

S T U D Y G U I D E

PRAY THEN LIKE THIS:

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN,
HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME.

YOUR KINGDOM COME,
YOUR WILL BE DONE,

ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD,

AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS,

AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS.



R. ALBERT
MOHLER JR.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION,
BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

S T U D Y G U I D E

The Lord's Prayer

R. Albert Mohler Jr.



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Teach Us to Pray

INTRODUCTION

Who better to teach us how to pray than the Lord Jesus Christ? The disciples understood this, and as followers of Jesus Christ, we understand this. In this lesson, Dr. Mohler places the Lord's Prayer in the context of the Gospels.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To answer why it is that we need to be taught how to pray
2. To introduce the context of the Lord's Prayer in Matthew and Luke

SCRIPTURE READING

Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.

—Luke 11:1b

LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. Christians need to be taught how to pray in order to guard against any confusion surrounding prayer and understand how prayer reveals what we actually believe.
 1. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, and the record of His instruction can be found in two gospels, Matthew and Luke.
 2. Like Jesus' disciples, we need to be taught how to pray because of the confusion that exists concerning prayer.
 - a. Prayer can often fail to resemble the models of prayer found in the New Testament.
 - b. Prayer can often be used to merely transition from one activity to the next even in the course of Christian worship.
 3. Like Jesus' disciples, we need to be taught how to pray because prayer reveals what we actually believe.

- a. Roger Scruton is a contemporary and prominent philosopher who converted to Christianity from atheism.
 - b. Even as an unbeliever, he rightly observed that a systematic theology reveals far less about what we believe than prayer.
 - c. Prayer not only reveals what we believe about God, it also reveals the entire range of our theological beliefs.
4. The Lord's Prayer is the model by which Jesus taught us how to pray in order to guard against confusion so that we would pray what we believe.
- a. The Lord's Prayer is short but theologically massive, because it includes the totality of the Christian faith.
 - b. The Lord's Prayer is the title traditionally given for the model Jesus gave the disciples.
- B. The Lord's Prayer can be found in the gospel of Matthew and the gospel of Luke.
1. The Lord's Prayer is found in Matthew 6 and Luke 11, which provide context important for understanding the Lord's Prayer.
 - a. Matthew 6 contains the form of the Lord's Prayer that has been used most often in the church and situates the prayer at the climactic peak of the Sermon on the Mount.
 - b. Luke 11 contains a shorter version of the Lord's Prayer but provides the greater context in which Jesus taught His disciples how to pray.
 - c. The context that Luke 11 provides helps us to understand why we have multiple accounts.
 2. The context of Jesus' instruction of the disciples in Luke 11 teaches us about Jesus' prayer life and teaching methodology.
 - a. Jesus habitually withdrew in order to pray; He would withdraw even from fellowship with the disciples into fellowship with the Father.
 - b. Luke 11:1 teaches us that Jesus was being observed in prayer, perhaps sovereignly anticipating His disciples' request.
 - c. Jesus is purposeful in allowing His disciples' request; question and answer can be a powerful and dynamic method of instruction.
 - d. Luke 11 teaches us that the nature of discipleship is being taught, so we must understand our need of being taught how to pray and honor the model of prayer Jesus gave to us.
- C. The gospel of Matthew provides further context to the Lord's Prayer in sequence with Jesus' wider teaching on prayer—most particularly, how not to pray.
1. Jesus teaches us not to pray hypocritically.
 - a. Jesus identifies the Pharisees as hypocrites, because they “love to stand and pray . . . that they may be praised by others” (Matt. 6:5).
 - b. Hypocrisy is presenting oneself as something one is not or presenting oneself one way in a given context while presenting oneself in another way in another context.

- c. Jesus is teaching His disciples that the temptation to draw attention to ourselves is a persistent temptation in prayer.
 2. Jesus teaches us not to pray ritualistic, empty prayers.
 - a. Jesus identifies the Gentiles as those that “heap up empty phrases . . . that they will be heard for their many words” (Matt. 6:7).
 - b. Prayer that is characteristically repetitious and ritualistic or prayer that is often accompanied by a symbolic object is not true prayer.
 - c. Repeated phrases and words may be appropriate in the context of urgency but do not fit the context of everyday Christian devotion.
 - d. Martin Luther said that Christian prayer should be “short and profound.”
- D. The Lord’s Prayer has been honored throughout the history of the Christian church, because God’s people have always understood their need to be taught how to pray.
 1. The disciples needed to be taught how to pray, so we shouldn’t be ashamed to acknowledge that we also need to be taught how to pray.
 2. Christians throughout the centuries return again and again to the Lord’s Prayer because it is how Jesus taught us to pray.
 3. We often pray beyond the words of the Lord’s Prayer, but we will never pray beyond the theology of the Lord’s Prayer if we are faithful.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. The Lord’s Prayer is found in each of the Synoptic Gospels.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. Jesus warns against _____ prayer.
 - a. Ritualistic
 - b. Repetitious
 - c. Hypocritical
 - d. All of the above
3. Jesus points out the hypocrisy of the prayers of the _____.
 - a. Zealots
 - b. Essenes
 - c. Pharisees
 - d. Sadducees
4. The Lord’s Prayer is the traditional title for the model prayer that Jesus gave His disciples, but other prayers can appropriately be called “The Lord’s Prayer.”
 - a. True
 - b. False

5. The disciple who asked Jesus to teach them how to pray was _____ .
 - a. Peter
 - b. Andrew
 - c. Matthew
 - d. Not identified

6. _____ said that Christian prayer should be “short and profound.”
 - a. Calvin
 - b. Luther
 - c. Spurgeon
 - d. Augustine

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do the gospel of Matthew and the gospel of Luke complement each other by providing the context of the Lord's Prayer? What do multiple gospel accounts teach us about the wisdom of God and Scripture?

2. Jesus gave us a model of how we are to pray. How is it possible that we are able to go beyond the words of the Lord's Prayer and remain faithful to the way Jesus taught us to pray?

3. What are some practical ways for Christians to avoid hypocritical and empty prayers?

4. How do discipleship and prayer relate to one another? What does the disciples' need to be taught how to pray teach us about ourselves?

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