

# How Disciples Should Pray, Part 1

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 07 December 2025

Preacher: Pastor Dave Thompson

[ 0 : 00 ] John chapter 11, please. John chapter 11. John chapter 11.

And thinking, I want to know God like that. I want to pray like that. I want to be able to talk and fellowship with God like that.

Now, I was young. And later I knew more of these men's lives. Found out they weren't as holy as I thought they were.

But still, even though they were like the rest of us, they were men who wanted to know God. Wanted to know how to pray. How to talk with God. And I'm convinced that they saw that because they saw Christ.

[ 1 : 30 ] And they saw others who wanted to know Christ. And heard it in their prayers. As we come to Luke chapter 11. We find Jesus praying again.

And it did something. Let's read John chapter 11.

I'm only going to read the first four verses today. 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.

And he said to them, when you pray, say, Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins. For we ourselves forgive one another. Who is indebted.

[ 2 : 31 ] Forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation. Let's pray together. Father, I thank you for the work your son did while he was on this earth.

Father, and I thank you that one of the things that he did amongst so many was to teach these men and ultimately all your disciples what it is to pray.

And I pray that you would be with us. As these men asked and you desire to teach them to pray, we come today asking that you would teach us to pray.

And Lord, as you did teach them, I pray that you would teach us. And Father, that you would work. And that we would glorify you in the way that we come to you.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. We find the disciples in a situation that was common to them.

[ 3 : 38 ] Jesus was a man who prayed a lot. Jesus' prayer life is something that Luke is very careful to point out. Luke didn't point out every time that Jesus prayed.

I'm convinced that Jesus prayed without ceasing. It's evident, even in the way he talked with people, that there were times that, in a sense, it might be hard to look and say, is he talking to them or is he praying?

But he was a man who prayed a lot. And scripture points out times when he got alone to pray and he was praying for who he would choose as his disciples.

He got alone to pray before he would face a specific situation or specific temptation. He prayed earnestly many different times in his life. It was common for the disciples to see him pray.

Jesus did not use his own divine strength to live a perfect life for us. He depended on the Father and the Spirit's ministry as he walked this earth.

[ 4 : 42 ] He was earning a righteousness for us that was truly human. And so he did not use his divine power to live this life he lived for us. He depended on his Father through the Spirit to be able to live the life that he lived for us.

And he did it because that's just the way we are to live. We're to depend on the Father through the Spirit to live the life that he's called us to live.

And again, Jesus was no stranger to prayer. He prayed often. Sometimes scripture says that he went off alone to pray and would spend the night in prayer.

Often he would take disciples with him. Sometimes all of them. Sometimes three, Peter, James, and John. Sometimes there were all kinds of disciples with him while he prayed. But he prayed often. And they got to see that. How do people learn how to pray? I think there are a couple things that this passage points out.

[ 5 : 55 ] People learn to pray, first of all, by listening to others pray. I think some of the first things that we learn about prayer is when we're sitting in church and the pastor's praying or someone's praying for something here or there or beginning in our opening prayer.

We learn to pray because we hear what other people have learned and how they express it to God. We learn by hearing others. Just like these disciples did. Now they came to a point where they wanted to know more.

We'll get into that in just a second. But they learned. They begin to learn. They begin to want to learn to pray because they had heard Jesus pray. A side note.

We often encourage people to come to Wednesday prayer meeting. And sometimes in pastoral visitation, I hear people say, well, I just don't know what to pray. So I don't feel comfortable coming. And that's I understand that. I understand that perfectly. But that's the wrong reasoning. That's the wrong thinking. Besides our responsibility to pray.

[ 7 : 05 ] Besides the need of the church for us to pray. That require what God expects us and us reaching out to him to see these needs be met. Prayer meeting is a place where you come to learn to pray.

I would much rather see people come to prayer meeting and not speak a word for months. Okay. You say, make it yours, pastor, and I'll come. Well, I would like to think you didn't wait that long. But I would rather you in prayer meeting. Because you will learn how to pray personally if you hear people pray.

