

# The Lord's Prayer

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Good morning, everyone. I said this last week, and I say it again this week. It's a great honor to open up God's Word with you this morning, wherever you may be.
- And I said this last week, and I'll say it again this week. This is great. We have technology. I really wish we could be together this morning, and looking forward to seeing you folks whenever we're able to meet again at the Ottawa Little Theater.
- If you have attended Messiah for some time, more than just a couple weeks, you will notice that we pray the Lord's Prayer every single week.
- It's a part of our service. Matt did it just a few moments ago, and it is a mainstay of Christian worship. It's a part of it.
- It also, for us that have been a part of Messiah for some time, it can get old hat. We can go on autopilot when we have our prayers, when we go through the liturgy.
- [ 1 : 1 0 ]     I don't want to say familiarity breeds contempt, but maybe familiarity breeds apathy. The thing is, the Lord's Prayer isn't just something that we ought to rifle off.
- It's very, very important. In fact, it's actually the basis upon which we should model our prayer life. In many ways, in our lives, we should model our lives after the Lord's Prayer.
- The centuries-old way that Christians have instructed other Christians, other potential Christians on the Christian faith have centered around three things.
- The Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. And really, an easy way to think of it is what to believe, how to live, and how to pray.
- These things are just the rocks, the foundational pieces of what it means to be a Christian. Last week, we looked at the Ten Commandments as the means by which we are to live out the gospel as God's people.
- [ 2 : 2 2 ]     So this week, we're looking at the Lord's Prayer in Matthew chapter 6. If you have a Bible, I would love it if you would follow along with me, although I'm sure we'll have the words on the screen as well.
- But if you have a Bible, pull it out. The Lord's Prayer opens with an address to God. Actually, before we get into this, I mean, like the Lord's Prayer, we could do a summer series on this over seven, eight, nine weeks.
- We have one week to do it. So we're not necessarily going to go forensic in terms of an exposition on the Lord's Prayer. But it's important that we get some handles on it before we jump in.
- You'll see that the Lord's Prayer opens up with an address to God. We look at it in verse 9. It says, And then it's followed by seven petitions, three of which have to do with God, four of which have to do of a personal nature.
- And then it wraps up with a doxology or a bit of praise to the Lord. And like I mentioned before, this gives us a framework for prayer and really a framework for our lives as Christians.

- [ 3 : 38 ] The Lord's Prayer also is deeply important because it helps us to do three things. It helps us to do three things. It helps us not to emphasize the personal over the transcendent.
- I'll explain this, but that's the first point. The second thing is to not, it helps us not to value the giver over the gifts. And the third thing it does is it helps us not just pray to God, but to also praise God.
- So I'll say those three things again. The first is it helps us, the Lord's Prayer helps us not to emphasize the personal over the transcendent. The second is not to value the gifts over the giver.
- And the last thing that it helps us to do is to not just pray to God, but also to praise God. Okay, so that first one, it helps us to not emphasize the personal over the transcendent.
- So it's important to know that Jesus wasn't the only rabbi that was walking around in the Galilee and in ancient Israel with followers.
- [ 4 : 53 ] That's not to somehow diminish who Jesus is, but just historically, there were other people that claimed authority, that claimed to be great, great rabbis, maybe even Messiah figures.
- Jesus wasn't the only one at that time. They would teach on God, their understanding of God. By the way, just to be clear, I'm not equating the two, okay?
- Just explaining this. They would teach on God, their understanding of God. They would interpret the Bible in certain ways. But it's really interesting that out of all of the documents we have from that first century, even if we go back through the Old Testament, before Jesus, there wasn't any teaching on how to pray by addressing God as Father.
- There was no, up until Jesus, nobody taught, hey, when you pray, you should address God as Father. It starts with Jesus.
- That's significant. It's not a throwaway, it's not something to throw away as if, you know, that's a detail that doesn't really matter. It's just a part of the story.
- [ 6 : 11 ] It matters because if we look at what precedes the Lord's Prayer, Jesus defines what is legitimate prayer from not legitimate prayer.
- And this is what he says in verse 5. 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. Lord, jump down to verse 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.
- Jesus contrasts the Lord's Prayer that begins with our Father with two kinds of prayer. I'll add a third one, and you'll understand why I'm going to add a third one.
- But the first one is this ostentatious prayer, this almost obnoxious prayer, this prayer that goes out and says, look at me, I'm a real religious person.
- [ 7 : 16 ] The type of prayer that is not so much for the connection between the person praying to God, but for the connection of the person praying to everybody else that's watching them.
- Jesus says that's not a good prayer. In fact, that's not a prayer at all. The second thing he talks about is this thoughtless religious prayer as if to strong arm God into doing the things that you want him to do.
- I have prayed, I have been religious, I have spent hours heaping up words, doing religious things, praying nonstop.
- You better hear me, you better do what I say. It's almost as if you are forcing God into a corner to act. Jesus here, he says that's no way to pray either.

