

## Scripture: Matthew 6:5-15

5 “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. 6 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.

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

“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 this day 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 evil.

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

## Observations

- Essence of Prayer
  - *Prayer is Communion with God.* Prayer is not a ritual or a performance to appease God. Prayer is God’s offer for us to relate with him directly.
  - *Prayer is for All and from God.* God invented prayer and Jesus is specific how to pray to God. While prayer is accessible for all, Jesus also defines what prayer is for us.
  - *Prayer is Best Experienced.* When Jesus says to pray like this, he did not say to preach on it, but to pray like this. We are called to be doers of the word, and not hearers only.
- Practice of Prayer
  - *Descriptive, not Prescriptive:* Jesus did not expect people to recite this prayer. He said to pray “like this,” so use this to guide your genuine conversation with God. Take a few minutes or hours to work through the categories of prayer Jesus provides us.
  - *Start with God:* Typical prayer meeting starts with a question, “What requests?” The focus is on me, which is not wrong, but is not the whole of prayer. Consider the pronouns in this example Jesus provides, focusing on God and he then turns to himself.
  - *Be Okay with Silence:* Jesus encouraged prayer to be private, and for you to say what you mean, expecting him to hear you. Do not rush, take a few minutes to be quiet, and then begin your time in prayer by following the subsequent pages of guided prayer.

## Your Name

God is concerned about you knowing his character, living for his reputation. Prayer is not to inform an uninformed God, nor to convince God, but to align myself to him. Begin by acknowledging God's identity and then consider how his identity should change how you view your experience.

**Step One:** Slow down, focus your mind on the truth of Psalm 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God."

**Step Two:** Identify a name or names of God that you identify with, and acknowledge this reality by reading the text and then rephrasing this truth in your own words as it relates to your experience.

**Step Three:** Acknowledge God's identity in your life, describing in your own words how his identity matters to you in your different roles, such as, son or daughter, friend, employee, neighbor, etc.

- *Elohim:* God is sovereign (Genesis 7:1-27; Psalm 91:1-16)
- *El Shaddai:* God is all-powerful (Genesis 17:1-27; Psalm 91:1-16)
- *El Elyon:* God is supreme over all kingdoms (Genesis 14:1-20; Psalm 9:1-10)
- *El Roi:* God sees us where we are at (Genesis 16:1-16)
- *Yahweh:* God is the source of all life, sacred, and yet personal (Genesis 4:1-9; Psalm 103:1-13)
- *Yahwah Jireh:* God provides (Genesis 22:1-19)
- *Yahweh Nissi:* God is our victory, who fights for us (Exodus 17:8-16)
- *Yahwah Shalom:* God is our means of peace (Judges 6:1-24)
- *Yahweh Ro'hi:* The Lord is my shepherd, cares for his people (Psalm 23:1-6)
- *Bread of Life:* Jesus satisfies our need for belonging and to feel important (John 6:35; 48-51)
- *Living Water:* Jesus satisfies our thirst for more, better, bigger (John 4:1-14)
- *Abba Father:* Abba is God's personal, loving care for us (Hebrews 12:4-12; Romans 8:15; Ephesians 3:14-19)
- *Good Shepherd:* Our protector lays down his life for us, leads us (John 10:11)
- *Immanuel:* Jesus is God with us, always near to our needs, here with us (Isaiah 7:14)
- *True Vine:* Jesus is the ever-flowing source of spiritual life for us to grow, improve (John 15:5)
- *Prince of Peace:* Jesus is the ruler who brings peace in our distress, anxiety (John 14:27; Isaiah 9:6)
- *Wonderful Counselor:* Jesus guides with amazing wisdom (Isaiah 9:6)
- *Mighty God:* Jesus is almighty God (Isaiah 9:6)
- *Word of God:* Jesus is the authoritative voice of God (Revelation 19:13)
- *Light of the World:* Jesus dispels darkness in our souls (John 8:12)
- *Teacher:* Jesus has everlasting words of life for us to learn (John 1:38, 6:60-69)

## Your Kingdom

The last days began when the kingdom arrived in Jesus (Mark 1:15) and continue as a present reign of Jesus in the lives of believers (Matthew 28:18-20). The church is the doorway to the kingdom of Jesus (Matthew 16), bearing witness to his reign by living out his values in community (Acts 1:8) and proclaiming his ethic to the world (Acts 8:12). Until Jesus returns to consummate his reign on earth (Luke 10:11-12), the church waits, bringing his future reign into a present reality by prayerfully asking God to bring his justice, healing, and restoration to earth.

