

The Uncommon Kingdom: Prayer

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Matthew 6:5-15

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Discussion and Reflection Guide

Prayer can be a tricky thing

It's possible to put lots of energy into a practice of prayer that is the equivalent of spinning our spiritual wheels.

*What comes to your mind when you think about prayer?

*What has been helpful in your prayer life? How have you felt stuck or dissatisfied in prayer?

The Sermon on the Mount helps us understand the motive of our heart is what matters most when we pray

Read and discuss Matthew 6:5-8 (NIV)

⁵ “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. ⁶ 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. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

*What have you learned from the Sermon on the Mount that translates to prayer?

*What does this passage say about how we pray?

*Why does the motive of our prayers matter?

*What is the purpose of prayer if He already knows what we need before we ask?

The Lord's Prayer shows us a way of praying that connects us deeply to God

Read and discuss Matthew 6:9-15 (NIV)

⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

¹⁰ your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from the evil one.’

¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

*What are some of the things you notice about the way Jesus structures his prayer? How is it instructive for the focus and purpose of our prayers?

*Why would it be important for us to pray communally? Do you typically pray more personally?

- *What are the implications of praying for His Kingdom to come?
- *Does the way you pray help you embrace dependence?
- *What is the relationship between the way we forgive and being forgiven?
- *What limits are you asking God for when asking for help with temptations?

In this prayer, Jesus teaches us that prayer can be something that draws our hearts closer to God, deepens our relationship with Him and others, and empowers us to follow after Him

- *How could you use this prayer to shape the way you pray?
- *Is there a section of this passage that stands out to you or is challenging the way you pray?
- *What is the Spirit saying to you about prayer?