And I know, I know some of you have work. I know that there are legitimate reasons. And I'm not trying to badger you. But I am trying to take away this reason. That you say, oh, I don't come to prayer meeting because I don't feel comfortable praying.

Come and learn. That's how the disciples did it. Now, that's one way we learn to pray. We learn to pray also by learning what is proper to pray.

[ 8 : 18 ] That's what we're going to spend a little bit of time today doing. We learn to pray. We learn to pray by learning what is proper to pray. Sometimes people say, oh, I don't want to know that doctrine.

It's boring and devotion. There's a phrase that I hear thrown around that I love. Doctrine is devotion. You will never be in awe of God if you don't hear things about God.

Brothers and sisters, that's doctrine. If you don't hear about how he's given his life for you, Christ has given his life for you. And you don't hear about the aspects of that.

You're not going to be moved to rejoice in it. You're not going to. You're not. Your heart's not going to be warmed. We know how to pray. By being exposed to the word and hearing the doctrine.

And I would encourage you. You say, I don't know how to pray. Then study and pay attention to what is preached. Study and pay attention to what you read in your Bible. Learn what you need to learn about God.

[ 9 : 24 ] Because as you learn about God, it just feeds that which you know God would have you to pray. So we learn how to pray by listening to others pray.

By learning what is proper to pray. Like Jesus is about to show. And by growing in our knowledge and understanding of the word. Those are the three, I think, the three biggest things.

That we can avail ourselves of to learn to pray. I think they're also commanded, all of them. In this passage, we find as they come to him, the disciples say, teach us to pray.

Now, there's been some explanation. Rabbis were famous for teaching prayers to their disciples. And oftentimes, the disciples would repeat those prayers. They came to us.

And it was sort of like the lodge motto. Or something like that. That's not what Jesus is getting at here. In fact, as you look at the content of the prayer.

[ 10 : 30 ] Jesus is not saying something that is going to be something. This is how we know we're all in the same group. This prayer that he teaches.

This pattern for prayer that he teaches. Is meant to accomplish something. It's meant to draw you close to God. It's meant to see God glorified.

It's meant to move the kingdom of God forward. And so, they say Jesus teaches to pray. And he gives his disciples a pattern.

A guide for prayer. Now, I'm going to say right up front. This, the Lord's Prayer is not meant to be recited mindlessly.

Some of you come from backgrounds. Where that if you sin, you would go and confess to a man. And he would say, say so many Hail Marys and so many Our Fathers.

[ 11 : 30 ] The Lord's Prayer. And in that situation, you would hear, okay, I've got to say three Our Fathers. And you would recite the Lord's Prayer three times. As if you were waving some magic wand.

This is not that. It's not something to be recited mindlessly. You might say, well, is it alright if we say the Lord's Prayer as a prayer?

Sure, it's alright to say it. But don't say it mindlessly. But be mindful that even in saying it, he's using this to teach us what is important to pray about.

So, here he's teaching his disciples what they and we, what we should have. Or what kind of things we should make a part of our prayer life.

So, as we begin, I want to look at verse two. First, he's asked them, or they've asked him to teach him to pray. And so, he says to them in verse two, and he said to them, when you pray, say Father.

[ 12 : 36 ] And let me stop there. Say Father. You look through the Old Testament. I looked quick this morning. I couldn't think of any. I did a search.

We don't see any places in the Old Testament where the Jews addressed God as Father. They may have, but it was not common.

And I think that's for a specific reason. There was an aspect about their salvation. Those even who were truly trusting Christ. There was an aspect of their salvation that they didn't totally understand yet.

And I think Jesus' coming made it such that they could begin to understand the way God related these people to himself. Because the work of Christ is what brings those who trust him into a new relationship with God.

It's the work of Christ that brings us into a new relationship with God. Now, the Old Testament, or the Jews in the Old Testament were called the children of God, which necessitates Father.

