

A hand is shown from the bottom, reaching upwards with fingers spread in a gesture of prayer. The hand is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and a ring on the ring finger. The background is a warm, golden bokeh of light spots, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

THE LORD'S PRAYER GUIDE

PRAYING LIKE JESUS PRAYED

THE LORD'S PRAYER

TRADITIONAL

Our Father, Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth,
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power, and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.

DALLAS WILLARD'S CONTEMPORARY PARAPHRASE

Dear Father always near us,
may your name be treasured and loved,
may your rule be completed in us-
may your will be done here on earth in
just the way it is done in heaven.
Give us today the things we need today,
and forgive us our sins and impositions on you
as we are forgiving all who in any way offend us.
Please don't put us through trials,
but deliver us from everything bad.
Because you are the one in charge,
and you have all the power, and the glory too is all yours-forever-
which is just the way we want it!

INTRODUCTION

When the disciples asked Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray,” he taught them what we have come to know as The Lord’s Prayer (Luke 11:1-4; see also Matthew 6:9-13). In the prayer, Jesus reveals what makes God’s heart tick. Author Darrell Johnson says, “As we pray the Lord’s Prayer we are drawn deeper and deeper into the concerns of the Triune God.”¹ In scope, it encompasses God’s agenda for whole world’s destiny, not to mention his will for our lives as his people. Over the centuries, many theologians and church leaders have spoken of the Lord’s Prayer as a condensed summary of the entire Christian life. As such, it serves as a helpful outline for Christian discipleship.

The more we learn to let Lord’s Prayer shape our own prayer lives, the more God shapes us to see things as he sees them, to value what he values, and to live accordingly. As we pray the Lord’s Prayer, we become partners with God in bringing about his heart’s desire for the world. This is the kind of praying God loves to answer!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide offers a 7-day cycle of reflections and prayer points based on the traditional wording of each clause of the Lord’s Prayer. It is recommend that you repeat the 7-day prayer cycle for one month or more. This will allow the themes of the Lord’s Prayer to “sink in” for you, and become more a part of your ongoing prayer life.

Simply follow the dates listed, and:

1. Read the reflection for the day. (You’re encouraged to look up any scripture references, too.)
2. Pray through the prayer points in your own words, as the Lord leads.

Note that there are also one or two suggested **worship songs** for each day’s theme that you can readily find online and incorporate into your prayer time if you like.

Praying like this might feel a bit different at first, but that’s okay. Remember, these are the key themes Jesus calls us to pray about—the concerns that are closest to God’s heart.

¹ Darrell Johnson, *Fifty-Seven Words that Change the World: A Journey Through the Lord’s Prayer*, p. 14.

OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN

REFLECT

OUR Father: Notice that the Lord's Prayer doesn't begin the way we might often begin our prayers. It doesn't begin with *I, me, or my*. Beginning prayer with *our* takes the focus off me, and causes us to be mindful of God's family, the church. It reminds me that whenever I come before my heavenly Father in prayer, I do so as a brother or sister of God's other children. He is *our* Father.

God calls us into one family because God *himself is a family*—a divine community of three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God himself exists in Triune relationship, because God is love (1 John 4:8), and love requires a plurality of persons. Author David Benner says, "We come to this God who is a community of love in the company of Jesus and all who call God Father."²

And consider how the prayer unfolds throughout—in the first person plural—with the words *us, our and we*. Our Father is profoundly concerned about the unity of his family, as reflected in Jesus' prayer in John 17:20-23.

OUR FATHER: Jesus leads the way, because not only does he show us what it means to authentically relate to God as Father, and to our Christian brothers and sisters (1 John 1:3-4). He *makes this possible* in the first place through his death and resurrection. In and through Jesus, God becomes our Father, who freely gives us the one thing we most need: *perfect love*:

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (1 John 3:1; see also Luke 15:11-31).

It is God's perfect, fatherly love in Christ that sets us free to stop striving to find life in false sources and on our own terms. God's fatherly love in Christ releases us to love and serve others sacrificially, because we already have all we the love we'll ever need in him.

Martin Luther said that addressing God as Father in prayer causes us to pause before talking to God, and to realize our standing in Christ: "You have taught us to regard you as one God and Father of us all... although... you could rightly and properly be a severe judge over us."³ He loves us, oh how he loves us! He's a good, good Father—it's who he is. And we're loved by him—it's who we are.

