

Discipline—Prayer

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1. Jesus **prioritized** prayer.

“They went to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and Jesus said, ‘Sit here while I go and pray.’ He took Peter, James, and John with him, and he became deeply troubled and distressed. He told them, ‘My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.’”

Mark 14:32-34 (NLT)

2. Jesus **practiced** prayer.

“He went on a little farther and fell to the ground. He prayed that, if it were possible, the awful hour awaiting him might pass him by. ‘Abba, Father,’ he cried out, ‘everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.’ Then he returned and found the disciples asleep. He said to Peter, ‘Simon, are you asleep? Couldn’t you watch with me even one hour? Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give into temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak.’ Then Jesus left them again and prayed the same prayer as before.”

Mark 14:35-39 (NLT)

3. Jesus **passed on** how to pray.

“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. When you pray, don’t babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!”

Matthew 6:5-8 (NLT)

“Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.”

Matthew 6:9-13 (NLT)

Connecting people to Jesus through intentional relationships with one another.

Small Group Discussion Opportunities

Questions specific to the teaching: Read Matthew 6

1. What are the ways that Jesus instructs his followers to *not* pray? Why do you think those types of prayers are not ideal in Jesus' view?
2. In verse 8, what is the purpose of prayer if God already knows what we need?
3. How can you strengthen your prayer life by applying the lessons in the Lord’s Prayer (verses 9-13?)

Discuss these questions:

1. What do we learn about God from this teaching?
2. What do we learn about man/us from this teaching?
3. What is God saying to you specifically through this teaching as it pertains to your life, family, and work?
4. Considering what you’ve learned today, what is a next step you need to take in following Jesus with others?

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March Prayer Focus: The Church

Father, we thank you for the opportunity to connect with other churches in this valley. We pray that you will strengthen the unity and bond between us and break down the walls of competition and dissension. I pray that we will be in one accord, worshiping one God, one Faith, one Baptism and one Hope. Help us to love one another into action as we work together to further Your Kingdom.

—AMEN