[ 13 : 49 ] But in the New Testament, there is a new relationship, or a better defined relationship. John 1, 12. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Romans 8, 16. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God. 1 John 3, 1. See what kind of love the Father has given us that we should be called the children of God.

And so we are. Jesus is reminding these people that the work that Jesus has done has brought them into this relationship of not just people God.

That's a fine relationship. That's a good relationship. This work that Jesus has done has brought these people into a relationship of father children. We become children of God because Jesus is the Son of God.

He did this work for us. He gave his life for us. He made it so that we could be acceptable in God's presence. And to do that, he adopted us as his.

[ 15 : 05 ] And we become part of the family of God. And now we are children. So now we're in a relationship that technically the Old Testament saints had but couldn't see much of.

But we're in a relationship where God is literally our Father. The title is meant to reflect the privileged situation the work of Christ has provided.

Technically that privileged situation goes all the way back to the first people, Adam and Eve, who trusted Christ. They didn't understand it all. They knew that there was a serpent crusher coming.

And they were trusting that God would do what he said he would do. But they were trusting that. But that trust put them in this new relationship. But now as we can pray, as Jesus is teaching us to pray, we're praying in relation to that relationship.

We're praying with thought of that relationship, that privileged relationship that the work of Christ has put us into. The God of the universe is our God.

[ 16 : 16 ] But we come to him like a father. You've probably heard this before. But JFK being our youngest president had little JFK Jr.

He was given the privilege of running around in the White House. He even spent time daily or often with JFK in the Oval Office.

Even sometimes while other people were there. JFK Jr. had, as a young boy, I think under five, had no sense of the fact that his daddy was the leader of the country that was considered most prominent in the world.

JFK Jr. just called JFK daddy. And though generals and secretaries and everyone else had to make an appointment, JFK Jr. walked in.

And though all these people, other people could be pushed away. And I'm sure JFK Jr. could. But seeing the illustration here. He could walk in and sit on the President of the United States' lap.

[17:39] While all kinds of things were going on. Because of the relationship that he had. When we go to prayer, we need to be mindful of the fact that we're going to the God of the universe.

But because of the work of Christ, we're going to our Father. The title is meant to show the intimacy we have. It's meant to show that he wants us to come to him.

It's meant to show that God enjoys us being with him. Wants us to be with him. He doesn't need us to be with him. He is God. He is all sufficient.

But he wants us to be with him. The title is meant also to point to the care God has for us.

The Father loves us as a father. We've made this point a few months ago. People say, oh, the God of the Old Testament was mean and cross.

[18:44] And Jesus was loving and kind. And it took Jesus to make God the Father softer. Jesus tried to make God the Father love us. And he died so that maybe the God the Father would love us.

No, God the Father loved us so much. That he sent his only son. To give us eternal life. He wants to be known as Father.

He wants to be addressed as Father. Because he wants us to come to him. He has a desire to meet our needs. A greater desire to meet our needs than any earthly father.

Your father may have been great. Your father may have been awful. But our heavenly father is the greatest of fathers. We'll look. It'll be a couple weeks now.

We'll look at Luke 11, 13. Where it says, if you then who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children. How much more will the heavenly father. The inferences.

[19:45] Who loves you much more. Will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him. And he goes on to give that illustration about the serpent and the egg.

And we'll talk about that when we come to it in a couple weeks. Jesus is teaching his disciples. He's saying, when you pray. Say, Father.

Father. You're addressing God. In this intimate way. Now. One question I thought about.

That I've heard people ask. And I'll just point it out here. Can we address other members of the Trinity in our prayer? Typically we pray to the father through the son by the spirit.

The father is the one whose will is done. We come based on the merits of what Christ has done. First Timothy 2, 5. For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men.

[20:42] The man. Christ Jesus. And. First John 2, 1. My little children. I am writing things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the father.

Jesus Christ the righteous. So we pray to the father. Jesus brings that request to him. The spirit helps us in prayer. Romans 8, 26.