The third category I would throw in would be for those that don't pray at all. That is one of those categories that is a tough thing for us to admit to if we call ourselves Christian, if we have put our faith and hope and trust in Jesus, that there are seasons that we just don't pray at all.

[ 8 : 47 ] And by implication of Jesus teaching us how to pray, he is encouraging us to be people who pray, to not be people that don't pray.

So really there's these three kinds of prayers that Jesus, one of them being no prayer at all, approaches the prayer that Jesus then contrasts with what?

He says, but when you pray, in verse six, 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.

Verse eight, do not be like them for your father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this, our father in heaven. It means that our prayers are deeply, deeply, deeply personal.

It means that we are praying to God as father in relational terms. That's very significant. I will just say this.

[ 9 : 54 ] The evangelical church for decades, I should say for decades as if I'm some kind of historian for all of my life, has preached, you need to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, which is very true.

But they've said it in such a way that it has become kind of cliché, a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, a personal relationship with God, as if to sap the very meaning behind it.

It's like a tagline. It's maybe on a bumper sticker, a fridge magnet. It's become kitschy to say, have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ or a personal relationship with God.

Yet, if we just kind of step away from the kitschy evangelicalism, by the way, we're an evangelical church if you're visiting us for the first time, if we just take a step away from that, there is something so profound about praying to God in a personal way, in a relational way.

I can attest to it that Orthodox Jewish people do not pray to God in a personal way. I mean, they would relate to God in a personal way in terms of the nation of Israel would, but in a personal, personal way?

[ 11 : 22 ] Islam similarly does not pray to a personal God. Nowhere do we see this call to a personal prayer life with God apart from what we see in the scriptures.

It means that we pray from this relational place, not praying in a performative way to reach some relational place.

That we have union with God, and from that union with God, we then pray. We don't pray in order to force God's hand for union with him.

If you remember last week, and if you haven't, we have it on YouTube, we looked at the Ten Commandments, and the remarkable thing about the Ten Commandments is that it opens up by saying that I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and then it goes on with the rest of the Ten Commandments.

But it starts from a place of relationship, a place of salvation. So too does this, when we say our Father. If we say our Father of God, we have to ask, how then have we become children of God?

[ 12 : 48 ] How are we able to call God Father? So I'm trying to plant this church out in Kanata, Messiah Kanata. Please pray for us.

We have a Tuesday evening group with some folks that have committed, other folks that are just checking us out, and we've been going through the Apostles' Creed. It's been incredibly rich to go through it.

And last week, we looked at the clause. So we're going clause by clause through the Apostles' Creed. Last week, we looked at the clause, I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. And the question came up, how can Jesus be the only Son of God, as it says, right?

We believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son. And yet, we are called children of God as well. Are those two things contradictory? They're not.

And here's why. On the cross, God, the Son of God, became fully incarnate, fully man, and fully God, Jesus Christ.

[ 13 : 51 ] And he died for the sins of the world so that whoever believes in him would not perish, but have eternal life. The Bible speaks of eternal life as being adopted into God's family, being called heirs of all of God's promises and of the heavenly inheritance.

Simply put, through the Son of God, we have become adopted sons and daughters of God. So to pray our Father is to be a person who has put their faith and hope and trust in the risen Messiah, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord.

It is deeply personal to pray our Father. Why? Because it came at a deep personal cost of God himself in the person of Jesus.

Bearing our sins upon his shoulders, paying the unjust penalty for us so that we might be welcomed into the family of God.

So it's a wonderful thing to pray. It's a deeply humbling thing to pray. It's so personal, but look at what it's followed up with.

[ 15 : 09 ] So if you go down to verse 9 again, and it says, Our Father, what does it say directly after that? It says, Our Father in heaven. It's very, very important that we don't pick pieces from the Bible out of context.

So it says, Our Father who is in heaven, or if you're used to the King James, who art in heaven. To say that God is in heaven isn't to say that he is in heaven and not here with us right now.