That he would give his only Son Jesus for us while we were yet sinners is the proof of that (Romans 5:8).

IN HEAVEN: We often think of heaven as a faraway place, somewhere up in the sky. But this part of the prayer does not speak of God's distance: "Father, can you hear me from all the way up there?" On the contrary, to speak of our Father is in heaven is to speak of God's nearness.

A biblical understanding of heaven is that it is the unseen realm of God which is not far away, but rather "all around us"—a dimension that is veiled from our eyes, and yet very close at hand. So here, it is as if Jesus is teaching us to pray, "Father, all around us; Father, very close at hand."⁴

The idea of God dwelling in heaven also carries connotations of God being on his throne. Heaven is where God's throne is. So when we pray to the Father, we pray to the one who is enthroned. If God is not on the throne, prayer is little more than a therapeutic exercise. But when we pray to our Father who is on his heavenly throne, it means that we pray to the one who has the power and authority to answer the Lord's Prayer.⁵ We can therefore dare hope that when we pray the prayer, things will happen!

PRAY

- 1. OUR Father:** Pray for continual loving unity at Cornerstone, and for the worldwide church.
- 2. Our FATHER:** Pray for God to implant in your heart a deep, comforting experience of his Fatherly love in Jesus (see Romans 8:16).
- 3. IN HEAVEN:** Pray that you will remain awake and alert to God's presence, which is very close at hand, and to have confidence that the God who is seated on his heavenly throne is able.

WORSHIP SONGS

Sons and Daughters (Bret Stanfil)

Good, Good Father (Chris Tomlin)

God is Able (Hillsong Worship)

2 David G. Benner, *Desiring God's Will: Aligning Our Hearts with the Heart of God*, p. 35.

3 As quoted in Timothy Keller, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*, p. 110.

4 Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*, p. 257.

5 Johnson, *Fifty-Seven Words*, p. 22.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

REFLECT

The meaning of this petition is, “May your name be treated as holy.” That is, may the name of the Father be treated as infinitely precious and highly valued above all else. The verb carries the sense of *praise, honour, exalt, magnify, revere, glorify*.⁶

If this is to happen, God’s name must be *known*. So “hallowed” also includes the notion of God’s name being revealed, manifest, made real: “May your name, O God, be made known on earth as you’re known in heaven.” Jesus lived and died to see the Father’s name “hallowed” (see John 17).

In the Bible, names are more than personal labels. Names describe *realities*. To know the name of God is to know who God is. It is to know God’s essential character and attributes. “Father, may your character and attributes be made known throughout this world as they are in heaven. Enhance your reputation in all the earth.”⁷

And it is in the name of Jesus that the Father’s name is hallowed. Jesus is the ultimate revelation of who God is:

1. Jesus is: *Immanuel, God with us*. (Matthew 1:23)
2. Jesus says: *Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father*. (John 14:9)
3. *The Son radiates God’s own glory and expresses the very character of God*. (Hebrews 1:3)
4. *The Son is the image of the invisible God*. (Colossians 1:15)
5. *The glory of God... is seen in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6) ... at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth... to the glory of God the Father*. (Philippians 2:10-11)

It turns out that, Jesus, the one who teaches us to pray for the Father’s name to be hallowed, is himself the answer to that prayer!

PRAY

- That the Father would “hallow” his name in your own life and in the life and ministry of Cornerstone.
- Pray for God to really make himself known in a special way to someone you care about who doesn’t know him yet— like a family member, a friend, a co-worker or neighbour.
- That the name and character of God would be made real through the revelation of JESUS the Son—his life and ministry, his cross, his resurrection, and ascension.

