

OUR FATHER

THE LESSON: MATTHEW 6

The first four books in the New Testament, called the “Gospels”, tell us about the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus from four different points of view (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). All four Gospels show that prayer is important, and demonstrate in various ways that Jesus set an amazing example of prayer for his followers. Jesus often removed himself from the crowds that followed him, to go to quiet places where he could speak to God, his Father.

Like Jesus, we too are invited to approach God as children speaking to a loving Father – with communication that is marked by openness, honesty, and trust.

When asked by his disciples how they should pray, Jesus gave them this well-known prayer, which is found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. The version appearing in Matthew’s Gospel is slightly longer, and both are used in our prayer book.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

At home, find a quiet space, and spend some time praying with the Lord’s Prayer, line by line. Try “translating” it into your own words and expanding on it with details from your own situation. For example, for the line, “Give us this day our daily bread”, you could pray, “Give me today what I need for today, and especially give me help facing the math test I am worried about.”

Finish your prayer by remembering that God knows and loves you, and that he wants to hear from you no matter how you are feeling. You might choose to end your prayer by thanking him for those things.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect, pausing to reflect after each phrase.

O Lord, from whom all good things do come: Grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. (COLLECT FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, BCP PAGE 196)

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MATTHEW 6: **WHAT HOLY DEPENDENCE LOOKS LIKE**

⁵“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

⁶But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁷“And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹Pray then like this:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

¹⁰Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us this day our daily bread,

¹²and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.