



S2.Lesson 20: Prayer – The Lord’s Prayer

Middle School Lesson Plans

Supplies Needed: Journals; Handout; tv or laptop to show movie clip (movie clip link is available at rfour.org/curriculum.html); lined paper for writing; 1 writing utensil per student

OPENING PRAYER

TELL

- We’re going to watch a movie clip where a person who hasn’t prayed before attempts to pray.
- Let’s see how it goes.

WATCH “Catch Me If You Can” Movie Clip

ASK

- So what do you think...was that prayer an actual prayer?
- Why do you think it was or was not?

TELL

- Today we’re going to look at the scripture where Jesus teaches his disciples to pray.
- This scripture is where we get the Lord’s Prayer from.
- Let’s read that now

READ Matthew 6:5-13

(from The Message) Matthew 6:5 "And when you come before God, don't turn that into a theatrical production either. All these people making a regular show out of their prayers, hoping for stardom! Do you think God sits in a box seat? 6 Here's what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace. 7 The world is full of so-called prayer warriors who are prayer-ignorant. They're full of formulas and programs and advice, peddling techniques for getting what you want from God. 8 Don't fall for that nonsense. This is your Father you are dealing with, and he knows better than you what you need. 9 With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this:

(NRSV)

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. “

ASK

- What images come to mind when Jesus says in verse 5, “Don’t turn [prayer] into a theatrical production”? Have you ever experienced someone praying before and thought “They’re just showing off” or “they don’t really mean what they are saying”?
- In the last class, we practiced silence. In verse 6, what does Jesus tell his disciples to do? (go find a quiet, secluded place)
- Still in verse 6, once in a quiet, secluded place, what will happen? (the focus will switch from you to God)
- After having spent some time being silent in our last class, do you think this switch in focus happens automatically? (no)

TELL

- Then Jesus says something along the lines of, “There are some simple steps to include in a prayer and when put together, those steps will look like this...” And then he tells the disciples what we now call “The Lord’s Prayer.”
- So as we talk about the Lord’s Prayer today, think of it from two different perspectives.
 - 1. It’s a mighty fine prayer to pray as is. No changes or adjustments needed.
 - 2. It’s a model/outline for praying that teaches us the 5 components of prayer that make prayer, prayer.
- We’re going to look at those components now.
- As a warm-up, we’re going to do a little bit of a matching game: It’s on the hand-out.

DO Hand-out sheet

ASK

- So for line A, what components did you add?
- [Ask same question for lines a,b,c,d,e,and f].

GO OVER The Lord’s Prayer as Outline (Alternate between Lewis and Bill – Lewis starts)

- *Our Father*
 - This is the **Introduction** part of the prayer. Who are you addressing? Say the name of who you are addressing.
- *Hallowed be your name*
 - This is giving **praise** to God. Giving praise to God is just like giving praise to others. Tell God what you think God has or is doing well.
- *Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*
 - This is the **invocation**, otherwise known as inviting God into you and your life.
 - God’s kingdom is wherever we allow God to be king.
 - Often times, we can do this by naming a problem and then telling God, I want your kingdom here, in this problem.
 - Examples:
 - God, I invite you into this problem.
 - God, help me to know and then do your will.

- *Give us this day our daily bread*
 - This is the part where we **ask** for help and in so doing, it helps to admit that we can't do these things on our own.
 - Ask God for what you think you need or what you want – and then remember to give time to listen for a response.

- *And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.*
 - This is the part where we **ask** for forgiveness/asking to remove obstacles that are in the way between you and God and between you and others
 - You can talk in generalities here, but the more specific you are in naming the obstacles and separations you see/feel between you and God or between you and others the better you'll be able to receive or offer the forgiveness.
 - Forgiveness cannot be overrated. It's a freeing exercise. But difficult. That's why we need to experience it/receive it before we can offer it.

- *And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. "*
 - This is the part where we **surrender** our own will, and commit to living God's way.
 - We have to let go of our way and agree to do it God's way before we can actually live God's way.

ACTIVITY (if there's time...)

- Using what we've just talked about and using the components on the handout as an outline, write out the Lord's prayer using your own language. Think about being willing to share your prayer with the class when we get done.

DO Activity

ASK/TELL

- Before we share our prayers, were there certain parts that were harder to write/think about than other parts?
- What parts did you find to be easier? Harder?
- Who is willing to share their prayer?

DO Sharing

TELL

- So in the movie, the person doesn't pray at all, according to the outline Jesus gives us:
- The character doesn't address God, he doesn't give praise, he doesn't ask for help, he doesn't surrender his will or agree to live God's way. So its not that he prayed wrong. It's that he didn't pray at all.
- Hopefully during these past few weeks, we've offered you some ways that help inform what prayer looks like for you.
- Being still for a few moments; paying attention to your breathing; remembering to pray (what the Shema is about); and finally, the different components Jesus teaches us in the Lord's Prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER