

**“LORD
TEACH
US
TO
PRAY...”**

*A Workbook of Daily Prayer
Based on the Lord’s Prayer*

A six week series for daily study.

*Developed by the National Prayer Mobilization Team
Contributions by:*

- a) Rev. David Chotka*
- b) Rev. Bob Beasley*
- c) Rev. Julius Tiangson*
- d) Gail Whyte*
- e) Lorraine Willems*
- f) Rev. Brent Farquhar*

WEEK #1 ***PRAISE THE FATHER***- “Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. . .”

Introduction:

Jesus’ life **was** a prayer life. He lived each day in an attitude of prayer. His prayer life characterized him. His disciples couldn’t miss it. In fact, “One day, Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” (Luke 11:1) Exposure to Jesus’ prayer life led his disciples to want to learn to pray. Of course, Jesus was very eager to respond to this request. The pattern of prayer Jesus gave his disciples as a guide continues to be instructive to us today. As we move toward Assembly 2002, let’s allow God to prepare our hearts through prayer.

Are you surprised by Christ’s starting point in this instructive teaching on prayer? “Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.” You shouldn’t be, but if we are really honest, we must confess that by nature, we are much quicker to ask things of God than to give glory and praise to God.

This principle of beginning our prayers in praise doesn’t come naturally to us. Our preoccupation with self and the circumstances that surround us often draw us too quickly into the arena of needs and burdens and requests. Jesus knew this, and so He starts His teaching on prayer with a strong exhortation. “Children, get your eyes off yourself, and lift them up to heaven. Let the glory of the Father’s presence draw you into expressions of adoration and praise. Express your worship to your Father, and don’t be in a hurry to move on. Let the hallowing of His name become you first passion. Let the holy presence of God intoxicate your soul and captivate your whole being as you glorify His name.

So, we start with Praise. Let’s train our hearts in this first work of prayer, lest the rest of our praying slide into the gutters of self centred requesting or mindless repetition. “Lord, teach us to pray by PRAISING FIRST.”

Rev. Brent Farquhar

Week #1 Praise the Father

DAY 2. We will always be discovering more and more truths about what our Heavenly Father is like. This is the ongoing pursuit of every follower of Jesus Christ.

I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders.

I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

My enemies turn back; they stumble and perish before you.

For you have upheld my right and my cause; you have sat on your throne, judging righteously. You have rebuked the nations and destroyed the wicked; you have blotted out their name forever and ever. Endless ruin has overtaken the enemy, you have uprooted their cities; even the memory of them has perished.

The Lord reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgement. He will judge the world in righteousness; he will govern the peoples with justice.

The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.

Sing praises to the Lord, enthroned in Zion; proclaim among the nations what he has done. For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not ignore the cry of the afflicted.

O Lord see how my enemies persecute me! Have mercy and lift me up from the gates of death, that I may declare your praises in the gates of the Daughter of Zion and there rejoice in your salvation.

The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug; their feet are caught in the net they have hidden. The Lord is known by his justice; the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands.

The wicked return to the grave, all the nations that forget God. But the needy will not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the afflicted ever perish.

Arise O Lord, let not man triumph; let the nations be judged in your presence. Strike them with terror, O Lord; let the nations know they are but men.

Psalm 9 NIV.

1. What aspects of God's character stand out to you in this Psalm?
2. What difference does knowing these things about God make in your approach to Him in prayer?
3. Take a few minutes to praise God for who he is.

Thought for the day:

Don't ask God for anything today. Instead, praise Him for who he is and turn the requests you want to make into praises instead.

Week #1 Praise the Father:

DAY 3. The Father is seeking true worshipers. How are we doing as a denomination; as a church; as a family; as a couple; as an person; in cultivation a true heart of worship?

“Sir,” the woman said, “I see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

Jesus declared, “Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

Then woman said, “I know that Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

*Then Jesus declared, “I who speak to you am he.”
John 4:19-26 NIV.*

1. What do you think this passage means by worshiping God in spirit?
2. What do you think this passage means by worshiping God in truth?
3. Do you want to be the kind of worshiper that God is seeking?

Thought for the day:

Let's ask God to make us the kind of worshipers he is seeking in all areas of our lives; personally; in our marriages; in our families; in our churches; in our communities; and in our nation and world.

Week #1 Praise the Father

DAY 4. Scripture gives God many names that reveal different aspects of His character. Studying these names provides a wealth of insight into the nature and character of God. Let's use a very familiar passage of Scripture to reflect on one of those names.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 23 NIV

1. What difference does knowing that God is your Shepherd make to you?
2. How does knowing that your Father is a Shepherd make you feel?
3. Are you in the habit of meditating on the Names of God in order to prepare your heart for intercession?

Thought for the Day:

Make a decision to cultivate and expand your knowledge of the names of God. This will assist you in your desire to daily "praise first" the Father, who's name is to be praised.

Week #1 Praise the Father.

DAY 5. There are times when doubt creeps in to our lives and makes it difficult to approach God. Cultivating our “praise first” attitude sometimes needs help.

Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.”

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 20:24-31 (NIV)

1. What did Thomas need to move from doubt to wholehearted worship of the risen Lord?
2. What do you need to help you move from doubt to confident praise? Ask God for it.
3. What do you do when you don't feel like praising God?

Thought for the Day:

“Faith is believing God’s word and acting upon it, no matter how I feel.” This quote reminds us that choosing to “praise first” in our prayer lives is sometimes an act of the will without much feeling. “I just don’t feel like it” doesn’t cut it with God. Do it anyway.

Week #1 Praise the Father

DAY 6. Being in Christ obligates us to walk in the Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that empowers us to be worshipers of God. It is walking in the Spirit that orients us to be “praise first” people. It becomes our natural impulse to praise our “Abba, Father”

Therefore brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship, and by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Romans 8:12-17 (NIV)

1. How important is it to have an assurance within of your being connected with God through Christ (saved) in boldly coming to “Our Father” in prayer?
2. Do you relate to this idea of “receiving the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba Father”? (Abba means “daddy”. This means that we enter into the same relationship with the Father that Jesus had through receiving his Spirit).
3. Do you daily ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-20)?

Thought for the Day:

May we, the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, be so full of the Spirit of God that our praises to God will lead the way forward in our determination to effectively touch and heal our nation.

