

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

The Engine Room - Part 2

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Introduction

Prayer is essential for an effective Christian life. Jesus spent time in prayer as part of His regular rhythm, and prayer was key to all He said and did. The disciples recognised this so they asked, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1) – the only record of the disciples asking Jesus to teach on a particular subject. Followers of Jesus know that sincere prayer makes a massive difference to our relationship with our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ.

Read Matthew 6:5-15

Discuss

1. In 1 Timothy 2:1, Paul urges Timothy, "first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made". Some describe their prayers as dialogue with God. How would you describe your prayer time with Jesus?
2. Prayer is a measure of our relationship with God. How healthy is your prayer life?
3. Review Matthew 6:5-8. Jesus takes time to clarify what prayer is not. Discuss the importance of each point, then focus on verse 6. The Gospels say that Jesus went to a solitary place. What point is Jesus making?
4. Verse 9: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name". The focus shifts from the individual believer to the group: 'our' Father, not just 'my' Father. This is a subtle but profound difference. Why? What does 'hallowed' mean? What is Jesus teaching the disciples here?
5. Verse 10: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven". This is a prayer for our community, our nation, and the world – but it starts with us. Give examples of how the Holy Spirit has led you to pray this for your own life.

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6. Verse 11: "Give us today our daily bread". This sounds reminiscent of the time Israel spent in the wilderness – God provided daily with manna from heaven and quail. Notice that Jesus places this before forgiveness. Is it more than an acknowledgement that everything comes from God? Consider John 4:32 and John 6:35. Whether physical or spiritual, all good things come from God, providing the sustenance we need to be active in God's work.
7. Verse 12: "Forgive us our debts (sins), as we also have forgiven our debtors (those who sin against us)". As we pray through verses 9–11, the Holy Spirit may reveal things we need to ask forgiveness for. Consider Matt 6:15 and James 5:16. How does this effect our prayers?

Respond

Verse 13 says, "And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one". The Lord does not tempt us with evil. Here Jesus teaches us to pray for the Lord to lead us. We can choose to be led by God. How can we add this into our prayer rhythm? Will you commit a certain amount of time to pray each day?