

## **Neighborhood Life Group Guide**

Matthew: The Lord's Prayer

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Matthew 6:1-18

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**Prayer:** One of the first prayers Christians are often taught to pray is called the Lord's Prayer. There are a few different English versions that have formed over the centuries, but all of them are based on Jesus' prayer in Matthew 6:9-15. Take some time as a group to pray through the Lord's Prayer. If you don't know the Lord's Prayer, here's a version that you can use:

"Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

- *Anglican Book of Common Prayer*, 1662

**Read:** Take a few minutes to read and mark up the following passage on your own.

### **Matthew 6:1-18**

#### *Giving to the Needy*

<sup>1</sup>"Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

<sup>2</sup>"Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>3</sup>But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

#### *The Lord's Prayer*

<sup>5</sup>"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. <sup>6</sup>But 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.

<sup>7</sup>"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. <sup>8</sup>Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. <sup>9</sup>Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. <sup>10</sup>Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>Give us this day our daily bread, <sup>12</sup>and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup>And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

<sup>14</sup>For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, <sup>15</sup>but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

#### *Fasting*

<sup>16</sup>"And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

## **Discussion Questions**

*\*Consider taking extra time during your Life Group this week to work through the personal reflection and prayer guide on the next page.*

1. After reading Matthew 6:1-18, share some observations from the verses you've just read.
  
2. What from this week's sermon impacted you?
  
3. Why is it a struggle to serve, give, pray, or fast in secret?
  
4. Jesus' prayer begins with praise and adoration: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name" (Matthew 6:9).
  - What is something you can praise God in your life?
  
5. When Jesus prays, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11), it shows our daily dependency on God for every need.
  - Make a list of the top things you need God to give you or your family every day.
  
6. Jesus prays, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:12-13).
  - Take a few minutes of silence to pray to God.
    - Confess sins.
    - Pray for people who've sinned against you. Pray for people you've sinned against.
    - Ask God to guard you from temptations.
    - Thank God for giving us Jesus to ultimately deliver us from evil.
  
7. In Matthew 6:1-18, Jesus tackles several issues related to hypocrisy. What does hypocrisy look like in a Christian? What hope is there for Christians dealing with hypocrisy?

**Personal Reflection:** Take a few minutes to reflect upon how you have been living out your faith for Jesus Christ this past week.

- ❖ **Word:** Have I read God's Word every day this week? What has God been teaching me?
  
- ❖ **Prayer:** Have I prayed to God every day this week? What have I prayed for?
  
- ❖ **Fellowship:** Have I gathered with other believers for fellowship and worship this week? How have I encouraged other Christians? How are other Christians encouraging me?
  
- ❖ **Confession:** Where am I struggling with sin, temptation, doubt, or hardship? Is there someone I need to seek forgiveness from? Is there someone I need to forgive?
  
- ❖ **Praise:** How have I seen God at work this week? What fruit have I seen in other people's lives?
  
- ❖ **Mission:** How have I been on mission this week? Who needs to hear the Gospel? Who can I invite to church? Who can I encourage or pray for this week?

**Prayer:** After you've spent some time in personal reflection, share one prayer request – a praise, a need, a confession, etc. Write down your group's prayer requests and commit to praying for them this week.