

# teach us to *pray*



Bloomington Campus Sermon Study - 5.31.2026

## Leader's Corner

Pray Like This

Matthew 6:5-13

**Summary:** Prayer is not meant to be performance, pressure, or polished religious activity—it is relational formation. In Matthew 6, Jesus assumes His followers will pray, but He redirects how they pray. Rather than praying to impress others or manipulate God with endless words, Jesus invites us into simple, honest, dependent communion with the Father. The Lord's Prayer is not merely a script to recite, but a pattern that shapes our hearts into people of belonging, surrender, trust, forgiveness, humility, and hope.

**Main Passage:** Matthew 6:5-13

**Main Idea:** Prayer is less about saying the right words and more about being shaped into the kind of people who live connected, surrendered, dependent, forgiven, and hopeful before God.

**Main Practice:** Slow down and pray through the Lord's Prayer intentionally this week—allowing each phrase to shape your heart, not just your words.

## Prayer and Praise

### Prayer:

*Father in Heaven,*

*Teach us to pray—not with performance, noise, or striving, but with quiet trust and surrendered hearts. Form us into people who delight in Your presence. Teach us belonging when we feel isolated, trust when we feel anxious, forgiveness where bitterness has taken root, and dependence where pride has grown strong. May Your kingdom shape our homes, our relationships, our church, and our lives. Deliver us from evil and anchor us in hope. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

### Worship Suggestions:

- The Lord's Prayer (It's Yours)
- Goodness of God
- Abba

## Group Discussion

When you were growing up, what's something someone taught you by saying, "Do it like this?"

1. In this passage, what unhealthy approaches to prayer does Jesus warn against?
2. What stands out to you most about the structure or tone of the Lord's Prayer?
3. Why do you think Jesus begins prayer with "Our Father in Heaven" instead of simply commands or requests?
4. What do you think it means for God's name to be "hallowed" in our lives?
5. Which phrase of the Lord's Prayer feels most needed in your life right now: belonging, surrender, trust, forgiveness, humility, or hope? Why?
6. What tends to distract or distort your prayer life most often: performance, busyness, anxiety, independence, shame, or something else?
7. How would our lives change if we genuinely prayed and lived, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done?"
8. Why is forgiveness such an essential part of spiritual formation and healing?
9. What would it look like this week to move prayer from being reactive or rushed into something relational and formative?
10. As a group, where do we most need God's kingdom, provision, forgiveness, or protection right now?

# Practice

## Group Practice:

Spend time slowly praying through the Lord's Prayer together. Pause after each phrase and allow different people to briefly pray one or two sentences connected to that theme:

- Father → belonging
- Hallowed → wonder
- Kingdom come → surrender
- Daily bread → trust
- Forgiveness → healing
- Deliver us → hope and protection

## Individual Practice:

Each morning this week, pray one line of the Lord's Prayer slowly before starting your day. Ask: "How does this shape the kind of person Jesus is forming me to become?"

Consider journaling one sentence each day about what God reveals.

# Further Study

## Additional Scriptures:

- Psalm 27:4 — Wonder and presence
- Romans 8:15–17 — Adoption and belonging
- Proverbs 3:5–6 — Trust and surrender
- Philippians 4:6–7 — Prayer and peace
- 1 John 1:9 — Confession and cleansing
- Ephesians 6:10–18 — Spiritual protection

## Reflection:

Prayer is not simply a place we go to get things from God; prayer is one of the primary places God forms us into people who look like Jesus.

## Quote:

"Prayer is the place where God gives us the same mind as Christ and forms us into the image of the Son." — Henri Nouwen