Likewise, the spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought. But the spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

So when we pray. We typically pray to the father. Now, there are several addresses. Or several prayers addressed to Christ in the New Testament.

Most are addressed to the father. There's a prominent one. Remember Stephen? As he was being stoned, he cried out, Lord Jesus. And he had several requests.

[21:44] But his prayer was directly to Christ. So it's not wrong to address Christ. And there doesn't seem to be any New Testament prayers that are addressed to the spirit.

But the spirit is God. It would not be wrong to address, I think, any member of the Trinity. But I think Jesus is teaching us here that typically we address the father.

So we have this relationship. Jesus, by his work, makes us to be God's children. And now we're in a relationship where the heavenly father is our father.

And we're to address him as so. And we begin now a section. There are five petitions.

If you look in Matthew's Lord's Prayer, there are six petitions. The one that's missing from here can logically be deduced from one of Luke's petitions here.

[ 22 : 43 ] So we don't worry about losing anything. The prayer here that Jesus shares is something that he probably taught relatively often. Or at least several times. This is at a different time in what would be considered Jesus' ministry at this point.

Although we don't know exactly when this happened. A different time than when Matthew did it at the Sermon on the Mount earlier in Jesus' ministry. So we begin now.

He's telling us, first of all, we need to address God as father. But he goes on in verse 2. And he said to them, when you pray, say, Father, how be your name, your kingdom come.

So, and this is interesting. This is not a statement. This is a petition that we make. We are to ask that God's name be hallowed.

This statement is not just saying, God, your name is holy. Now, that's a fine statement to make. But it is not what this, this is.

[ 23 : 57 ] It's not limited to that as far as what this statement is being made. I'm going to quote from the Heidelberg Catechism 122. We read through this, ended earlier this year.

I thought this was very good. And it will be a succinct way for me to go through this. And the Heidelberg calls, hallowed be thy name, the first petition.

Most all commentators call it the first petition. So, question 122 says, what does the first petition mean? The answer is, hallowed be your name means, help us to truly know you, to honor, glorify, and praise you for all your works.

And for all that shines forth from them, your almighty power, wisdom, kindness, justice, mercy, and truth.

And it means, help us to direct all our living, what we think, say, and do, so that your name will never be blasphemed because of us, but always be honored and praised.

[ 25 : 14 ] Now, there's a lot there. I'm not going to take time to go through all of it, but I do want to give you the gist of it. Jesus is calling us when we say, hallowed be your name.

He's calling us, first of all, to know God more. We can't do that on our own. We never investigate God to be able to know Him.

Remember, no man can see God. Only the Son reveals Him. If we're going to know God more intimately, God has to reveal Himself to us.

And so, when we pray, hallowed be your name, holy be your name, sanctify your name, we're asking God to help us to understand that, to know that, to experience that more.

And to see His holiness in His works, in His power, in His wisdom, in His justice. It's a way for us to ask God to draw us closer to Himself, to know Him more intimately.

[ 26 : 32 ] Remember I told you one of the ways that we get to know how to pray is when we understand God more. We understand truths of God more.

Well, this is kind of that circle that happens. We ask God to show Himself to us, and He shows Himself to us. And we learn more, and we crave more, and we ask God to show Himself to us, and He does.

Let me just interject here. There was a phrase that I heard people say for a long time, not here, in some of the podcasts that I was listening to.

There was a phrase that I heard people say, and I did not understand for a long time. It's not important that you remember the phrase. It's called the beatific vision. And I thought, what is this guy, Catholic or something?

Because it is a phrase that's used in Catholicism. The beatific vision. What is the beatific vision?

Well, it's where God, or Moses, wanted to know more about God.

[ 27 : 54 ] We'll get more into this in the end. I'm going to make some application. But it's where God reveals Himself to us. And when we're praying that God's name be made holy amongst the things that we're praying, we're praying that God would reveal more of Himself to us.

Mankind, even Christians, do not honor God the way He deserves. God is the most glorious being. This is another aspect of what it is to hallow His name.

