

The Lord's Prayer

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[0:00] It's so good to be here. It's so good to be able to see you all, see the faces. We've been going through a series on, well, we unofficially called it the greatest hits of the Bible, and we went on a greatest hits tour.

The reason why is we're here to get to know him more, right? That's what we're here to do. When we're trying to get to know him, we use this book. But this book is a big book.

So what happens is we end up reducing it to some sound bites. Things that we've heard before. The Ten Commandments, something that we've heard before. The Fruit of the Spirit, something we've heard before. But sometimes when you just try and get to know someone using sound bites, it's not really enough.

You don't really get to truly know them. So we've been trying to go through this and go, actually, why were those sound bites even sound bites? Why are they so popular? Why was the Ten Commandments so popular? Why were the Beatitudes so popular?

Why was the whole armor of God so popular? The idea was to look at that. Let's zoom in and then let's zoom out and go, actually, why was this passage important? And what is it really trying to tell us about God?

[1:04] And that's what we've been doing. And what we've realized as we've gone through this whole series is, man, life is bigger than us. Life is so much bigger than us. Jeremiah 29, for I know the plans I have for you, was not really about us living happy, healthy lives.

That we were actually supposed to be in exile. That we were saved from all of those things. And so we see that life is just so much bigger than us. But there was one that we actually have missed. And this is the one that we're finishing off. So we're doing a bit of a swivel here. It's kind of the final one of the series. But also it kickstarts us off into a new series. And of course, it's the one that actually, if there was a passage that really reminded us that life is bigger than us, things are way bigger.

It's much more about us. We're not the center of our universe, in case you didn't know that. It's the one that actually probably is the most quoted passage in the whole of Scripture. It's the one that actually, even people who don't really go to church might actually know.

And of course, what is that one? The Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer. And what we're going to find out is, actually, what is it about this Lord's Prayer that's so interesting? Why do we all know it?

[2:11] Why are there songs written about it? And what's it actually trying to tell us? So we're going to go through that. And of course, my prayer is that as we look at this, my family and I, we pray this prayer two times a day, three times a day.

And actually, you likely will actually know it. I think Shum actually knows it in Cantonese, right, as opposed to in English, because it's just the way that you've been brought up with it. What does that actually mean?

What's it actually trying to tell us? So that's what we're going to do today. We're going to unpack it. There's two places where the Lord's Prayer really comes in. Of course, it's actually almost incorrectly named the Lord's Prayer, because it's not really the Lord's Prayer.

The Catholics call it Our Father. Actually, I think that name is probably more appropriate. It's the Our Father Prayer. It's not really the Lord's Prayer, because the Lord's Prayer is in John 17, when actually Jesus prays himself to God.

This is the disciples' prayer. This is Jesus teaching them how to pray. And so we're going to go through that. There's two places that it comes from. I'm going to start with Luke 11, and then I might jump into Matthew 6, just for a little bit, just for different parts as well.

[3:12] So, as always, can I invite you to stand for the word of the Lord? Our Father, we stand as we listen to your word, because we truly, truly understand how important this is, that this truly does give us life.

And so we come before you and ask, as we read this passage, as we listen to this passage that we've heard so, so many times, would you hit us around the head with it again in a fresh new way? Would you take us deeper?

Would you take us deeper into your presence, Lord? Luke 11. Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.

And he said to them, when you pray, say, 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 who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation. This is the word of the Lord. Please take a seat. So as you can see, this one's a slightly shortened version.

[4:24] The one in Matthew 6 on the Sermon on the Mount is where he goes into a little bit more detail. We'll kind of bounce around with a bit of both of them. But what I wanted to start with, which is the reason why I like this, is it starts off because in the beginning of chapter 11, his disciples go to him, and they say, Lord, teach us to pray.

That's interesting, because the disciples didn't really ask that. And there's some really interesting points when it even came to that. Lord, teach us to pray. First thing. Actually, they knew how to pray. These were Jewish boys who had grown up in the system.

They knew how to pray. Every day they would pray three times. And they would know how to pray. They would pray the Shema. And they would pray out of duty, out of discipline. So actually, these boys knew how to pray. They knew scripture.

And yet, they saw something in Jesus where they were like, this guy's doing something different. So they weren't saying, teach us how to pray, because they actually knew how to pray. What they were saying was, teach us how to pray like you.

