



WEEK 1: OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

Ice Breaker: What day would you want to re-live from this past summer?

Ramping Up

This week, we begin our series on how to pray the way Jesus taught us to pray. For many of us, whether we call it “the Lord’s Prayer,” the “Our Father,” or something else, this prayer is deeply embedded in us. For others, this prayer will be new. For any of us looking to learn to pray - like a handrail along a steep path up a mountain - this prayer will guide us and will shape how we pray.

- What does this prayer (the Lord’s Prayer) bring to mind for you? Memories? Stories?
- What’s been your “handrail” for prayer? How have you learned to pray? Any useful prayer tips?

Read Matthew 6:5-8

*This teaching from Jesus immediately precedes the Lord’s Prayer, and is a kind of prologue to it. There’s strong words and provocative teaching in it as it gets to the heart of **why** we pray. It ought to cause us to pause and consider our own prayers in light of it.*

- What stands out to you in this passage?
- What do we learn about prayer from this particular teaching of Jesus?
- How can we make sense of “for your Father knows what you need before you ask him”?

Read Matthew 6:9-13. Focus on 9b (“Our Father in heaven”)

God is our Father, but God is not necessarily like our earthly fathers. They are, at best, a mere shadow of him. God is more like the father “we all long for,” and we are his kids. That’s good news. He is a personal God. He knows us better than anyone every could. He sees all, he sees all we do, and yet, he still loves us. He knows what we need before even we do, and promises to give it!

- How is it a good thing that God our Father is not necessarily like our earthly fathers?
- What are some good qualities of our earthly fathers that do reflect God’s character?
- *Read Matthew 7:9-11.* Based on that passage, what is God our Father like?
- *Read Psalm 33:13-15.* How is prayer impacted by the fact that God ‘sees all’?
 - Is this comforting and trust-building, or kind of scary?
- **Who** you are is less significant than **whose** you are. How does this sit with you?
 - Why is this sometimes so hard to believe and/or to live as if it’s true?

LET’S PRAY!

Is there something going on in your life where you just need to see God’s power to breaking through?

For today’s meeting, take time as a Group (~5 minutes) to answer this question and your Group leader will close the night in prayer. Remember, this week we are praying for us to pray - for God to produce in us a hunger and thirst for God that is met in prayer. Don’t forget to pray for that too!