



## A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Series Theme:	Lord, Teach Us to Pray
Text for the Week:	Matthew 6:5-8
Message for the Week:	How Not to Pray
Theme for the Week:	A God worth just spending time with

### Week 1

#### Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

What was your "go to" prayer growing up?

#### Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

#### Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Matthew 6:5-8](#) out loud.

[Clicking this link will bring you to multiple translations.]

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

## Respond / Reflect:

Why do you (or don't you) pray? What is your daily prayer practice?

Do you find prayer intimidating? Why or why not?

Which length of prayer is the best? Why?

Do you have any guilt about your prayer life? Where does this guilt come from?

What misconceptions do you have about prayer? How do you know it is a misconception?

## "Try It!"

During this worship series on prayer, we are going to be experimenting with different prayer practices each week:

### Practice #1: Keeping the Daily Hours

This week, spend 3-5 minutes in prayer, three times a day. Pray when you get up in the morning, at noon / the middle of your day, and when you go to bed at night.

## Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you.

*Jesus, time and time again, you spent time in prayer time with your Father in Heaven. Jesus, as we turn our attention to prayer in the days and weeks to come, Lord, teach us how to pray. Amen.*

-A prayer based on Matthew 6 and Luke 11

## Missional/Spiritual Practice for the Month: Kingdom Prayers

During the month of January, pray this prayer each day, multiple times throughout your day:

*Lord, we pray for an outpouring of your Holy Spirit that you would...*

**REVEAL** Christ to us,

**SHAPE** us in the character of Christ, and

**EQUIP** us for the mission of Christ. Amen

If you would like a background photo of this prayer for the home screen of your phone, please contact the church office and we will email it to you.

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## Matthew 6:5-8 New International Version

<sup>5</sup> "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. <sup>6</sup> But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. <sup>7</sup> And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

## Matthew 6:5-8 The Message

<sup>5</sup> "And when you come before God, don't turn that into a theatrical production either. All these people making a regular show out of their prayers, hoping for fifteen minutes of fame! Do you think God sits in a box seat?

<sup>6</sup> "Here's what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace.

<sup>7-13</sup> "The world is full of so-called prayer warriors who are prayer-ignorant. They're full of formulas and programs and advice, peddling techniques for getting what you want from God. Don't fall for that nonsense. This is your Father you are dealing with, and he knows better than you what you need.