



EKKLESIA

Swartz FBC Leader Discussion Guide



SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6:5-15

SERIES: Ekklesia

TITLE: The Church Prays

CIT: “The goal of prayer is the ear of God.” - Charles Spurgeon

SUMMARY

The Lord’s Prayer is likely familiar to many of us. Yet, there are some fascinating things we may miss as we recite this prayer over the years. John Stott summarizes the passage well in his commentary on the Sermon on the Mount:

“If the praying of Pharisees was hypocritical and that of pagans mechanical, then the praying of Christians must be real—sincere as opposed to hypocritical, thoughtful as opposed to mechanical. Jesus intends our minds and hearts to be involved in what we are saying. Then prayer is seen in its true light—not as a meaningless repetition of words, nor as a means to our own glorification, but as a true communion with our heavenly Father.

The so-called ‘Lord’s Prayer’ was given by Jesus as a model of what genuine Christian prayer is like.”¹

TEXT

The Lord’s Prayer

⁵“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁷“And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹Pray then like this:

“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 lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

¹⁴For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. ²

¹ John R. W. Stott and John R. W. Stott, [The Message of the Sermon on the Mount \(Matthew 5-7\): Christian Counter-Culture](#), The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 145.

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2025), Mt 6:5–15.

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.”

1. PRAYER IS PERSONAL.

- When you pray, what do you imagine your relationship to God to be?
- Do you speak in prayer like you are talking to a father or a distant authority?
- How does seeing God as Father help shape our hearts and our relationship with Him?
- What changes when prayer becomes personal?

Application Question: Is prayer personal for you?

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

2. PRAYER IS COSMIC.

- Whose agenda is dominant in your prayers?
- What do we struggle to surrender to God in prayer the most?
- Why is it easier to ask God to change situations rather than to change us?

Application Question: Whose will are you seeking?

Give us this day our daily bread, ¹²and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

3. PRAYER IS RELIANCE.

- What does our prayer life reveal about our trust in God's providence?
- Why is daily dependance harder than crisis dependance?
- Why is self-reliance the enemy of a Godward heart?

Application Question: Is your prayer life reliance or demands?

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

¹⁴For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

4. PRAYER IS SPIRITUAL HELP FOR SPIRITUAL BATTLES.

- What is spiritual about prayer?
- Give some examples of spiritual battles we fight with prayer.
- How has your prayer life been a game changer for you?

Application Question: Who is fighting your spiritual battles?

Head / Heart / Hands

- What does this text teach me?
- What does it tell me to feel?
- What does it tell me to do?