**Step One:** Reflect on the specific injustice, pain, hurt you experience on earth.

**Step Two:** Identify the values of God's kingdom below that should exist in place of this experience.

**Step Three:** Declare this to God by acknowledging the reality that should reign on earth, and call upon God for his values to be revealed in this difficult situation.

### The Kingdom values are:

- *Reconciliation:* Not having anger towards others (Matthew 5:21-24; 31-32)
- *Self-control:* Not lusting in the flesh (Matthew 5:27-30)
- *Truth:* Not spreading falsehood (Matthew 5:33-37)
- *Forgiveness:* Not retaliating against injustice (Matthew 5:38-42)
- *Love:* Not hating our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48)
- *Generosity:* Giving to the needy (Matthew 6:1-4, 19-21)
- *Humility:* Not praying for praise (Matthew 6:5-15, 16-18)
- *Godly Devotion:* Seeking the light, serving God (Matthew 6:22-24)
- *Hope:* Not anxious, but trusting God today, hopeful for tomorrow (Matthew 6:25-34)
- *Transparency:* Not judging others without letting others judge us, too (Matthew 7:1-6)
- *Godly Dependence:* Asking for help from God, expecting him to help (Matthew 7:7-11)
- *Kindness:* Do to others as you would have done to you (Matthew 7:12-14)
- *Spiritual Health:* Bearing fruit (Matthew 7:15-20)
- *Faithfulness:* Doing the will of God from an active relationship (Matthew 7:21-23)
- *Wisdom:* Being a doer of the word, and not a hearer (Matthew 7:24-27)

## Your Will

Our prayer should align to God's will. 1 John 5:14-15 reads, "And this is the confidence that we have toward him that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And, if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him." Jesus does want us to only present our desires to him, because praying is not just about us, but knowing his will and praying accordingly.

**Step One:** Consider the desires God has for us below, and acknowledge the desires you share with God.

**Step Two:** Name each of the specific desires you have for your life: hopes, dreams, and longings.

**Step Three:** Acknowledge to God that "his will be done," in each of your desires, hopes, and dreams.

- "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future," Jeremiah 29:11
- "This is good and pleases God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved," 1 Timothy 2:3-4
- "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus," 1 Thessalonians 5:18
- "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality," 1 Thessalonians 4:3
- "Now may the God of peace, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him through Jesus, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen," Hebrews 13:20
- "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me," Luke 9:23
- "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you," James 1:5
- "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight," Proverbs 3:5-6
- "Understand the Lord's will: be filled with the Spirit, singing in your heart to God, giving thanks," Ephesians 5:15-20
- "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness," 1 John 1:9
- "He has shown you, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God," Micah 6:8

## Give Us

We acknowledge our need for God by asking him for help. Like sheep without a shepherd are those who do not ask God for his provision. Jesus said in Matthew 7:7, "Ask and it will be given you." God is our Father, who wants to give good gifts to his children so we should trust his goodness for our life and ask for his help, knowing he cares for us. James 1:17 reads, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the father of the heavenly lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." We should pray expectantly, knowing that what we want may not be what we need, but knowing he wants our good as his children he loves.

**Step One:** Consider the specific needs you require help from God.

**Step Two:** Ask him for specific needs so that you can identify how he provides for you.

**Step Three:** Trust him to give what is asked, to give something better or even different. You may need to wait, to change your expectations, or rejoice in receiving what was asked of him. Either way, trust that God is your father who cares for you and provides what you need to live for him.

Provision to consider:

- Health
- Integrity
- Faith
- Humility
- Generosity
- Love
- Joy
- Contentment
- Food
- Finances
- Self-control
- Goodness
- Knowledge
- Patience
- Peace
- Physical healing
- Restored relationships

## Forgive Us

Mankind left to ourselves will not live how God created us to live, and the consequence of our disobedience is ultimately death (Romans 3:9-23). God is love (1 John 4:8) so he sent his Son to forgive us of our disobedience by dying our death (1 John 4:10; Ephesians 1:7). Those who trust in Christ's work on the cross are declared innocent (Romans 5:1), which is to say, they are no longer condemned for their sin (Romans 8:1-4), and they also belong to God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) as his children (Galatians 4:4-7). Until we are face-to-face with Jesus, those who trust Christ continue to sin, to disobey God (Romans 7:7-24). For this reason, we acknowledge our specific sins to God and ask him for forgiveness, not based on ourselves, but upon the work of Christ, so that we have an honest, transparent relationship with God.