We're not talking about a Christian Mount Olympus where the gods are up there and sometimes they come down to visit. Nor is it if you're into comic books like the Justice League's Watchtower where it's just kind of hovering over earth and then a superhero beams down.

That's not what it says, it means when it says Our Father who is in heaven. Rather, it is this recognition that God is sovereign over all, that he is creator over all.

God, one of his attributes is his omnipresence or his ubiquity, that God cannot be in one place and not in the other.

[ 16 : 27 ] He is everywhere. Everything, in fact, is held together by God. So to say that our Father in heaven isn't to say to talk of a distant God out there but it's to talk about a transcendent God, an almighty God that we get to call Father.

See, God isn't some kind of talisman, not some kind of lucky rabbit's foot, something that we rub or hold when we want good things to happen.

God is deeply personal but is infinitely transcendent.

We submit to him and his will, not the other way around. We come to him on his terms, not the other way around. God. And those things have to be held in tension.

They have to be. In fact, they don't just need to be held in tension but you have to understand it because one without the other negates both.

[ 17 : 43 ] If we say that God is almighty and he's not personal, then we are creating a God that's a bit tyrannical, a God that is not the Christian God in the Bible but would look more so like a God in the Greek myth and the Greek myths.

If God is personal and he is not almighty, then on what basis is he personal? Has he dealt with our sins? Has he dealt with our brokenness?

Can we put hope in him to right all the wrongs? You see, saying our Father in heaven it is one and the same. It is the personal God.

It is the transcendent God. It is the one true God. So he is personal and he is transcendent. And this is important for us as well.

It's good news for us because what we do a lot as people and I would I would say this would be a cross cultural thing.

[ 18 : 56 ] So if Canada has many different cultures, these subcultures, then I think this is something that we could maybe observe throughout all the different cultures. But what we do is we put our eternal hope into temporal things and we put our we look to the eternal to solve our temporal problems.

We invert things. We don't we don't have ordered proper ordered lives. And here we have an example right off the bat in the Lord's Prayer where God is incredibly personal where he helps us in our day to day.

It'll we'll read in a in a brief moment about how we can pray for our daily bread. and yet God is incredibly transcendent so that we can put our eternal hope in him.

It helps us to order the way we view life. Which also leads really nicely into another thing that the Lord's Prayer helps us to do to not value the giver over the gifts.

Years ago before I was married before I owned a car might have even been before I owned a bicycle. I owned a bus pass though. I would ask a friend to borrow her car and to do errands, to go to town.

[ 20 : 33 ] Good friend at the time. And it got to the point that I'd only talk to her if I wanted to use her car. car. And she called me out on it.

I've been friends for a long time. She called me out on it. And I remember just I knew she was right 100%. I felt so much shame. I used her. I valued her friendship not for her but for what she could provide for me.

That is a car to use. In one of, you know, not to brag or anything like that, but one of the better moments of my life, I admitted fault immediately.

You're right. I knew it. And anyways, it was very humbling. It was very humbling, that's for sure. But how often do we treat God like this?

We value not him, we value the things he could do for us. And how does that play out? Well, we pray when things get bad.

[ 21 : 35 ] And I'm not talking necessarily, you know, you might pray to thank God for the food before the meals that you eat. You're tucking the kiddos in, you know, you say a prayer with them.

But we only come to God in earnest prayer when we're on the ropes, when we need something. And that's a good thing that we pray to God when we need something.

But when we only really pray to him, when I only pray to him when I need something, I, I was telling Matt just before we jumped in on the live stream that this has been one of the hardest times of prep for a sermon for me personally because it has exposed how prayerless of a man I am.

And I'm a minister at church. I'm supposed to be praying for you guys on the regular. And it just exposed how prayerless I am and how I come to the Lord when I want something.

Maybe that's the case for you too. And I will just say this. I can say this to you because I'm including myself in here. That's wrong. It is not good. It is not good to ignore the giver of the gift and just focus on the gift.

[ 22 : 56 ] All too often this is our default, but the Lord's prayer counteracts this default. default. It counteracts this default. How does it do that?

Well, the Lord's prayer, if you look, and I mentioned this, it's seven petitions, and it starts off with hallowed be thy name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

So there's the three that are directed to God. But then there's four for us. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who, sorry, I'm just, I'm reading it in the ESV, but remembering it in the King James.

As we also have forgiven our debtors, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Okay, those are the four for us. So what we end up doing with the Lord's prayer is that we are constantly praying for God's name to be hallowed, for God's kingdom to come, God's will to be done, and then we pray for our own requests.

