

"The Lord's Prayer"

June 24, 2018



The Reverend John Powers shared a powerful message about the Lord's Prayer on Sunday. This week we will focus on key words in that prayer. Begin your daily meditation each day this week by praying the prayer the Lord taught us to pray. You will find it in Matthew 6:9-13.

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Matthew 18:20, Ephesians 3:6; Matthew 5:1-11,
24:24-33; Jeremiah 29:11-13, Proverbs 3:5-6,
Matthew 26:36-42 ; Exodus 16:11-21;
Ephesians 6:10-17

DAY 1

Read Matthew 18:20, Ephesians 3:6

Jesus began his prayer with the words "Our Father," not "My Father" or just "Father." His prayer reminds us that God is the God of us all and is to be worshiped and glorified in community. Jesus reinforced this with his promise to be with us whenever two or more of us are gathered in his name. While there are certainly personal aspects to our faith, and we are blessed with a one-to-one personal relationship with the Lord, our faith journeys are to unfold in the community we call the church.

- **Reflect on your own faith journey. What aspects of your journey are private - just between you and God? What aspects of your faith life are shared in community?**

- **Is Sunday morning worship your only communal faith experience or are you part of a class, small group, or ministry team? What gifts do you share with your Christian brothers and sisters?**
- **Why do you think Christ stressed the importance of having his followers gather to share the Lord's Supper and to pray?**

Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you evaluate whether living in Christian community is a Sunday practice or a daily practice for you. If you have not taken an opportunity to do daily life with other Christians, search for a way to do that. There are many opportunities for you here at St. Paul.

DAY 2

Read Matthew 5:1-11, 24:24-33

Sometimes we get so caught up in our own success, ambitions, houses, activities, family and hobbies that we begin to view our environments as our personal kingdoms. Other times we view our nation with all its benefits and the patriotic feelings it inspires as our kingdom. Jesus taught us to pray for God's kingdom to come here today on earth as it is in heaven, but the secular world tempts us to allow earthly kingdoms to overwhelm God's kingdom.

- **The Beatitudes describe the characteristics of those who will inherit God's Kingdom. How do those characteristics compare to the qualities valued by our culture?**
- **Jesus' kingdom parables teach us that the kingdom is found in the midst of the world's evil. Where do you see God's Kingdom in the world today? How do you contribute your time, talent and treasure to building that Kingdom rather than the world's kingdoms?**
- **What parts of various secular kingdoms are tempting you today? Are you able to keep God's**

Kingdom in focus and as a priority in the face of these temptations?

Meditate on the words "Thy Kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven" and ask God to help you make a commitment to God's Kingdom rather than the kingdoms offered by the world.

DAY 3

Read Jeremiah 29:11-13, Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 26:36-42

Most of us experience conflicts between our wills, plans, and desires, and God's will and plan for us. It can be especially difficult when God's plan seems impossible for us to accomplish or when God's plans seem to call us to give up things we enjoy or things that we value. The thing we need to remember is that while we are asked to take up our crosses and follow Jesus, God's plan is always for our good.

- **How is God calling you to do something different or to become a different kind of person than you are today?**
- **Do you trust God to give you the strength you need to do God's work in the world or do you sometimes feel like you have to do everything with your own, rather than God's, strength?**
- **What will it take for you to seek God's will and then say the words "Thy will, not my will be done?"**

Ask God to reveal his will for your life and for the courage and obedience to say "Thy will be done."

DAY 4

Read Exodus 16:11-21

As we reflect on the story of how God fed the people as Moses led them through the wilderness, we should be careful to note that God provided food each day - not a whole week or month's worth at a time. This practice helped the people to remember that God's provision is fresh and new each day. When we pray "give us this day our daily bread" the word "daily" is an important word. It reminds us to praise and petition God each day through our prayers and that we should never take an abundance of blessing for granted.

- **What happens to us when we have too much and, as a result, we stop asking for God to provide?**
- **Do you ever behave as though you are entitled to all you have? How does that type of behavior reflect gratitude to God for being the provider of all good things.**
- **Pray for the Holy Spirit to instill a sense of gratitude in your heart that is reflected in your prayers to the One who provides all we need.**

Reflect on all that God has provided during the last twenty-four hours and offer a prayer of thanksgiving.

DAY 5

Read [Ephesians 6:10-17](#)

Evil is real and exists in our world today. We face many temptations, and our culture often entices us to do things that harm others and ourselves. Many obstacles and evils seem more than we can bear because we don't face them wearing the "armor of God." When we pray the words "deliver us from evil" we are asking God to equip us with the spiritual armor described in today's passage.

- **How does truth help us stand against evil? Have you ever stood your ground against opposition because you were able to cling to God's Truth?**

- **How has the your faith acted as a shield against a temptation that you faced?**
- **How does God's Word operate to protect you from the evils of this world?**

Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen your "armor of God" so that you can stand strong in your faith as you face evil and the daily temptations the world throws your way.

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