**Step One:** Reflect on the kind of life God wants us to live by reviewing the below list of scriptures.

**Step Two:** Confess your disobedient acts and attitudes to God, and acknowledge the kind of life he wants you to live. Ask for his forgiveness.

**Step Three:** Trust him to forgive you based on his promise in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Commands of Christ in the Bible:

- Love the Lord (Matthew 22:37-38)
- Love your neighbor (Matthew 22:39)
- Honor your parents (Matthew 15:4)
- Bring in the poor (Luke 14:12-14)
- Pray in faith (Matthew 21:21-22)
- Lead by being a servant (Matthew 20:26-28)
- Deny yourself (Luke 9:23)
- Beware of covetousness (Luke 12:15)
- Do not commit adultery (Matthew 5:27-30)
- Love your enemies (Matthew 5:44)
- Go the second mile (Matthew 5:38-42)
- Keep your word (Matthew 5:33-37)
- Follow me (Matthew 4:19)
- Repent (Matthew 4:17)
- Celebrate the Lord's supper (Matthew 26:26-27)
- Make disciples (Matthew 28:19)
- Listen to God's voice (Matthew 11:15, 13:9)
- Forgive offenders (Matthew 18:21-22)
- Do unto others (Matthew 7:12)
- Practice giving, praying, fasting (Matthew 6:1-18)
- Let your light shine in the world (Matthew 5:16)

## Deliver Us

Salvation includes regeneration, new birth through the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5) and transformation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). Christ empowers those he saves to live out his life and purpose on earth (Romans 5:10). We live no longer under the control of sin, our flesh or the work of Satan, and instead yield ourselves to the Spirit, who indwells us to live for Christ (Romans 8:10-11). Asking God to deliver us is to acknowledge how the Spirit empowers us to overcome the addictions, the desires, the infatuations of this world so that we can live and love freely.

**Step One:** Ask God how selfishness, lust, and pride have been evident in your life. Determine if there is any sin, habit, addiction in your life that is controlling you, preventing you from living fully for God.

**Step Two:** Acknowledge the below promises in scripture as it relates to this area that needs deliverance. Thank God for his promise of deliverance in our life, and verbalize how you yield control to God in this area according to his promise.

**Step Three:** Ask God how to specifically experience victory over this area that is negatively affecting your ability to live for him. Listen for how He may reveal to you to change your habit.

Promises of Deliverance in the Bible:

- “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose,” Romans 8:28
- “Submit yourself to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you,” James 4:7
- “He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness,” 1 John 1:9
- “The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged,” Deuteronomy 31:8
- “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future,” Jeremiah 29:11
- “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed,” John 8:36
- “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus,” Philippians 4:19
- “I called to the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and I have been saved from my enemies,” Psalm 18:3
- “Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart,” Psalm 37:4
- “You, LORD, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you,” Psalm 86:5
- “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus,” Philippians 4:6-7
- “Is anyone sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the LORD. And, the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the LORD will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.” James 5:14-15
- “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it,” 1 Corinthians 10:13

## Lead Us

Jesus is our Lord, so we follow his leading in our life. Hebrews 12:2 calls us to, “Keep our eyes on Jesus, our leader and instructor.” Christ is to influence the decisions and direction of our daily lives. We need spiritual ears to hear his words for us and spiritual eyes to see where he is guiding us to go and live for him. Asking Jesus to lead us in the specifics of our day is to acknowledge his authority in our life.

**Step One:** Consider the plans you have for the day, the week, the month or year, the people you should encounter, and the work you must or want to get done.

**Step Two:** Ask Jesus to guide your behavior, your attitude, and your decisions as you think through what you must do or hope to do for him.

**Step Three:** Ask Jesus to give you a new vision for anything you may not be thinking about and acknowledge his control in your life. Yield the day or week or month to him, and listen for any ideas, promptings, intuition he may want you to consider. As always, check what you hear with the truth of scripture because nothing he will ask of you will contradict God’s word.

Areas of life to consider:

- Friendships
- Financial decisions
- Job
- Hobbies
- Habits
- Disciplines
- Soul care
- Physical health
- Community service
- Church involvement
- Dating, being single, marriage
- School
- Future
- Unknown
- People to confront or encourage
- Activities to stop doing or start doing
- Time management
- Surrendering to God’s plan
- Walking with God
- Where to live, who to live with
- How to get advice
- Listening to God’s Spirit