

**PARTICIPANT**

# Lord's Prayer

REVISED EDITION

## Contents

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Session 1: What Is Prayer .....	2
Session 2: The Lord's Prayer .....	8
Session 3: Personal Prayer .....	12

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## Lord's Prayer

REVISED EDITION

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The original edition of this resource was published by Changing Church, Inc., Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Burnsville, Minnesota.

Scripture quotations are from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission.

ISBN 9780806649214

Manufactured in U.S.A.

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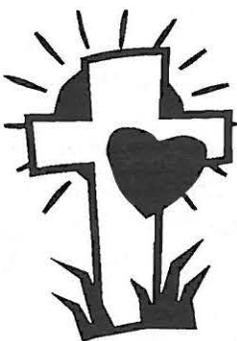
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**To Know, To Live,  
To Grow**

Augsburg Fortress  
MINNEAPOLIS

# Session 1

## What Is Prayer?

### Scripture Text

Luke 10:38-42

### Session Theme

Being present with God.

### Open with prayer.

Where is your favorite place to get away? What do you like about this place?

Who is your best friend? What do you like about this person? What do you have in common? How are you different from one another? How is your friendship strengthened? What things can weaken your friendship? How do you act when you are together?

The next few sessions will focus on relationships—relationships with friends, family, and God. This is a time to appreciate our friends and families, and also to focus on the importance of our relationship with God.

### What Would You Do?

1. Your family has agreed to spend two years as missionaries in Africa. Your parents will leave their jobs, and you and your younger sister will leave your school. It's the end of May and you will leave for Africa in six weeks. How will you spend the next six weeks? What activities will you be doing with your friends? Will your family pray together about this situation?
2. Your mother is taking a new job in another city. She starts the new job in one month. She has agreed to let you stay with friends for the rest of the school year, but then you will move to the new city too. How will you spend the last three months of the school year? How do you think your mother will feel living without you for a few months? Will you pray with your mom before she leaves?
3. You have just been diagnosed with a terminal illness. Right now you feel pretty good, but the doctors say your health may deteriorate very quickly. Your life expectancy is uncertain. How will you spend your time with friends and family? What might you pray for?
4. Your father just had a heart attack and has been in and out of intensive care. If he makes it through the next two weeks, he has a good chance of a total recovery. Today you are the only family member at the hospital. How will you spend your time? Will you and your father pray together?

5. Your mom and dad have just finalized their divorce. Your dad is going to move to Texas while you stay with your mom in Wisconsin. You won't see your dad for at least nine months once he moves. Tonight he is taking you out for the last time before he leaves. How do you want to spend your time together? What things might you want to talk about? Will you pray together?

Overall, how do these situations make you feel? What things worry you? What priorities come to mind? List the top five priorities you identified.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss the following questions.

- What is one thing you appreciate about your family?
- How does your family help you nurture your relationship with God?

## Scripture Discussion

While traveling through Jerusalem, Jesus stopped in Bethany to visit with his friends Mary and Martha. Jesus knew his time on earth was limited. He was heading toward the cross. A quiet visit with friends must have been important to him at this point. Keep this in mind as you read Luke 10:38-42 and discuss the following questions.

Why do you think Jesus stopped to visit Mary and Martha?

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How did Mary respond to Jesus' visit?

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When was a time when you felt very welcomed or loved by a family member or friend?

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How did Martha respond to Jesus' visit?

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Which of these responses do you think Jesus appreciated most at this time?

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How do you think Mary's attentiveness made Jesus feel?

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Why did Jesus want Martha to join him?

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How can we balance these two responses?

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List some times when you prefer listening to or visiting with someone else.

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List some times when you prefer to make preparations for guests, such as cooking food or setting the table.

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Just as Jesus looked forward to spending time visiting and enjoying friendship with Mary and Martha, God looks forward to spending time with us.

# Joe and the Chocolate Chips

Ask two people to perform this skit or read it aloud to the group. Then discuss the following questions as a group.

## Characters

**Joe:** a 15-year-old returning home from football practice

**Mom:** busy in the kitchen, preparing a recipe for that evening

**Mom:** *(To herself)* Okay, now I need two cups of flour ...

**Joe:** *(Enters, wearing a football uniform)* Hi, Mom.

**Mom:** One cup of sugar ... *(Looks up)* Oh. Hi, Joe. Where are the chocolate chips I bought last week?

**Joe:** *(Sits down)* I'm exhausted. Football practice was terrible.

**Mom:** *(Distracted)* Joe, do you know where the chocolate chips went? What did you say about football practice?

**Joe:** I think Beth ate them last night. I said football practice was awful. Brian hit me so hard, I felt like I ran into a wall. Then I dropped the ball and the coach screamed at me. I'm afraid I won't get to play on Saturday.

