

Checking In

1. Take a few minutes to check in with everyone, see how they are doing, and open with prayer.

Learning

Knowing God

Key Doctrines

- *God* – The one true God revealed in Scripture eternally exists in three persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- *Heaven* – The place where God dwells in glory.
- *Adoption* – As those united with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit we are given a new identity as beloved children of God the Father.

Key Observations

- *Read: Matthew 6:1-18*
 - As you read the broader context in which the Lord's Prayer is given what stands out to you? What is Jesus concerned about in this section of teaching and how does this impact the way we understand prayer?
Jesus is concerned in this section with "practicing your righteousness" to be seen. He talks about giving, fasting and praying. In other words, he is concerned with doing spiritual practices for the sake of worldly affirmation. Specific to prayer, he is concerned both with people praying to get noticed,

but he is also concerned when people "heap up empty phrases" in prayer as a way to control God.

- As you focus in on the Lord's Prayer itself (verses 9-13) what stands out to you about the way God is addressed? How is God addressed and where does he dwell?

God is addressed as Father first and foremost. This establishes a certain kind of relationship immediately between the one praying and God. It is a personal and familial relationship. However, the truth that we can come before God as a Father does not mean he is like any earthly father. In fact, this Father dwells in heaven and is to be hallowed and worshiped.

- As you focus in on the Lord's Prayer itself (verse 9-13) what stands out to you about the petitions prayed? What is being asked for and what does this say about the human condition?

The petitions show up in the last three verses of the passage. What we see here are three very distinct and very practical requests. Provision for our daily needs, forgiveness for our sins and protection from temptation. This is a picture of our fragile life marked by temptation and sin.

- *Read: Mark 14:32-42*

- If the Lord's Prayer is Jesus' instruction on prayer, this passage gives us a clear picture of Jesus' practice of prayer. As you read the passage what stands out to you about the way Jesus is talking with God?

Allow people to share their observations. The primary thing to emphasize here is that Jesus is talking to the same "Father" he calls us to pray to. What we see is Jesus crying out in a moment of utter desperation to this Father.

- If Jesus has called us to pray to the Father along with him then this prayer is not merely a window into Jesus' prayer life, but a model for our own. What does this passage teach us about honesty in prayer?

Jesus embraces a radical honesty in this scene. Making it known that he doesn't want to have to go to the cross, and pouring out his heart with his body and his words with shocking vulnerability. This is a beautiful model for our prayer lives.

Listening

Responding to God

- In light of hearing this week's sermon, our study together, and listening to God's Word, how might God be inviting you to take a step of obedience?

Loving

Obeying God

- What is happening in my own life right now that I need to share and for which I need prayer?
- This week I am committed to praying for _____ about:

Checking Out

- What was most meaningful about this group session for you (*Give each person 1-2 sentences to share*)?
- Close by praying the Lord's Prayer together out loud (Matthew 6:9-13).