There's something different. So that's the first observation. Second observation is this. Actually, they said, teach us how to pray. Actually, if you were hanging around Jesus, would that be the thing that you ask him to teach?

[5:29] They didn't ask him, hey, Lord, teach us how to preach like you. Man, you just killed it with that sermon on the mount. Took you three hours to get through the sermon, but teach us how to preach. Man, the way you healed that person.

They went from blind, and now they can see. Teach us how to heal. Teach us how to cast out demons. Teach us how to walk on water. Teach us how to fly.

But they say, teach us how to pray. Isn't that interesting? There's something about that that really piques my interest. And maybe it's because, actually, just a couple chapters before, Luke 9, Jesus takes a couple of them, three of them, actually, to go up to a mountain to pray.

And then his face starts glowing, and then Elijah shows up, and then Moses starts showing up. So they're looking and going, wow, I'm just used to praying my three times a day prayer, doing the usual stuff.

And it's kind of rote. It's kind of like, Thank you for this food. Thank you for this. Help us be good people. Help us be healthy and happy. Amen. That's what we're praying. But the way this guy prays, Moses shows up.

[6:32] His face starts glowing. Or maybe it's in Luke 10, just the chapter before, where Jesus is saying, Hey, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, so pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest.

What does praying earnestly even mean? I thought prayers are just reciting scripture. So they go, teach us to pray. Not to preach, not to heal, not to cast out demons, not to walk on water, but teach us to pray.

And a final thought is this. Actually, to even pray, you have to learn to pray. Those of you who have seen my family come back, it's been nearly two months now since you've seen them, so you've seen Ruben kind of shoot up, his voice drop.

These things are all happening, and you see Micah fill out a little bit. It's really cute. If we were, so in England, we were driving, and actually anywhere outside of Hong Kong, you drive for more than 30 minutes, unless you're Hank and you live out in Saikong.

And so we were figuring out ways to entertain ourselves, so we listened to this podcast called But Why? And it's just questions that kids ask. And one of the questions is, why are babies so cute? [7:37] Or why is my baby so cute? And the reason why they're so cute is because they're biologically designed that way to attract you in, so that they can get your attention. Why do they need your attention?

Why do they need your attention, Gabs? So you would look after them, protect them, provide for them. Yes. What else? Why does a baby need your attention? Why does a baby need our attention? To copy you.

To imitate you. To learn from you. So currently, MJ's vocabulary is Angu. Which is versatile. It means a million things. But eventually, he'll start developing new words.

Why? Because he's copying from us. And the whole point is that when people who can speak talk to a baby who cannot speak, when they make a sound, we're supposed to imitate them to tell them that this is the sound that you're making and this is how ridiculous you sound.

And then they start copying us. Praying is really the same. That we're actually supposed to learn how to pray. If you're sat here going, actually, I'm not really a prayer warrior. There are some people who I know who are true prayer warriors who can pray for hours and pray for days.

[8:43] I'm not one of those people. I get bored after two minutes. Well, we need to learn how to pray. It's interesting because disciples say here, they say, hey, Jesus teaches us how to pray as John taught his disciples.

So they looked and saw John the Baptist and go, hey, John was teaching them how to pray. Can you teach us how to pray like you? Because it's very clear to us that you and John the Baptist do something very different to what we've grown up doing.

So can you show us how to do this? Which brings me to another question is actually who taught you to pray? Have a think. Was it your grandma? Was it literally at the dinner table? Tell the person next to you, who taught you to pray?

Have a think. I might ask a few of you. I'm scouring.

Only a few more seconds. Who taught you how to pray? Oh, of course, if you're here for the first time and you don't pray at all, that's completely fine too. Right, okay.

[9:42] Let's pick on some people. Paul, let's go for you first. Paul Roth, who taught you how to pray? I guess my parents, but not in any. Not formal way, just listening to them and so you hear them pray and then so that's how you've ended up kind of praying.

John C., what about you? Who taught you to pray? You're welcome. Yep. Often it's just the people that we hear praying first, right?

And that's how we start learning how to pray. It's interesting because one of my favorite people in the world is Kenneth and every time I pray with him, he's kind of like, oh, no, I don't want to pray. It's just, I'm not good at this. This is cool. He's good at many other things, but this isn't one of the things he's confident with. But then once he prays, you're like, dude, Gabs is the leader. He's like, yes. It's funny.

Mother Teresa was interviewed one time and she was asked, hey, when you pray, what do you say to God? And then she had the famous answer, which was, I don't say anything.