God is the most glorious being there is. He is perfect in all that He does. Because He is perfect in all that He does and is.

Because He is God. He deserves all glory and honor. So when we say, hallowed be Your name, we're not only asking Him to reveal Himself to us, we're asking that God glorify Himself.

He deserves that. And He does that in and through us, in some aspects of it. He deserves all glory. As we are praying, we're asking God that He would magnify Himself more and more.

[ 29 : 12 ] Again, touching that idea of seeing the glory of God. We'll talk more about that in a minute. We're unable to make God's glory greater.

We must ask Him to do this. Why would we ask God to hallow His name? To make holy His name? Well, first of all, because we're commanded to. Secondly, because glorifying God is the chief end of man.

Many of you know the first answer, or first question of the Westminster Catechism. What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

And so, one of the things we pray is that God would glorify Himself in and through us. There's not a greater joy for any creature, including us, than that we see the glory of the Lord.

We back up, or stop here just a second. Have you noticed the times when we, in our singing, and when the worship leader presents Christ to us, and it's clear, and we see some aspect of God in a way that we never had before.

[ 30 : 26 ] And how it just fuels our singing, and how we just want to respond in praise. And when we're done, we think, that was an experience I want all the time.

I want to see God in such a way that it moves me, that it encourages me. I want to see Him more glorious. I want to see Him more grand. Not that He can become that, but I want to see more of it. And this is exactly what I was pointing to in the situation at Mount Sinai. Moses had been up on the mountain, and God had been giving him the law.

And God's glory had been on the mountain, and that was a blessing to Him. And remember when He came down, His face shone, and He didn't recognize it or realize it, and the people were afraid because His face showed.

Well, went back up on the mountain, and what was one of Moses' first requests? I want to see your face. He had enjoyed the presence of God so thoroughly, he wanted more.

[ 31 : 40 ] And so he asked for more. Remember, God couldn't directly reveal it to him. He had to put him in a cleft of a rock, and cover his face, and go before him while Moses was covered.

And then Moses got to see the after glory. Moses wanted more. Isaiah saw the glory of God. Now it made him fall to the earth as dead.

And yet God raised him up. And after seeing the glory of God, as God calls for someone to serve Him, He says, I'll go. Send me. He was so enthralled with the glory of God, he wanted more.

We can see it when we see God reveal Himself in our worship, and in our works, when God does something through us, and uses us.

We're encouraged because we're seeing God as great, we're seeing Him as holy, we're seeing Him as powerful. It is the thing that we will enjoy most about heaven.

[ 32 : 43 ] We will enjoy most about heaven, not the clouds, if there are. Not the new heaven and new earth. They'll be great. It won't be that.

It will be, being in a situation, we'll be able to see God for who He is. And He is so great, so holy, so vast, that He'll be revealing constantly more aspects about Himself.

And any worship service that we can sense God's presence and feel like it was great to see what, this little bit about who God was, we'll see that regularly and unendingly, and it is the thing we will most long for.

Whatever thing we think brings us joy and satisfaction here, we'll not be able to handle the microscopic bit of a candle to what we will know and see in heaven.

So when we pray and ask God to work in the world, in and through us, and to show His name holy, and for Him to reveal His glory, that's what we're doing when we say, hallowed be Your name.

[ 34 : 00 ] We're asking God to reveal Himself, to grow us in Him. And then it goes on, He asks, tells Him to pray, the Father would also, that His kingdom would come.

Now this is not just asking God to bring an end to this age soon. Now there's every reason to pray that. It's a legitimate ask.

Remember John at the end of the book of Revelation, the Lord has been speaking, and John says, He who testifies to these things says, surely I am coming soon.

He's saying that that's what the Lord has said. And John's response is, Amen, come Lord Jesus.

And we long for that. And to say, Thy kingdom come, we're not just asking, in fact, we're not really even asking, for the end of everything.

