

Teach us how to **pray**

Notes Guide
Week Seven



Forever and ever. Amen. Question Guide

Way in

Why is prayer such a good thing?

One day at work, a colleague says to you, 'You're religious, aren't you? You couldn't pray for my dad could you? He's not well, and my prayers don't seem to work.' How would you reply?

Read **Matthew 6:9-13** & **1 Chronicles 29:10-13**

At the end of the Lord's Prayer we often pray the words 'For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.' However, these words do not appear in Jesus' prayer recorded in the gospels. As such, it may have been an adaptation from 1 Chronicles 29, when King David praises God for the way in which his people have committed themselves to building his temple. Regardless of where the exact words came from, they are great things to pray and acknowledge!

1. The final sentence of the Lord's prayer begins with the word 'For...'. Why is this such an important word? What difference does it make to the way we might pray the whole prayer?

2. As you read through 1 Chronicles 29:10-13, what aspects of God's character and provision does David mention? Which are the aspects that fill you with confidence as you pray, and which are the ones that you have questions about?

3. As you think back through all of the things prayed in the Lord's prayer, how do these aspects of God's character affect the way you pray for them?

4. It is wonderful to know that our prayers are answered not because of the quality of our prayers, or the certainty of our faith, but in the character and nature of God. How does this set us free to pray more, and with more expectation?

5. 1 Chronicles 29:11-12 remind us that everything belongs to God, and that he reigns as king over all. How might this change the way you pray for:

Your family

Your future

Your workplace

Our nation

6. Read Revelation 21:1-5. 1 Chronicles 29:10 speaks of God's everlasting care and rule. It can be easy to assume that the difficulties that we may face now are as it will always be. And yet, God's everlasting care is one of joy, healing and wholeness. Does this change how way we pray in the middle of hard times? Are there any circumstances in your life, or those around you, in which you need to remember this, and pray differently as a result?

Final reflection on 'Teach us how to pray' series

1. What key things have you discovered about prayer during this series?

2. What actions have you taken, or might you take, as a result of the series?

3. Take some time to thank God for what he has been doing.

How to pray like Jesus

Question Guide

Way in

Why is prayer such a good thing?

One day at work, a colleague says to you, 'You Christians are always at each others throat. I thought Jesus was all peace and love! Why can't you just get on?' How would you reply?

Read **John 17:1-26**

In John 17 we get a rare glimpse into the things that Jesus prays for. What a privilege! The focus of our study will be verses 20-26 where Jesus prays for all believers (that's us!). But it will help to look back at verses 1-19 to see what Jesus prays for himself and his disciples.

1. Unity is the first thing that Jesus prays for us. Without going into too many details, what experiences have you had where there has been disunity in churches you have belonged to? What did it feel like at the time? What sort of unity does Jesus pray for (v21-23)?

2. Jesus makes a link in his prayer between unity and our witness. Why do you think these are so closely linked? Why will a united church be more effective in mission and why will a divided church be less effective?

3. The greatest challenge for us is to hold together truth and love. Look back to John 1:14-18. Jesus is described as being full of grace and truth. Can you give any examples of how Jesus held these two together? How do you think we can do this? What signs are there in the prayer that Jesus wants us to be like him – full of grace/love and truth?

4. Trace back through the whole of chapter 17 the references to Jesus 'word' (v6,7,14,17,20). How should God's word be at work in our lives? What effect should it have? Can you give any practical examples of the difference God's word is making in your life at the moment?

5. Are you surprised by the way Jesus prays for his own glory to be seen (v24)? Why is this a brilliant thing for us to pray for ourselves and for others?

6. Which features of Jesus prayer do you most need to bring into your own prayers?

Quote for reflection

"There are some Christians with a heart for God's word, and there are some Christians with a heart for God's world." (Anon)

Discuss together.

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- 1. What key things have you discovered about prayer during this series?*
- 2. What actions have you taken, or might you take, as a result of the series?*
- 3. Take some time to thank God for what he has been doing.*