

Sermon Discussion Guide

Praying Like a Son

Matthew 6:5–8

Jesus assumes that we pray (5, 6, 7)

Dan. 6:10; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 18:1–8; Rom. 8:26; Phil. 4:6–7; 1 Thess. 5:17

- Where in verses 5, 6, and 7 do we see that Jesus assumes his followers pray?
- Why is prayer important in the Christian life?
- What are some ways you struggle with prayer?
- What is the primary reason we all struggle with prayer?
- What should you do when unbelief keeps you from prayer?

Jesus teaches us how not to pray (5, 7)

Matt. 6:2; 23:5–7; Luke 11:1–4; Acts 4:23–31; 1 Kings 18:20–29; Matt. 26:36–44

- What are two wrong ways of praying that Jesus warns us against in these verses?
- What is the motivation behind hypocritical prayer?
- In what ways are we tempted to turn prayer into a performance for other people?
- What characterizes pagan prayer? According to Jesus, why do the pagans fill their prayers with an abundance of words?
- Martin Luther said, “Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance, but laying hold of his willingness.” How would understanding this truth change your prayers?

Jesus teaches us how to pray (6, 8)

Matt. 6:1,4,6,8,9,14,15,18,26,32; Ex. 4:22; Hos. 11:1; 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps. 89:26–27; Ps. 68:5; John 17:1, 23; Rom. 8:15–16; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 3:1; Matt. 27:46

- How did Jesus address God in his prayers?
- Why would this have been surprising, even shocking, to the disciples and the Pharisees?
- As adopted sons and daughters, Jesus invites us to address his Father as our Father.
- How does knowing God as Father change the way we pray?
 - Freedom (v. 6)
 - Confidence (v. 8)
- In prayer do you approach God as your heavenly Father?

Conclusion

- In which of Jesus’ prayers did he not address God as Father? (see Matt. 27:46)
- Spend some time at the beginning of your prayers this week delighting in the Father’s love.