayer and then prayerfully consider each stage and meditate on them – allow memories to come to mind and for each stage consider these three categories and write down everything that comes to mind.

- 1) Times I was hurt by others
- 2) Times I hurt others
- 3) Times I hurt myself

Afterward, confess your sins to God. Share with a friend (if you're ready to and feel God is asking you to). Lastly, renounce your sin and accept God's forgiveness. If you need to speak to a Pastor don't hesitate to set up a meeting.

Daily Training

11/20/18

Home & Office Inventory

The practice of burning and destroying idols, objects of false worship or false teachings, occult material, and possessions which have led us astray is a rare practice in most orthodox, evangelical, and less “emotionally expressive” churches.

Yet it’s a biblical practice found in both the Old and New Testament and something that the Church has done and continues to do in every part of the world.

A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas.

Acts 19:19

Go through your home and office and identify objects that fit the description. This could include things like Ouija boards, figurines of idols (usually souvenirs from foreign travel), Occult symbols, Astrology, Horoscopes, Tarot Cards, Good luck charms, Dream catchers, etc.

Prayerfully consider whether these objects have or could be used by Satan or could possibly have been cursed by someone inviting an evil spirit to attach to it. Burn or toss (if burning seems too intense) objects in question while you recite The Lord’s Prayer.

Daily Training

11/21/18

Memorize Scripture

Scripture memorization was Jesus' preferred method for responding to Satanic attack.

When we memorize scripture – we equip ourselves for “battle” by being prepared to respond to the Evil One with the truth of God's word.

If you haven't yet memorized The Lord's Prayer – try to memorize it today.

If you have memorized The Lord's Prayer, try a new verse like:

"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."

1 Corinthians 10:13

Here's an easy method for memorizing scripture:

- 1. Memorize the scripture reference (book, chapter, verse number) by repeating it aloud.**
- 2. Read the verse 10 times. If it's long, try to mentally divide it into three parts.**
- 3. Say the verse out loud 10 times, only reading scripture when you need help remembering.**
- 4. Write it down and carry it with you, trying to recite from memory occasionally during the day.**

Daily Training

11/22/18

Fasting

We said last week that when Jesus resisted and responded to Satan – He recited memorized scripture. Well, he did something else too – He fasted. In Daniel 10, Daniel fasts for three weeks until He receives a vision of an angelic messenger who helps explain an earlier vision he had received.

Why does fasting work? Put simply – it's a time of focused prayer. We use the time we would've used eating to pray instead. We use our feelings of hunger as reminders that we're fasting – which reminds us to pray. On top of all of this, fasting is a confession that we need God – more than the bread we eat.

Plan a fast for today or tomorrow and use this time of fasting to pray that God would increase your understanding of spiritual warfare and help you to be aware of times and places where Satan is at work (either in your life or in the lives of others around you). Pray for the gift of spiritual discernment.

Consider what you will fast from, how long you will fast, and be specific so that you do not justify ending a fast by bending the rules of your fast during your temptation.

Daily Training

11/23/18

Identity in Christ

Read The Lord's Prayer and consider for a moment the what it means to "deliver us from evil." What are the different ways that Satan attacks us?

Scripture refers to Satan as a deceiver, an accuser, a tempter, and the father of lies. One of the lies humanity often falls victim to is one of identity. Who are we? Who are we meant to be?

How we see ourselves oftentimes determines how we act and relate with others and with the world. The truth is we might have a lot to say about ourselves and even though we think we have the best seats – it's God who knows us best and it's God who gets to define us. Knowing our identity in Christ helps us to respond correctly in times of spiritual struggle.

Meditate on this short list of scriptures and what they say about you. Which is hardest to believe? Study it and memorize it and commit to trusting God in it.