WORSHIP SONGS

What a Beautiful Name (Hillsong Worship)

Your Name (Paul Baloche)

6 Darrell Johnson, *Fifty-Seven Words*, p. 30.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

REFLECT

The central clause of the Lord's Prayer is "on earth as it is in heaven." It captures God's passion to bring the reality of heaven to earth. It sums up the very heart of God's grand purpose in Christ. This is a paradigm shift for many Christians today, who have been taught that God's ultimate plan is to whisk people away from earth and take them off to heaven. But when Jesus returns, God's ultimate plan is for his kingdom—his holy, loving rule and reign—to come fully to earth as it already is in heaven. God's goal is to unite heaven and earth into a single realm, called the new heavens and the new earth, where he will dwell with his people forever (see Revelation 21:1-5). "God's space and ours are finally married, integrated at last. That is what we pray for when we pray Thy kingdom come," says New Testament scholar N.T. Wright.⁸

The Lord's Prayer shows us that God's primary purpose is not about getting people to heaven when they die. It is to resurrect the physical bodies of those redeemed in Christ to rule and reign with him in a gloriously restored earthly creation (see Romans 8:22-25) in which all things have been forever set right (see Colossians 1:20 and Ephesians 1:10). As Darrell Johnson puts it:

To pray the Lord's Prayer is to participate in heaven's invasion of earth, which began with Jesus, continues in and through the church, and will be brought to completion at the return of Christ. It is to participate in a revolution of huge proportions: *O Father, your name is hallowed in heaven; hallow it on earth, in me, in my family, in this city. O Father, your kingdom has come in heaven; cause it to come on earth, in my house, in my neighborhood, in this country. O Father, your will is done in heaven; make it be done in earth, in my work place, in the work places in Vancouver and Seattle and Dallas and Mexico City and Tokyo and Baghdad and Calcutta and Nairobi. O Father, your name be hallowed; your kingdom come, your will be done on Main Street and Wall Street, as it is in heaven!*⁹

God's kingdom exists wherever God's will is done. Obviously, God's will is not fully being done on earth yet. However, in Jesus, and through the church, God's kingdom has broken into this world. One day, all suffering, poverty, and death will

be ended. To pray “Thy kingdom come” is to yearn for the coming future of God’s perfect justice, peace, and love, and to agree to be agents of that justice, peace, and love here and now as a sign of the glory of the Lord that will one day fill the whole earth (Habakkuk 2:14; Isaiah 11:9).

To pray “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done” is not only to pray for God’s will to be done in the wider world. It’s also to pray for God’s will to be done in our own lives. How can we know that God’s will is what is truly best for us? Tim Keller explains that,

This is the one part of the Lord’s Prayer that Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, when he said, “Not my will, but thine be done.” He submitted to the Father’s will, and it saved you and me. That’s why we can trust him. Jesus is not asking us to do anything for him that he hasn’t already done for us, under conditions beyond comprehension.¹⁰

PRAY

- That God would bring his kingdom more fully in you, in Cornerstone, in your city, and in the world—spiritually, socially, relationally, economically, environmentally—and in other churches, marriages, families, youth, children, men, women, seniors, etc.
- That God would help you to submit more fully to his will for your own life, encouraged by the fact that Jesus submitted to the Father’s will when he gave his life for your salvation. In Christ, God has shown himself to be fully “for you” and therefore you can trust that his will is what is best for you, no matter what.

WORSHIP SONGS

Build Your Kingdom Here (Rend Collective)

Let Your Glory Fall (David Ruis)

8 N.T. Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*, p. 13.

9 Johnson, *Fifty-Seven Words*, p. 19.

10 Keller, *Prayer*, p. 112-113.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

REFLECT

Of this petition, David Benner writes,

What God wants is that we (not I) come for our (not my) daily (not weekly) bread from him (not the labor of my hands)... Most of us so excel at ensuring our ongoing supply of life's provisions that we find the idea of having to come back for daily bread offensive. But God invites us to abandon our neurotic displays of self-sufficiency. He invites us to surrender our stolen independence and exchange it for a willingly accepted dependence.¹¹

This clause in the Lord's Prayer reminds us that our basic needs and desires—bread, and all that it stands for—are not too unimportant to bring before God. God intends for us to pray for specific needs, because that is precisely what children do with the one they love and trust as “Father” (Matthew 7:11).

When we ask God for our daily bread in light of the God-centered petitions in the first half of the Lord's Prayer, we are asking that God meet our needs *in his way and for his glory* (James 4:3). And since God himself is the one we most deeply hunger for (whether we realize it or not), this petition is also a way of asking that we be fed with more of God himself.