It's a fine thing to ask for, and it's a great thing to long for. But again, using the Heidelberg Catechism, a summary of their, of this petition, question 123, what does your kingdom come mean? [ 35 : 13 ] It means rule. God, it's asking Him to do this. Rule by, rule us by your word and spirit in such a way that more and more will submit to you.

When we're asking for His kingdom to come, we're asking that people be saved. We're asking that God brings the nations to Himself. We're asking God to complete this work. And in a sense, it is pointing to that. We can't wait until it's done, but we're, we're saying, God, save the nations, save the people of the nations. Or we might be innocent, saying, save my daughter, save my son, save my uncle, all these things.

We're asking God to do the work that only He can do. Bring the nations in. He's also, in saying that, meaning that we said, that, that Christ is saying that we should ask that God would preserve our church and make it grow.

May your kingdom come. May Grace Fellowship Church grow, not for the sake of our pride, but for His glory.

[ 36 : 26 ] May the church in Hazleton grow, not for the sake of our pride, but for His glory. May the church in Pennsylvania or in the United States or in the world grow, not because of anything we want, but because it brings glory to this infinite being who has done all this for us.

And asking for God's kingdom to come also is speaking about destroying the devil's work. Destroy every force which revolts against you and every conspiracy against your word.

Do this until your kingdom fully comes when you will be all in all. And so we ask our Father that His kingdom would come.

These aren't just statements of idle words. These are requests we make of our Father because it pleases Him. We think of the kingdom of God.

Man is dead and trespasses and sins. We can do nothing to make people come to know the Lord. We share the gospel. It is not the... We're not the instruments of their...

[ 37 : 33 ] God uses us. God is the one who does the work in their hearts. We can't make ourselves grow. Christ is the one who builds His church.

Now, we may obey and do the things that He commands us to do and God uses them in us. But it's God who does the work. We cannot protect ourselves from the attack of the enemy. We may put His armor on but it's His armor.

We may use the weapons that He gives us but they're His weapons. He's the one who protects us. We use what He tells us but He's the one who's actually doing this. When we pray for God's kingdom to come we are asking for Satan's kingdom to be destroyed.

We're asking God to save, grow, and protect those who are His. Those who are His now and those who will be His. And for God to bring us into submission.

As I close out I'll just point out a couple of things. I'm not, I didn't even plan on trying to make it through the whole Lord's Prayer today as I started through and I realized it wouldn't. But I want you to see a few things in this passage.

[ 38 : 45 ] I want you to first of all see Christ's love and care in teaching His disciples how to pray. the Father loved His people so much that He sent the Son.

The Son loves His people so much that He would have them to fellowship with the Father. There is no way we would know these things if Christ did not reveal them.

By nature we can know that there is a God and that we ought to submit to Him. Romans 1 says that's all we can know about God by nature.

Jesus came to reveal God to us reveal the things of God to us and here He is revealing to us what it is to pray.

It's to want His glory. It's to want Him to advance His kingdom. We wouldn't know that if it wasn't for Christ coming and doing this and it is His love and His care for us that points this out.

[ 39 : 51 ] Also in this passage I want us to see Christ in that we only have a relationship of being a child of God by means of the Son of God.

We can only call whether it's New Testament or Old Testament saints we can only call God our Father because Jesus has been willing to come adopt us to Himself.

We are co-heirs with Him. We have a relationship being a child of God by means of the Son taking on flesh earning a righteousness for us paying for our sin in order that we might be adopted as children of God.

And so just a couple of things is what should we repent of? We should repent of being people who think praying is something where I make things happen or something I do to earn God's favor. If you pray every day just to be able to say you had devotions so people can think of you as a good person then you're missing the mark.

[ 41 : 13 ] We pray to know Christ. We pray to know what He would have us to know. And I would also encourage us as we close to repent of coming to God as an equal.

Too often we come to God thinking yeah I'm just going to ask for all these things because that's what will make my life easy. God is holy.

Everything is about Him. We can come boldly. We come as a child. But we should never come flippantly. So let me encourage you to