And it is this back and forth prayer that we pray ultimately for God to be held at the highest of esteem, that his name be hallowed, which is simply just to say that God is glorified, that he is holy, that he is other than us, that all praise is due to him, that his kingdom come is a simple way to say how the gospel has transformed the world through Jesus, through his church, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and continues to do so, that we pray for that, and God's will to be done, and we see the most precious, beautiful picture of that with Jesus in the garden, where he prays that the cup will be passed, that he won't have the drink of the cup, but ultimately he prays to the Father, your will, not mine, be done.

[ 24 : 58 ] And in light of that, we say, God, please meet my needs, please help me to walk in your ways, please help me to avoid evil, to avoid darkness, to avoid brokenness, and instead live into the good, and live into the light, and live into fullness, and it's a back and forth, where we're praying to God for his name to be lifted high, and for him to meet our needs, which glorifies him as well, and eventually, because nothing is overnight, but eventually we'll start to value the giver much more than the gift.

Our lives will be ordered properly, where we don't love the temporal over the eternal. not an overnight thing, especially if it's your default, like it's my default.

But the Lord's Prayer, it helps us with that. We have to also remember that throughout all of Scripture, the true gift that God wishes to give his people is himself.

In the garden, it is not the tree of life that is the crown jewel. It is God himself dwelling with man.

All throughout the Old Testament, there are instances and prophecies, writings. If we read through the Psalms, it's like this as well, especially Psalm 16.

[ 26 : 39 ] But the true hope for the human soul is God himself. At the end of the age in the book of Revelation, St.

John's Revelation, what is the culmination of all of redemptive history? Is it not that God would dwell with his people?

God is the true gift. He is the true gift. We can forget this all too often.

And the Lord's Prayer, if we pray it, if we see what it truly is, it helps us to renounce entitlement. When we pray to the Lord, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and then we pray, give us today our daily bread, how do we then act smugly that everything comes from our own hand, the sweat of our own brow, love, the hard work we've done, the excellent investing that we've accomplished over the decades, over the years.

We recognize that all of God's gifts to us, all of the good things in our lives are gifts from him. And we don't pray with effervency, so when it says, give us this day our daily bread, it seems like a redundant prayer, but this is like a desperate cry for people, especially the people that would be hearing Jesus in the Galilee, they live a hand-to-mouth subsistence type of life.

[ 28 : 23 ] We don't, even the most poor among us don't live that type of life, maybe some, but not like it's not across the board.

And yet, if God did not give us breath in our lungs, how would we go to our jobs, how do we do the things that we ought to do? So we must understand then that there is no entitlement, it is all a gift from God.

There is a thanksgiving that bubbles up. We value the giver over the gift. God's name and his kingdom and his will, these are all things that we need to think about and dwell on, talk to our friends about, to not push aside because of the potential cost that it will bring to our lives.

We might be very comfortable with where we're at now and we're not willing necessarily to pray, God, your will be done in and through me. But that's what this prayer is calling us to.

God's name. Because if we value the giver over the gift, then we want to please the giver. We want to please the Lord. That our lives, everything we have, it is a blessing from him.

[ 29 : 45 ] So how then can we use it? And if we don't feel the hunger pains in our stomach, then why don't we seek out people that might feel that?

Why don't we help them? Because God has given us good gifts. And if you're afraid that God's will for your life will cost too much, Romans 12, 2, it says, what is the will of God?

It is good, pleasing, and perfect. Good, pleasing, and perfect. What's the will for your own life? Is it good, pleasing, and perfect?

Not just to you, to your family, but to those around, to God himself? Again, guys, I'm pointing the finger at me. It was a really hard week.

It was, putting this sermon together, reading through this word, and I think what is scaring me the most, in some ways, true fear, true confession about my true fears, is that I'm going to go back home after this, and I'm just going to get on with my life.

[ 30 : 51 ] Just status quo, talk about doing God's will, and then, I don't know, I forget about it. If God's will for all of this world, including your life, is that it is good, and pleasing, and perfect, I mean, what do we have to lose?

To know the giver, to know that he delights in what we do, and that we delight in him. the chief end of man, it says, is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

And I have a friend who likes adapting that a little bit, and he says the chief end of man is to glorify God by enjoying him forever. remember that Jesus says, take my yoke upon you, my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Even if we do hard things, if we are doing it and we know that God is pleased, then it doesn't become so burdensome.

but it's hard when it's our default, when it's my default. We must not value the giver over the gifts. I think I've said that like half a dozen times, but it's good.