[10:42] And then the interviewer were like, oh, okay, that's an interesting one. And so then he, being very smart, then just twisted it quickly and just said, hey, well, what does God say to you? And she says, nothing. And it's interesting because prayer isn't really just about presenting requests and talking.

It's just about being together. And it's interesting because actually I think who teaches us how to pray? People growing up in this world, in this city, just the world, just the culture.

What is praying is communicating. And what we're seeing right now is actually we see a whole generation of people being taught how to pray, how to communicate in a completely different way. You've got young people who are actually struggling to actually have face-to-face conversation because the world is saying, hey, you talk via technology.

And then, of course, then you've got the young people trying to teach old people how to use technology. We're all learning from somewhere, but the problem with this world is everything is so fast. Everything is so distracting. Everyone is so anxious.

Especially in a city like Hong Kong. We've just spent a few weeks in England where things are just slow-paced. Everything is slow. Which actually makes it much more conducive to prayer.

[11:52] The moment I came back, I started walking faster. I started losing patience with people. I started doing a million things. And I was like, man, it catches up with you. The world is teaching me how to pray, but the world doesn't really know how to pray.

But just before you go, oh, well, then what hope is there for us? Actually, there is comfort in this because in chapter 11, just before he starts to teach, in chapter 10, there's a fascinating interaction where he's hanging out with a few friends, Mary and Martha.

And of course, Mary is the one who chooses to sit with Jesus. Martha's the one who's running around doing a whole ton of things and is getting a bit annoyed at her sister. And what then does Jesus say? Jesus says, Martha, you are anxious and you are troubled.

Mary has chosen the right thing, the one thing. And that's the important thing. What is that important thing? Being with me. That, brothers and sisters, is prayer.

Just being with him. You don't have to say anything. And actually, St. Teresa River Villa is the one who said, actually, when it comes to prayer, everyone is a beginner. We're going to try and learn that in these next few weeks.

[13:01] Actually, this time last year, we were just about getting ready to move into it. I had a picture pop up on my phone. It was a picture of me, Trevor, Francis, and we were in Kongfuk, Far East Side, dragging some chairs out.

We went down to the basement and went around the side like we were stealing stuff. I guess we were kind of stealing stuff. And then, it's been one year, and I remember when we started being here, we went through the series on Revelation on the churches.

And one of the fears that I have, one of the biggest fears I have when it comes to church is this, that it often feels like a memorial service. Do you remember me saying that? It often feels like we're all coming in here to talk about a guy who died 2,000 years ago.

He was a good guy, and he was a nice guy, so we're going to sing songs about this guy. But man, it was sad because he died. But we're all here to remember him.

If you walk into many church services these days around the world, that's how it feels sometimes. I'm like, man, that sucks. Jesus died. This is a memorial service. But of course, we said that's not true because Jesus is alive, and he's here right now, and he's here with us.

[14:10] That's what we actually believe. So it's not a memorial service. But then here's the second problem. We know he's alive, so it's not a memorial service. But imagine that actually we're trying to be with him here, but so often, we forget that he's here.

Do you do that? Do you turn up here and go, actually, I'm here to meet with Jesus? No, you don't. You hear, I'm here to hear Paul sing. I'm here to hear someone speak. And you forget.

Have you been to, have you had a birthday party? Have you ever gone to a birthday party where that person's birthday, whose it is, everyone forgets about them and ignores them and then just have a good time? That's how, sometimes that's what we do with Jesus.

When we walk into church, we're like, yeah, Jesus is alive. But actually, he's just going to hang out in the corner and none of us are actually going to talk to him. We're just going to spend that time hanging out with each other and celebrating this guy, but we're not actually going to be talking to him.

That's a prayerless church. That's a prayerless church. That's my greatest fear, that we walk in here, that we actually can do a whole church service and completely ignore Jesus.

[15:17] That's my greatest fear, my greatest vision, my greatest prayer, is that we would come in here and actually spend time with him, that you don't come here and just listen to Paul's lovely voice and that you don't come and just have your ears tickled by a sermon that you find interesting and insightful, but you come here and you meet the living God, that you celebrate the one who died but is now alive.

So we're going to go through this series on prayer and just let me warn you. There is no point in me spending the next few weeks giving sermons about prayer and then us just going, cool story, bro. We're going to go. Can you see how stupid that feels and sounds when his children gather together and spend time talking about him and then leave without ever talking to him?

