



## Honest to God

### A Master Class in the Lord's Prayer

#### Session 2 – Our Father

For John Mahony, a retired U.S. Army colonel, instinct kicked in first on the morning of September 11, 2001. The building jerked hard. “Earthquake,” said his California instinct. Mahony led his co-workers from the 19th floor, North Tower, to stairs filled with smoke and stunned evacuees. Fire sprinklers turned stairwells into waterfalls. Firefighters rushed up as frightened civilians stumbled down. Out of chaos, a familiar rhythm surfaced. His daily habit of saying the Lord’s Prayer settled his mind as the building writhed.

“At first I couldn’t get past the first part. Thy will be done. Thy will be done. But then it came and with it, peace. Jesus was right there with me, with all of us.” Despite the horror of that day, “I walked away with two priceless gifts—God’s peace with me every day, and the unshakeable power of a simple prayer.”

#### Goals for this Session:

- Discover why there is power in this ancient prayer.
- Consider how the attributes of God instill confidence in our Father.
- Examine ways to develop and strengthen personal prayer habits.
- Pray honest prayers that expand understanding and hold steady with gratitude.

#### Ice Breaker

What is your favorite name for addressing God?

#### Day One – The Big Idea

Read **Matthew 6:9–13** and **Galatians 4:4–7** to get the overall idea. Follow the dialogue closely but without getting bogged down in details.

1. What is the central topic? State the main point of this passage in a sentence or two.
2. What insight does this give you into God’s ways and our relationship to Him?
3. The Bible shapes our core beliefs about God and our conduct toward others. Share one takeaway lesson from this passage and how you can apply it to your life.

## Day Two – Who Is Like Our God?

Jesus taught us to begin our prayer with worship, adoration, and praise. Remember how King David sat before the Lord and prayed, “Who am I, O Lord God...that You have brought me this far? For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears” (2 Samuel 7:18, 22 NKJV). Giving thought to who God is will give us every reason to echo David’s same prayer.

It’s a healthy and humbling experience to contemplate who God is—but it’s a lot like trying to drink Niagara Falls with a teacup! While God is too big for our minds to fully comprehend, He is near and wants to be known.

1. God’s attributes are essential qualities that are His alone. Meditating on these attributes strengthens our faith, and stirs awe and confidence in our Heavenly Father.

Give yourself time to read these verses. You don’t need to write them here, word for word, but make a note to help you remember what it says and how you might pray it back to God.

- a. **God is eternal.** As believers, we will live forever (immortality), but only God is eternal. We are created beings, but there has never been a time when God did not exist.

Exodus 3:14

Deuteronomy 33:27

Psalms 90:2

- b. **God is unchangeable.** God is immutable, which is to say He does not change. He has no need to grow or develop in character. He will not degenerate or cease to be perfect.

Psalms 102:25–27

Malachi 3:6a

James 1:17

- c. **God is all-knowing.** God is omniscient, which is to say He has complete and perfect knowledge. God is fully aware of all things at all times and has unlimited understanding.

Job 34:21

Psalms 139:1-6

Hebrews 4:13

- d. **God is ever-present.** God is omnipresent, which is to say He is present everywhere. At the same time, God is not limited by time and space. He exists outside of time and space.

Deuteronomy 4:39

Proverbs 15:3

Jeremiah 23:24

- e. **God is all-powerful.** God is omnipotent, which is to say that He has unlimited strength and the ability to accomplish all that He desires.

Job 42:2

Psalms 115:3

Jeremiah 32:27

2. When we settle our thoughts and worship God for *who He is* at the start of our prayer, what effect will it have on everything else that follows?

### **Memory Verse**

Write the verse and let it be part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

For us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him;  
and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist for Him.

1 Corinthians 8:6 NASB

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### **Think it over**

What is the difference between “*from*” whom and “*by*” whom?