[ 32 : 15 ] Hopefully it's memorable for me and for you. It also here talks about forgiveness.

Again, in light of God giving us forgiveness through his son. And this is the tough part. It tells us to pray, to forgive, to ask for forgiveness for ourselves, but also that we need to forgive others.

And you see divine forgiveness is intertwined with human forgiveness. That's really, really hard if you've been wronged.

To pray this. To pray that God forgive me like I've forgiven other people, but do you know what that person has done? Do you know what my mom or my father, my dad, my brother, my sister, my spouse, my spouse has done?

Do you know what my ex-spouse has done? It's hard. I mean, pain and unforgiveness, it is, I do not want to downplay that at all.

[ 33 : 25 ] but if we understand that we have been forgiven an eternal debt by God, that we have sinned in a huge way against the living God, that we will start to see that debt against us begin to diminish.

When you are filled with thanksgiving, when you are filled with, I should say not filled, when the chains are taken off, there is a lightness that you see things differently, especially if you see yourself as a sinner, as somebody who has really offended the living God, then who are you to hold it above someone else if God doesn't hold it above you?

In the end, we want to do, we want to pray that God would forgive our sins, and in light of praying, your kingdom come, your will be done, hallowed be your name.

It's hard, it's not easy, but without God's forgiveness, we have no mechanism to deal with the past. We just don't. Our culture right now, what is our culture doing right now with the past?

It's going on a witch hunt. It is a witch hunt. It really is. And conservatives are doing it just as much as liberals. It is endemic.

[ 34 : 57 ] It's a big problem right now. It really is. We don't know what forgiveness is. We want to tie people to the stake and be the person to light the wood, to set them ablaze.

We don't understand. We don't have a mechanism for forgiveness to deal with the past, and yet here it is. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sinned against us. What does Jesus say?

How many times must we forgive our brother that wrongs us? He says seven times seventy, which is a wonderful way of saying however long it takes. That doesn't mean we just ignore wrongs.

Justice still needs to be carried out for some heinous things. forgiveness. But forgiveness, I mean that is freedom. And we can forgive others.

We can. We can. It might take time. Might need to have a chat with George or myself or somebody else you trust. Maybe work through some of this stuff. It's not easy.

[ 36 : 00 ] But it is liberating, especially if you know that you've been liberated yourself. The last thing that this does, the Lord's Prayer, what it helps us to do, is to not just pray to God, but to praise him.

We've talked a lot about God, about hallowing his name, his kingdom come, his will be done, about how he meets our needs.

And friends, if you are honest with yourself right now, this can seem as though there's a weight, a heavy weight that's put on you by me.

I mean, potentially. But this is, like I mentioned, one of the most freeing things we can do. Remember that God's will is, it is good, perfect, and pleasing.

And when we encounter God and as we pray to him, we'll realize we are free people. And we pray, like with the Ten Commandments, we live out the Ten Commandments from a place of salvation.

[ 37 : 16 ] We pray the Lord's Prayer from a place of complete liberation. And this will elicit praise. It just will.



when Jill read the Lord's Prayer in verse 13, it ends by saying, but deliver us from evil. When we pray it at Church of the Messiah, it says, for yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever.

And it's just not, I mean, if you have a Bible, there might be a footnote there that will say something like that in the earliest manuscripts, that section is omitted.

and it's true, the earliest and most reliable manuscripts we have of Matthew's Gospel does not include that.

It's added later. But it's still worthwhile to pray. It's incredibly biblical to pray, for yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Absolutely, it's biblical.

[ 38 : 18 ] But it is also important that we do that because we pray to God and it then, if we truly grasp what we're praying, we will praise him.

We will. The Lord's Prayer opens up with an address about God. It has seven petitions. But then if we say for yours, it ends with doxology, a worship of God.

We can't be moved by God, truly moved by him, and then not praise him. He redeems mankind for the sake of love.

He's a promise keeping God. He genuinely desires to bless us for our good, that he blesses us with his very presence.

We get taste of it in this life, but the promise is for the life to come. It means that Jesus himself is the ultimate gift that we pray for in the Lord's Prayer.

[ 39 : 25 ] Jesus has made a way. In fact, Jesus is the very embodiment of the Lord's Prayer. Consider this, that if we go through kind of line by line of the Lord's Prayer, he's the embodiment of it.

He called God Father. He is the only begotten Son. We are the adopted sons. He calls God Father. He brought honor to his name. He ushered in the kingdom.

