

Prayer is something we should constantly strive to learn more about

It must have been a wonderful experience for Jesus' disciples to hear Him pray. Given the close relationship between Jesus and the Father, it must have been a moving experience actually to hear the words with which He spoke to God. It is no surprise that, having heard the Lord pray, the disciples wanted Him to teach them more about prayer: "Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples'" (Lk. 11:1).

Prayer is something we should constantly strive to learn more about. As the years go by, we tend to settle into certain routines in our praying, and we need to make the effort throughout life to grow deeper and deeper in the knowledge of what prayer should be. Indeed, there is more to learn about communicating with God than we could learn in a long lifetime. The challenge is to keep learning and growing.

You may not have thought about it, but prayer is one of the principal means of coming to know God more fully. We study the Scriptures to gain truth about God, of course. Indeed, the Scriptures are our primary source of information about God. But we come to a richer understanding of what we know about God as we communicate back to Him in prayer. God having spoken to us in the Scriptures, we gain insight into His character as we pray to Him. It is a good idea for us to talk to God in prayer about what we have learned about Him in the Scriptures.

Think of it this way: in prayer, we must speak with God in the context of our own experience. In using our own words to talk to God — based on what we know of Him through the Scriptures — we apply our knowledge of Him to the real-life activities that we have been through. In talking through these things with God, we come to understand the truth of God's truth. We learn the real significance of the truths and principles that we have learned in the Bible. Prayer, then, does not allow God to know more about us — it allows us to know more about God. Throughout the coming week, then, let's pray more sincerely, and in doing so let's learn more what God intends prayer to be. We are never praying better than when our prayers are helping us to understand God.

Monday: Matthew 6:5-8

Key Idea: We ought to pray sincerely unto God, and not for worldly reasons.

Questions for Family Growth: In v.5, how did Jesus say the "hypocrites" prayed? What was wrong with the praying of the "Gentiles" in v.7? What did Jesus teach about the way His disciples should pray?

Wisdom for the Day: Proverbs 17:16.

Tuesday: Matthew 6:9,10

Key Idea: We ought to pray in a way that shows true reverence for God.

Questions for Family Growth: What is the manner in which Jesus said we should pray? Is it significant that this prayer begins as it does? What does it mean to “hallow” God’s name? What should we pray concerning God’s kingdom and His will?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 17:17](#).

Wednesday: Matthew 6:11

Key Idea: We ought to pray that God will provide for our daily needs.

Questions for Family Growth: What kinds of things might be included in the expression “daily bread”? If God already knows what we need ([v.8](#)), why should we ask Him for our needs? What does it mean to ask for the things we need “this day”?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 17:18](#).

Thursday: Matthew 6:12

Key Idea: We ought to pray for God’s forgiveness of our sins.

Questions for Family Growth: What are the “debts” mentioned here? Why is it so important that we forgive those who have sinned against us? Consider [vv.14,15](#). With what attitude of heart should we pray for forgiveness?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 17:19](#).

Friday: Matthew 6:13

Key Idea: We ought to pray that God will help us to be strong spiritually.

Questions for Family Growth: What is “temptation,” and what should be our prayer concerning that experience? What should we pray concerning “evil” (ESV) or the “evil one” (NKJV)? With what words did Jesus conclude this great prayer?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 17:20](#).

Gary Henry — WordPoints.com