## Day Three – A Family Prayer

Read **Galatians 4:4–7** and **Romans 8:14–16**

The Lord's Prayer is a *family* prayer, but it's not for everyone. In one sense, we are all God's children because He created human beings. But the only way to become *family* with God is through faith in Jesus Christ.

1. We are so accustomed to this prayer that we can pass right over "Our Father" and not even notice the gospel in it!
  - a. Our **Father**. Prior to this, the name used most often was Yahweh (Lord) and it was so revered that, once written, it could not be erased. No devout Jew would presume to call God his own Father. How did Jesus make it possible for us to say Abba, Father?

John 1:12

Galatians 4:4–7

Romans 8:14–16

- b. **Our Father**. No Christian is an only child. We are family, not a loosely knit organization. The Lord taught us to pray *our* Father to remind us that prayer is not, (even when we're alone in the *secret place* Jesus spoke of), an all-about-me activity. Why is that good news?

Acts 1:14 and 2:42

Ephesians 6:18–19

Philippians 2:1–4

Colossians 1:9–12

2. What are some practical ways for us to pray with, and for, other Christians?

- a. Do you participate in praying with other believers on a regular basis? Would you like to? In what way?
  - b. What would you say is the greatest benefit you have experienced from praying with, and for, others?

**"God does not expect us to maintain the life of prayer in our own strength.**

**Jesus knows how weak we are. Therefore, when He teaches us to pray, He invites us into fellowship.**

**To pray is to practice the communion of the saints, which is the spiritual fellowship all Christians everywhere enjoy in Jesus Christ."**

Philip Graham Ryken

*When You Pray:*

*Making the Lord's Prayer Your Own*

## Memory Verse

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and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist for Him.

1 Corinthians 8:6 NASB

## Think it over . . .

If I was more intentional about existing for God the Father each day, what would be different?

## Day Four – A Good, Good Father

### Ephesians 3:14–18 NLT

“When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources He will empower you with inner strength through His Spirit. Then Christ will make His home in your hearts as you trust in Him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, how deep His love is.”

1. The apostle Paul knew how to pray big prayers! Wouldn’t you like someone to pray this for you? Well in fact, he did! (By the way, we can pray this for others too.) This prayer is for those who have been adopted into the family of God.

Paul asks the Spirit to give us power to *understand* the love of God. The word *understand* means to jump on and wrestle to the ground. It reminds us of what nearly every child in every generation is compelled to do when they see their dad or grandpa laid out relaxing on the floor—jump ‘em! The idea here is, never outgrow the delight of tumbling around with how and why you were adopted into God’s family (aka *the joy of your salvation*). Here are the highlights; you fill in the details:

- a. Christ redeemed you (Galatians 3:13, Matthew 27:46). What did that cost Him?
- b. The Spirit of His Son confirmed it—welcome to the family (Galatians 4:6, Romans 8:16). Wow, what was that like for you?
- c. Your inheritance (Ephesians 1:1–14). Does that read like small print on a contract? No worries—just keep checking back, it’ll hit you.
- d. All-access pass (Ephesians 2:18). What’ll you do with that?
- e. New name, new identity (2 Corinthians 5:17). How’s that going?

- f. Bonus! Jesus has plans and He’s praying for you (John 17:1–26). Just read and say thanks!

**Day Five – Honest to God: A Master Class in Prayer**

This will be the layout for the last day throughout this series. Just choose some scripture, insight, or the Memory Verse and *pray it*.

A doration ...

C onfession ...

T hanksgiving ...

S upplication ...

**Memory Verse**

For us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him;  
and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist for Him.

1 Corinthians 8:6 NASB

**And When You Pray ...**

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” —Ephesians 6:18 NIV

**“Prayer is not just getting God to move. It’s the process through which God moves and changes us. Prayer will not only transform what you pray about; it will transform you.”**

**Greg Laurie**

For you personally, what has been the most important discovery or insight from this study?

How will you put living it into practice in the days ahead?

Prayer Requests

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