**Mom:** That's too bad. Say, will you run down to the store for me and pick up some chocolate chips? I want to finish these bars before Grandpa and Grandma get here. What time is your game Saturday?

**Joe:** Nine o'clock. We're picking up Dennis at eight-thirty. Why can't Beth go get the chocolate chips? She ate them.

**Mom:** You know I don't want Beth biking across that busy street. The money's in my purse.

**Joe:** *(Disappointed)* Okay, I'll go. Where's your purse?

As a group, discuss the following questions:

- How do you think Joe is feeling? Why?
- How do you think Joe's mom is feeling? Why?
- What response is Joe hoping for? What response does he get?
- What things need to change in order for both Joe and his mom to feel good about this situation?
- How is this situation similar to Jesus' visit with Mary and Martha? How is this situation different?

## The Definition of Prayer

Drawing on Luke 10:38-42 and your own experience, write your own definition of prayer. Share this definition. Then, write a group definition of prayer.

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Jesus asks us to be in relationship with him. He considers time spent together to be precious. The Bible shows many examples of God's desire to communicate with us. Psalms is a book of songs and prayers. Look up the following passages from the book of Psalms and list some reasons we should pray.

Psalm 8:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 12 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 19:14 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 25:4-5 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 51:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 55:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:10-12 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 119:105 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 133 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 136:1-9 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 139:1-4 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 146:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

## What Is Prayer?

- Prayer is a time for us to be present with God.
- It is a time to praise God.
- It is a time to give thanks for God's glory.
- It is a time to listen to God's word.
- It is a time for God to teach and guide us.
- It is a time to be forgiven by God.
- It is a time to lift up our needs.
- It is a time to lift up the needs of those around us.

God, our creator, loves us very much. Just as Jesus liked to spend time with his friends during his time on earth, God likes to spend time with us. God enjoys our presence, and prefers that we put our time and energy into spiritual things, rather than into earthly things.

## Assignment

Think of three things you can do this week to be intentionally present for a family member or friend—really paying attention to that person. Write these three things in the space below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

This coming week, do something special for a family member or friend. Choose something that is not expensive and that shows you care for the other person.

**Close with prayer.**

# Session 2

## The Lord's Prayer

### Scripture Text

Luke 11:1-4

### Session Theme

Jesus speaks to us.

### Lord's Prayer

Luke 11:1-4

*Father, hallowed be  
your name.  
Your kingdom come.  
Give us each day  
our daily bread.  
And forgive us our sins,  
for we ourselves forgive  
everyone indebted to us.  
And do not bring us  
to the time of trial.*

### Open with prayer.

Discuss the following questions:

- How might you act in the presence of someone you admire?
- How would you want to spend time with your favorite famous person?

God is with us whenever we pray. Whether we are alone in our room, hanging out with a group of close friends, or off in the midst of natural beauty, God promises to give us full attention. It was customary in Jesus' time for religious leaders to teach their students simple words to help them pray. The students would memorize these prayers and say them over and over each day. Jesus' disciples asked him to do the same for them.

### Scripture Discussion

Read Luke 11:1-4 and answer the following questions:

What was Jesus doing when his disciples came to him?

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Why do you think Jesus might have wanted to pray?

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Why might we want to pray?

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How did Jesus begin his prayer? Why?

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How do you greet your family or friends?

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Maybe you refer to your friends with nicknames or have a nickname that certain friends call you. When those people recognize you by that name, it means something special. It's the same way with God. God wants to meet us on a personal level. We begin our prayer by addressing God as someone who is special in our lives.

## What Do We Ask for in Our Prayers?

List some things that Jesus prayed about. \_\_\_\_\_

Why do we pray "Your kingdom come"?

What does "Give us each day our daily bread" mean?

Why do we need to ask God for forgiveness?

Why must we forgive others?

What does "And do not bring us to the time of trial" mean?

Does Jesus' prayer request the same things from God that we might request?

What specific requests does Jesus suggest we make in our own prayers?

What are your needs today? How might God help you today?

Do you worry about things that occurred in the past? How might God relieve your stress or take away your worries?

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Do you have a family relationship or friendship that needs God's attention?

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What are your dreams for the future? How might God guide you in achieving your dreams?