Doesn't that just sound ridiculous? So we're going to try. I'm going to talk for a bit. Today I'll talk for a bit longer because we're going to go to the Lord's Prayer but for the coming weeks we're going to go through and actually have a look at what prayer really means and then we're actually going to try it because if we're going to be a gathering, a simple gathering in a complex time, we're going to try

and figure out how to navigate this world.

We're going to try and pray together and it might be awkward and you might be sat next to someone who is a little bit awkward but we're going to do it anyway because we're not here for them necessarily. We're here for him.

[16 : 36] We're trying to go to him together but of course, we'll do a little bit of the Lord's Prayer first as well but just recognize this. This is important.

If you're just like, oh, here we go, a sermon on the Lord's Prayer, I want to say, this is so important. Now, we still are struggling for space here but actually, this is not the number that interests me the most.

Do you know what number interests me the most when it comes to churches? It's not how many people attend on a Sunday but it's how many people turn up to a prayer meeting. That's how you know how healthy a church is. Not by how many people ram into a place on a Sunday morning but it's how many people show up to a prayer meeting on a Wednesday night or on a Monday night or on a Tuesday morning.

Only then will you find out who are the people who actually really want to spend time with him and who are here just to sing a few songs. It's different. So we're trying to figure that out ourselves and we're going to go through the Lord's Prayer and when it starts with this, now Jesus was praying in a certain place and that's when the disciples look at him and go, man, he's doing it again.

Hey, go. Go and ask him what he's actually doing and tell him to teach us. He went to a certain place. Made me think, do you have a certain place when you pray? Does anyone have a certain place?

[17 : 53] Do you have your spot that you go to? Do you have a thing that you do when you pray? John Mark Homer said that actually when he prays, he does this thing where he faces east.

Not because of anything other than he just tries because that's where the sun rises and that's where, prophetically, that's where Jesus will return. So he, out of just using his body to pray, he faces east because that just reminds him.

In university, I used to pray. I used to, me in my room and I would switch off all the lights.

Regardless of what time it was, it would be completely pitch black and I would pray completely in the dark because I have such a busy mind. I needed to completely stop everything.

I remember Gabs told me he used noise-canceling headphones but he wouldn't even have music in it. He would just use it just to cancel everything out and he would have that time. Do you have a certain place when you pray?

If you're struggling with prayer, maybe it's because you don't have a certain place. Maybe find a certain place. Maybe there's a little nook in your flat that you can use. Maybe it is a place in your office.

[18 : 53] Maybe it's that you come up here and you find a corner here. Have a certain place because one of the things that I've learned about prayer is that you have to be consistent. You have to be consistent and each to their own.

Everyone can do it differently. Christina and I, we pray very differently. There were many years where actually I have to completely shut off all the lights, draw the curtains and completely be in a dark space and only then will I be able to pray.

Whereas Christina would be like, oh, I pray all the time. I pray when I'm walking, I'm doing this, I'm working. It's different. But do you have a certain place? Do you have a certain thing? And if you don't, it's time to think about it.

And so he starts here and they see him and they go, teach us how to pray. And so then he says, pray like this. Now in the Matthew version, he says, pray like this. And in the Luke version, he says, when you pray, say this.

And it starts with this. And the first thing it says is our father. Bear in mind here, when Jesus is doing the prayer, he's saying, this is a template on how to pray. You don't have to pray exactly like this.

[19 : 53] You guys have grown up praying three times a day, reciting the Shema, but this is how you can pray. And it can be different. It's a template. It's a theological framework. He's trying to show them who God is.

Because when you know who God is, then you'll know how to talk to him. We all talk to different people differently, right? I was fascinated how British people are so good at just talking.

We call it chin wagging. You can just meet anyone, anywhere, mostly in queues, because British people like queuing. And then you can just strike up a conversation with anyone in a queue and you'll just talk about anything and everything. And afterwards, you realize, actually, we haven't talked about anything, but we've just spent half an hour talking about whatever it is.

But there's a way. There's a style. They're so good at it. That's what allows them to stand in a pub with a pint of beer for hours doing it. And of course, you come to Hong Kong in a cha chan teng, you get spoken to in a very different way because you get told off all the time.

But they love you. But they'll tell you off. You talk to different people in different ways. God talks to us in different ways.