He submitted to the will of the Father. So he says, I only do what I see my Father doing. He gave himself as the very bread of life. The very bread of life.

He won forgiveness for us on the cross. He suffered temptation, but did not give in. And what does he do? He delivers us from evil. He is the very embodiment of the Lord's Prayer.

And when we pray it, we can pray it with Jesus in mind. And this brings praise to our hearts if it moves us. If it moves us.

[ 40 : 27 ] We have this saying that seems to have developed in our small group for the church plant where we say theology, proper theology leads to proper doxology.

theology, when you understand, truly understand what God has done for us in Christ Jesus, then our hearts will be moved to praise him properly, to praise him with our whole hearts, to learn how to praise him.

It is deeply, deeply connected. I really don't want to burden people. just kind of in closing, I really don't want to burden people with, hey, you need to pray more or else, you know, you're no good.

I don't want that at all. Life is full of anxieties and we've had just a tremendously difficult, like what, what are we on, like month 15 or 16?

I don't know, a lot, a lot of time has gone by in this, in this pandemic with restrictions. I don't want to guilt anybody into any of that.

[ 41 : 37 ] But if prayer truly is turning our heart toward God to listen and to speak with him, as our catechism says, it would seem to me that prayer provides an opportunity to give our problems and our concerns and our, and and our anxieties to God, knowing that he and only he can alleviate all of the pain, all of the, the, the, the trouble, all of the things that we try to mask with, with either substance or busyness or entertainment, whatever it may be, that never truly fixes things.

Only he can deal with it. We can enjoy his grace and his love and his kindness. We bring our desires to the Lord and ultimately we pray our father and we're praying, God, give me yourself, teach me your ways, help me to deny myself, to deny my entitlements, help me to live a life that says your will be done through me, your kingdom come through me, through our church, through my family.

You're not going to get it right every time, but by God's grace, he's going to start transforming your heart. We'll learn to enjoy God and we might go through seasons of dryness and if you're in one right now, it's okay, but still say pray.

Pray. If it feels like you're going through the motions, it won't feel like you're going for through the motions for very long. I haven't given you guys any kind of practical tools, but just a few things.

You want to pray if at all possible with other people, but for sure by yourself. And if you can, try to pray as early as you can.

[ 43 : 29 ] Try to make it the first thing you do. And if you have children, it's difficult. If you're working shift work, that's hard to. God's not like, listen, if you don't pray between six and six thirty, like don't bother.

He doesn't say that. But try to make it one of the first things. And start with two minutes or three minutes. Start with an aid. I tried my best to pray with the Book of Common Prayer, the morning prayer service.

I like books, like physical books, as opposed to using my smartphone, just because I can get lost. An hour can go by on YouTube on my smartphone.

But you could use morning prayer, and it helps us then to structure our prayer life. You can also use, and I think Claire will throw it up, the Daily Prayer app.

And it is an adaptation of the prayer book, but in contemporary language and really beautiful backgrounds if you're into that kind of stuff. And I think it's about ten minutes long.

[ 44 : 31 ] They throw some scripture in there, they throw some prayers in there, and it's really good. It's called the Daily Prayer app. There's also the Book of Common Prayer app. It's called Daily Prayer, and it's from the Church of England.

You can check that out. It's not as pretty, but it's like a full version of this on your phone. Or if you have another way of praying, you can pray through the Psalms, whatever it may be.

Try your best. By God's strength, ask him to help you to pray. And then pray. Ask somebody to hold you accountable to it and pray. And see how the Lord will transform your life.

One last thing before we close. God really, really, really loves you. And that's not a kitschy thing to say.

If it seems kitschy, that's okay. He really, really loves you. He really, really, like desperately wants to connect with you. So much so that he sent his son, Jesus Christ, fully man, fully God, to make a way for you to enjoy his presence.

[ 45 : 43 ] Isaiah 65 verse 24 says this. This is God speaking. Before they call, I will answer. While they're yet speaking, I will hear. He is, like your sins are paid for.

He's not waiting to punish you. He's desperate for you to come. Now, I shouldn't say desperate as if God is some man who has needs. But he wants to meet with you.

In 12 weeks, because this is Trinity Sunday, the collect for the 12th Sunday after Trinity says this. He is always more ready to hear than we are to pray. And isn't that the truth?

Friends, if you have put your faith and hope and trust in Jesus, or if you're thinking about it, today is the perfect day to ask God to help you to pray. And then we can pray together.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

[ 46 : 45 ] And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.