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Jesus points out three areas to focus on in our prayer life:

1. We present God with our needs for today.
2. We give God our burdens from the past.
3. We invite God into our future.

Our prayers can include our relationship with God, our family, our friends, or any other person. We can include our struggles at school, at work, at home, or any other place. Our prayers should include whatever is in our hearts or on our minds. The words of the Lord's Prayer can be our only words or they can be combined or replaced with words that are real for us today.

Did Jesus intend for us to pray only this prayer? Why or why not?

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Why might it be helpful for Jesus to teach us a prayer?

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How can we use this prayer as a basis for a spiritual life?

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# Session 3

## Personal Prayer

### Scripture Text

Luke 11:5-13

### Session Theme

How do I pray?

#### Open with prayer.

This session focuses on how to make prayer a part of our everyday life and a part of our self-identity. This session looks at the following questions:

- What do we ask for in prayer?
- How will God respond to our requests?
- Will our prayers be answered?

Imagine you have been awarded a one-hour shopping spree in your favorite store. During this hour, you can do whatever you'd like and have whatever you want.

- Which store would you pick?
- How would you feel being alone in that store?
- What would you do first?
- What would you take with you at the end of your hour?

List some gifts you have received without giving anything back in return.

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- How do you feel about receiving gifts and giving nothing in return?

### Scripture Discussion

Read the parable Jesus tells his disciples about prayer in Luke 11:5-13. Hospitality was very important to the people of Jesus' time. Homes were opened to travelers for food, drink, and rest. There were no fast-food restaurants or rest areas for travelers, and motels were not located at every major intersection of town. People relied on each other to meet basic needs while they were on the road.

Traveling at night was common because the sun was so hot during the day. This presented a dilemma for many travelers, because most people closed their homes at night in order to keep warm. They also baked only enough for one day at a time, and were often out of bread once night came.

## The Host and the Traveler

What advice does Luke 11:5-13 offer for travelers? For hosts?

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How did the traveler decide where to go for help? How did the host decide where to go for help?

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What do you do when you have certain needs? Where do you go to for help?

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## God's Message to Us

Jesus often used a type of story, called a parable, to reinforce his teachings. But Jesus also used parables that showed the opposite of his teachings.

The parable from Luke 11:5-13 is one of contrast. Jesus used the story of a persistent host begging for food from an unwilling friend in order to meet his obligation to a passing traveler. The contrast, according to Jesus, is how willing God is to listen. God never locks the door and goes to sleep, only to be awakened by our persistence. Jesus points out that even the unwilling man eventually responded to his friend.

What advice do these verses offer us about prayer?

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Will our prayers be answered? Are they always answered as we intend?

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What does God promise for us in prayer?

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What do these verses recommend for our relationships with family and friends?

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Throughout our lives, our prayers will change just as our needs change. Look up the following verses. They represent several different types of prayer. After each verse, note which type of prayer is represented.

Psalm 9:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 16:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 22:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 23 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 33:20-22 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 67 \_\_\_\_\_

John 17:1-5 \_\_\_\_\_

John 17:6-19 \_\_\_\_\_

John 17:20-26 \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 1:3-11 \_\_\_\_\_

People offer prayer in many forms and for a variety of reasons.

- For many people, reading from the Bible is a great way to pray.
- Some Native Americans use dance as a form of prayer.
- In worship, songs are often used to begin our prayer time.
- Silence can be one of the most powerful ways to be present with God in prayer.
- Inviting God into our everyday thoughts and activities is also a wonderful way to connect with God in prayer.

How do you usually pray?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What makes your time with God different from the time spent talking to friends or time spent alone?

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When do you feel most connected to your best friend?

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When do you feel most connected to your family?

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When do you feel most connected with God?

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Make a list of types of prayers that are meaningful for you. These types of prayers can include songs, poems, written prayers, and dances.

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- Share one prayer you enjoy with your group.

## Assignment

Choose one Bible verse that is a meaningful prayer for you. Write the verse and Bible citation below. Then write the entire verse on an index card and put it on your bathroom mirror or refrigerator. Memorize this verse.

**Meaningful verse:**

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**Bible book, chapter, and verse:** \_\_\_\_\_

As this study of the Lord's Prayer comes to an end, think of ways to make prayer a regular part of your life. Here are some ideas:

- Set up a prayer schedule. Try various types of prayer. Do each type for one week before moving on to the next.
- Keep a prayer journal. Write down what was meaningful for you during that time.

**Close with prayer.**