[21:00] We have to find our own way, but it all starts with, do you know who God truly is? Because who you think God is will reflect how you pray to him. Does that make sense? Who you think God is will reflect how you pray to him.

And so Jesus says, hey, when you pray, if you want to learn from me, you're going to pray like this. Our Father. Our Father. Let's just go with those two words first. Our. What is our?

You can copy me if you want to. Those great Chinese students. Love it. So you get our Father. Our. It means when you learn to pray, you do it together. Who struggles to pray on their own?

Can you just put a hand up? And I'm putting my hand up because I'm confessing this. I find it hard to pray on my own. Does anyone else? Put your hand up if you struggle with this. It's hard. Because when you're praying on your own, you start going into all these different kinds of places and suddenly your phone buzzes because there are multi-million dollar companies giving people a lot of money, the brightest minds in the world, to create apps to get you addicted to your phone so you can always keep looking at it and stay on it.

And so I struggle to pray on my own. So I have to move all the devices away. But one of the best things to do when we're learning how to pray is to do it together. Our Father. So when you pray, you say, Our Father.

[22:12] There's a communal aspect which is what we're going to be trying to do in here in these next few weeks. So if you are finding it hard to pray on your own, you're in good company and we're here to learn together. And it says, Our Father.

Of course, if you've been around church long enough, you'll have been told, hey, that word Father, Abba Father, is like Daddy. It's like there's an intimacy that comes with this.

And actually, I would say that's half the story because it's like there's an intimacy. It's kind of like you saying, Daddy, but it's a, Daddy, I trust you. Daddy, I obey you. Our Father.

Now, this is where, actually, we have to pause for a second because this is probably the biggest hurdle a lot of us have to jump through because the way we perceive our Father, our earthly Father, or even just any fatherly figure, will affect how we relate to our Heavenly Father.

So how, what do you perceive when you are talking to God? Do you think, do you see a king? Do you see a king who you're going, approaching a throne very sheepishly to? Or do you see a tyrant who you're just absolutely petrified of because you know you've done some mistakes and you don't want him to find out so you're being very sheepish?

[23:19] Or do you treat him like a genie? Hey, I'm here to ask for things. Our Father. Unless we get to grips of what that truly means, it will affect our prayer life.

And so, I'm not saying that actually we have to ignore our own experiences and our own perceptions of a father. We just have to be aware of them and we have to recognize who God is. And recognizing this prayer is trying to show us who he is. This whole book is trying to show us who he is. And we have to be open that it might be different to our experience of our earthly father. Our Father in Heaven.

What's your relationship like with Father? Because how you know him will affect how you speak to him. Does that make sense? This is pretty simple stuff, but I feel as though unless we get to grips of that, we won't be able to truly pray properly.

And so he says, Our Father in Heaven. And the word heaven jumps out to me and it's already just supernatural. It's somewhere else. It's in a far distance. If anything, that's a good thing because it tells me that actually, I had a good friend growing up who said, Oh, actually, Jesus is like my best friend.

[24:27] And I just hang out with him. And so when I pray, it's kind of like me just talking to a best friend. We're waiting in line, queuing up to buy a subway and I'm just going to talk to him. And there's good stuff with that. There's an intimacy with that that I just really loved.

But you know what that really lacked? Reverence. That's like, Oh, Jesus is your best friend. Jesus is just hanging out with you. He's just at your level. He is not at your level. He is not at our level. There is a reverence that we have to look at God and just enlarge our view of who God is and like, Man, the fact that I'm even talking to you is nuts. I should not be allowed to talk to you at all. And yet here I am. Our Father in heaven. So one, he's in a distance, but actually the word there, some commentators say is actually our Father in the heavens, which was implying back in those days just the air itself, just the atmosphere, that he is closer to you than you even realized. Again, this should fill you with a different kind of reverence, a different kind of awe. And then, Man, I can't just say the same thing to you every time because you are right here. You are closer to me than the air I even breathe.

[25 : 32] Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Who's used the word hallow in the last year? I did actually because my son has just started, because when we were in England, he found my collection of Harry Potter books.

Yes, Aidan, you know, the Deathly Hallows are split into two movies. What does the word hallow even mean? Juju, you're good English. What does the word hallowed mean?

I don't actually know. You don't actually know. Hallowed. Does anyone know what the word hallowed means? Who's, huh? Yes, holy. What does holy mean? Set apart.

It means different. It's like, our Father, our Father in heavens, in the air, in the atmosphere, in the distance, you're different.