“Today I have God,” says Dallas Willard, “and he has the provisions. Tomorrow will be the same. So I simply need ask today for what I need for today or ask now for what I need now.”¹² Therefore, to pray this part of the Lord's Prayer helps us grow in freedom from worry about our future.

Tim Keller also explains how Martin Luther sees a powerful *social* aspect to this part of the Lord's Prayer:

For all people to get daily bread, there must be a thriving economy, good employment, and a just society. Therefore, to pray “give us— all the people of our land—daily bread” is to pray against “wanton exploitation” in business, trade and labor, which “crushes the poor and deprives them of their bread.”¹³

PRAY

- Pray for your own daily needs with the above reflections in mind. Know that God invites you to specifically bring your needs to him, and it delights him when you do. Don't forget to ask God to feed your deepest hunger with more of himself!
- Pray for the daily needs of others that the Lord brings to your mind.
- Pray for the world—that God's justice and mercy will reign more and more so that none will have to go hungry, and the basic needs of all will be met—especially their need for God. And ask God, "How might you lead me today to be an answer to this prayer for a person or group of people in need?"

WORSHIP SONGS

Lord, I Need You (Matt Maher)

Enough (Chris Tomlin)

Breathe (Marie Barnett)

11 Benner, *Desiring God's Will*, p. 42.

12 Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*, p. 261.

13 Keller, *Prayer*, p. 114.

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US

REFLECT

What do you do when you blow it? John Eldredge counsels us to,

Repent quickly. The sooner the better. For one thing, you do not want to lose your intimacy with God. For another, you know the enemy is going jump all over you when you blow it, and you don't want to get hammered by that for days, weeks, months, years. Also, you are after freedom; the longer you wait to repent, the deeper a hold the sin gets in you.¹⁴

Eldredge goes on to describe that “repenting in the moment” will look and sound something like this:

First, run to God: *Father, forgive me. I'm sorry. I ask your forgiveness for [fill in the blank – this envy, that comment, the lust, my cowardice]. O forgive me, Father.*

Second, RENOUNCE it: If you intend to repeat it, your repentance is a fraud. By renouncing it you summon your soul to the posture that you do not intend to repeat it. Furthermore, when you sin, you give way to forces that you do not want running pell-mell around your soul. Sin is what gives the evil one a place in our life: “Do not sin, and do not give the devil a foothold” (Ephesians 4:26-27). You do not want him taking advantage of your fall. Renounce it quickly: *And Father, I renounce this. I renounce [the envy, comment, lust, cowardice...]. I renounce choosing this; I renounce giving it a place in my heart and soul. I renounce every claim I've given to the enemy through my sin. I reject this, in Jesus' name. I banish this from me. I am dead to sin, and alive to God.*

Third, cleansing and renewal: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9) and “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24): *Father, cleanse me with the blood of Jesus; wash me right here, from all of this. I plead the blood of Christ over this sin. Wash me*

clean; renew me. O father, sanctify me through and through right here, in this. I ask you for your holiness here, in this.

As well, failure to forgive others is like cutting off the branch you're sitting on, says Bible scholar N.T. Wright:

The only reason for being Kingdom people, for being Jesus' people, was that the forgiveness of sins was happening; so if you didn't live forgiveness, you were denying the very basis of your own existence.¹⁵

PRAY

- Use the above outline for a time of personal confession. Because it's fairly simple, try to silently practice this form of prayer throughout the day, as often as you catch yourself needing to repent of any sins in thought, word, or deed.
- Who do you need to forgive this day? Commit them to the Lord, and pray this prayer of blessing on them: *Lord, I agree with you that this person is created in your image and that Jesus died for him/her. He/she is therefore loved by you, so I pray your blessing on his/her life now, in your name. Amen.*

WORSHIP SONGS

Forgiven (David Crowder)

Forgiveness (Matthew West—a song about forgiving others)

¹⁴ This counsel, along with the 3-step confession model that follows, is quoted from an article by John Eldredge called *Repentance in the Moment*: <https://wildatheart.org/daily-reading/repentance-moment>

¹⁵ Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*, p. 39. On forgiving others, see also Matthew 18:21-35, Ephesians 4:32, and Colossians 3:13.)

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION; BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL

REFLECT

This petition is not just that we won't face temptation, but that we won't be brought or "led" into temptation. Or, as Jesus puts it elsewhere, that we won't "give in to" temptation (Matthew 26:41). Here, we are asking God to keep us from *entertaining and considering the prospect of giving in to sin*.

