

# Lesson 13

## Jesus Teaches Disciples to Pray

Key Scripture Readings: Matthew 6:8-15

### Summary

- After exposing the problems with the “righteousness” of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus begins discussing what it takes to be truly righteous. Instead of praying vainly to be seen of men, the disciple uses prayer to talk to and draw closer to God. The disciple understands that prayer is a privilege and glorifies the heavenly Father.
- In Matthew 6:9-15, Jesus offers a model prayer. He does not intend this prayer be mindlessly recited. Instead, through it, Jesus teaches us what prayer should involve.
- Prayer is first and foremost about the Father (Matthew 6:9). The scribes and Pharisees used prayer as a tool to get people to focus on and exalt them (Matthew 6:5). Disciples use prayer to focus on and exalt God!
- It is interesting that when praying, Christians can call God “Father” (Matthew 6:9). The word “Father” refers to a tender and close relationship between God and His people. While God is certainly the King and Lord, He is also a Father.
- The meaning of names was extremely significant in Bible times. When praying, disciples are to acknowledge the sacredness of God’s name. The Father’s name is “hallowed” (Matthew 6:9). It is something that announces His holiness and power.
- Sometimes the “kingdom” and “church” are often portrayed as being synonymous (Colossians 1:13-18; Acts 2:47). Other times, the word “kingdom” is used to refer to the rule and reign of God in the hearts of men (Matthew 6:33). This is something that God’s people need to continue to pray for (Matthew 6:10). Kingdom citizens need to pray that everyone on earth will eventually be touched by the gospel and surrender to the rule and will of the King!
- Disciples have physical needs as they live on God’s earth (Matthew 6:11). By praying for the Lord to continue providing “daily bread,” God’s people acknowledge Him as the ultimate source of their physical blessings.
- Disciples also have spiritual needs. There is a need for God to help them overcome temptations and forgive them of sins (Matthew 6:12-15). Receiving God’s forgiveness has conditions. One must first be willing to forgive others (Matthew 18:21-35; Ephesians 4:32).
- It is worthy to note that while the second half of Matthew 6:13 is beautiful and true, it is not found in the better New Testament manuscripts.

## Study Questions

1. What are some of the biggest hindrances to a healthy prayer life? How can these hindrances be overcome?
2. In what ways does the Lord's prayer challenge us to be more thoughtful when we pray?
3. In what ways does the Lord's prayer challenge us to be more thankful when we pray?
4. In what ways does the Lord's prayer challenge us to be more spiritually focused when we pray?
5. In what ways does the Lord's prayer challenge us to pray more often?
6. List one aspect of this prayer that you need to include more in your prayers. How do you plan on including it more?
7. List another prayer of Jesus that can help disciples pray better. In what ways can this prayer help us?