You are a New Creation - 2 Corinthians 5:17

You are a part of a Royal Priesthood - 1 Peter 2:9

Christ loves you - Galatians 2:20

You are Christ's friend - John 15:15

You are God's child - John 1:12

You are co-heirs with Christ - Romans 8:17

You are a citizen of heaven - Philippians 3:20

You are part of the body of Christ - 1 Cor. 12:27

Your body is a temple - 1 Cor. 6:19-20

You are God's masterpiece - Ephesians 2:10

Daily Training

11/24/18

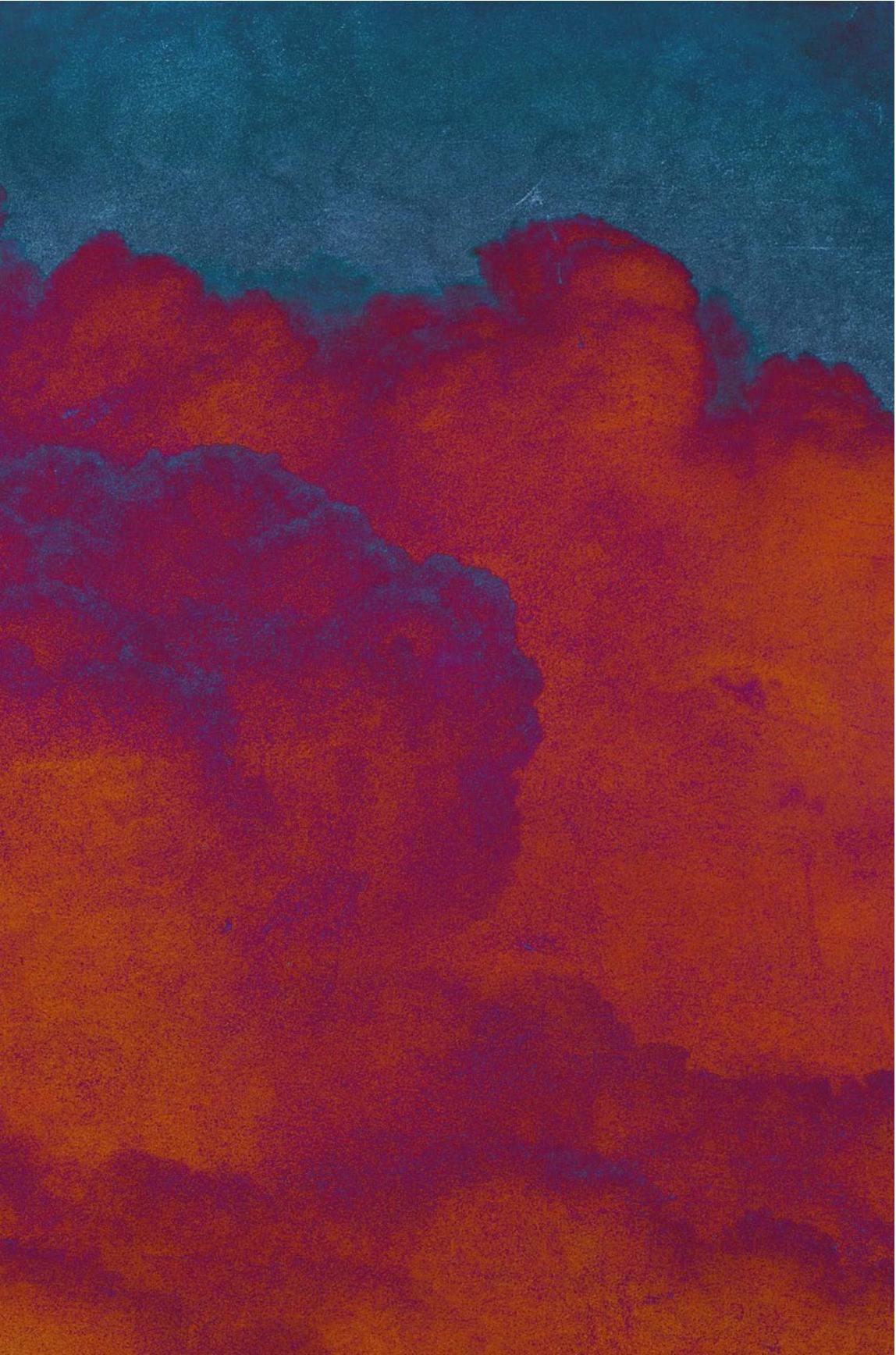
The Armor of God

We're not powerless in this fight and God doesn't expect us to lie back while He does all the work.

Read Ephesians 6:10-18 and pray through it. Meditate on it. Go slowly. Consider how strong you are in each "piece" of armor that's mentioned – do you know what Paul is asking of us? Do you know how to strengthen your stand against Satan? Study the text and ask God for guidance.

1. Write down each step or action that Paul asks you to take.
2. Write down what stands out to you.
3. Write down what's expected of you and how you can take ownership for your faith and spiritual protection?

When you've done the study, read The Lord's Prayer. Ask God to help protect you from the Evil One. After, ask Him to help you to protect yourself.



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*For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for eber and eber.
Amen.*