Augustine, the ancient church leader and theologian, said that "lead us not into temptation" is a prayer for deliverance from the evil that remains inside us, and that "deliver us from evil" is a petition for protection from evil forces outside of us, especially the spiritual forces of evil (Ephesians 6:10-20).¹⁶

To pray this part of the Lord's Prayer is to recognize the reality of the evil that remains in our own hearts, and in this world, and to take them seriously. But more than that, it is to breathe in the victory of the cross of Christ (Ephesians 1:7), through which our sins are forgiven and the enemy is utterly defeated (Colossians 2:15). God's grace in Jesus is greater than all our sin.

Consider, too, that although Jesus gave this prayer to his disciples, when he prayed to be delivered from evil in the Garden of Gethsemane, God's answer was "No."¹⁷ Remember, Jesus put his request for deliverance from evil alongside an earlier petition from the Lord's Prayer: "Not my will, but Thine be done." So in a way that is unique to Jesus alone, he was not delivered from evil, but rather was completely exposed to its full fury by God's will. In doing so, he absorbed evil's power, exhausting and defeating it, so that we, although guilty, could be forgiven and freed to become beloved children of "our Father."

PRAY

- Take some time to pray for deliverance from temptation within, and from evil without, for yourself, for Cornerstone, and for others.
- If you have the time, look up Ephesians 6:10-20, and “pray on” the full armour of God.
- Re-read the last paragraph in the reflection above about how Jesus was not delivered from evil’s wrath for our sake, and spend a moment to worship and thank him.

WORSHIP SONGS

Beneath the Waters (I Will Rise) (Hillsong Worship)

Break Every Chain (Tasha Cobbs)

Whom Shall I Fear (Chris Tomlin)

¹⁶ See Keller, *Prayer*, p. 117.

¹⁷ Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*, p. 50.

FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY, FOREVER

REFLECT

These words are not found in the gospel passages where Jesus teaches the Lord's Prayer. However, they are a rich and longstanding traditional "doxology" that the church added as a worshipful way of concluding the prayer. This ending of the Lord's Prayer is an invitation to contemplate what is meant by kingdom, power, and glory.

In his gospel, Luke strikes a deliberate contrast between the baby King in his humble manger, who stands over against even the greatest king of the mighty Roman Empire (Caesar Augustus). It was to this baby King that the angels of heaven sang, "Glory to God in the highest"—and they did so in the company of a group of humble, workaday shepherds (Luke 2:13-14).

Bible scholar N.T. Wright explains that later in Luke:

This, then, was what it would look like when the ancient promises were fulfilled, when the glory of the Lord would be revealed for all flesh to see together: a young Jew, riding over the Mount of Olives in tears, driving the traders out of the temple, and dying at the behest of Caesar's kingdom. And once again, Luke intends us to realize, the angels are singing that God is glorified, and that the way of peace has been achieved after all. This is the ultimate redefinition of the kingdom, the power and the glory. Caesar's plans for his own glory are turned by God into the establishment of the true kingdom.¹⁸

All this has tremendous implications for Christian life and ministry. King Jesus redefines what "power and glory" look like. It's counterintuitive, but true power and glory are not found in worldly titles, popularity, wealth, or military strength. True power and glory are best revealed in Jesus' manger, in the garden where he tearfully prayed, and ultimately on the cross (John 12:23-33; Hebrews 2:9-10). The church, as the new royal family, is called to live by this radical redefinition of power and glory revealed in the manger and the cross (Philippians 2:5-11; Galatians 6:14). Is the distinctively humble and gentle "power and glory" of Jesus revealed in the way you live and serve?

To pray the doxology of the Lord's Prayer is also to pray with confidence and commitment in the Spirit of Jesus, who has defeated the power of the world by the power of his cross.

PRAY

- That the “power and glory” of God in Christ will be revealed in and through you, and through Cornerstone.
- Pray for a fresh filling of the Spirit of Jesus, that you may serve others as he served them.

WORSHIP SONGS

The Lord's Prayer (Matt Shepherdson)

Our Father (Bethel Music, written by Marcus Meir)

18 Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*, p. 66.