Man, you're so different. In fact, I can't truly understand who you are. You are nothing like this world has ever seen. Hallowed be your name.

[26 : 35] Can you see the humility that that should fill you with from the beginning? Does that impact your prayer? Or do we, or do we end up just sliding into this because kind of casual, our Father in heaven, bless his food, bless his time, let us have healthy bodies.

in Jesus' name, amen. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. And then it says, your kingdom come, your will be done.

This is the part that really starts to hammer home that life is much bigger than us. When you say, your kingdom come, your will be done, what you're saying is this, hey, actually, your kingdom is coming.

It's not quite here yet. Theologians call that the already, but not yet. You look around the world and you see the brokenness and you're like, man, God's will is not being done fully right now. Some of it is, but some of it is definitely not.

And what we're praying for is, Lord, your kingdom come and your will be done. Your will be done. There's a humility that you're filled with right now. There's a humility because you're just like, oh, it's not my will.

[27 : 41] This prayer is about dying to self is what Richard Foster says. This prayer is about saying, God, it's not even my will. I may want this job. I may want this spouse. I may want to move here. I may want to do that.

But first and foremost, I want your kingdom to come. I want your will to be done. And that's on a macro level, the wars that are going on in the whole world.

And it's on a micro level today. Lord, when I go to work, when I deal with my boss, I want your kingdom to come. I want your will to be done. And maybe at this point, I want to share with you a little story about just our dear brother, Aaron.

I know that some of you know about this and it only happened a few days ago and it happened very, very quickly. But I want to share this story because it's such an inspiration. I've had his permission to share it. And as a community, I want us to pray for him and with him like the way that they're praying.

A couple of days, just before we flew back, we got news that Aaron, our dear brother, you may recognize him. He's the tall, white, bold guy. I guess it's the only way if you don't know him. He's here. Of course, him, Rebecca, Sam and Bella have been dear, dear friends to us this last year.

[28 : 48] They're on the mission with us in Young Life. And a few days ago, Aaron found out, well, he's been having headaches, like serious headaches this last month or so. So they went to the doctors and finally they found out that actually he had a blood clot in his brain that he still has right now.

He's in the hospital right now, though Lord willing, he will leave today. They then found out that actually he has something called, I'm going to try and say this right, doctors don't judge me, polysynthemic vera.

Did I get that? I'm just looking at Trevor because I feel as though he knows you represent all doctors to me in this world. Polysynthemic vera, which is a form of chronic leukemia, which is actually a form of blood cancer.

And they found out a few days ago about this, which is basically his body just creates too many red blood cells, which causes it to be too thick. And so actually that's what's causing the blood clots, which actually, when treated is okay.

If untreated, it's dangerous, I believe. But with treatment, he's actually okay. He's still going to be able to live a normal, fruitful life just with treatment. And when we were talking to him, man, I actually know what the prayer that he had, him and Rebecca, they shared with us.

[29:56] He's like, you know what, what we've been praying, the prayer, the only prayer that we've been praying is that God would be glorified in all of this. That God would be glorified in all of this. And he's been reflecting and he asked me to share this with you guys and he's been reflecting on Psalm 139, that he is fearfully and wonderfully made, that actually God knew about this from the moment he was born and he's choosing to let it happen till now, so may God use it for his purpose.

Man, that's a your kingdom come, your will be done prayer. Because so often when we have illnesses, ours is just, Lord, can you just heal us of our comfort? Can I just get better from this cold? Like, can I just test negative on the COVID stick? Just please, that's all I want. But the real prayer is, your kingdom come, your will be done.

Jesus models this prayer to us in the Garden of Gethsemane because he's like, God, what I'm about to suffer, I don't really, I'm not really a big fan of, I'm not really that excited and thrilled about going on a cross and being nailed in my wrists and being crucified.

So if you could take this cup of suffering away from me, that'll be great. great, but your will be done. He humbles himself. That's the prayer. But that's, of course, a very hard, painful prayer to have.

[31:11] But it's when you look at this broken world and you go, God, your kingdom come, your will be done. When you hear the news about Ukraine, your kingdom come, your will be done. When you hear about the heartbreak that you see in your life and your loved ones, your kingdom come, your will be done.

And so we're praying, Lord, would you heal this? Would you restore this world? But ultimately, we're asking that actually your thoughts are higher, your ways are higher, your kingdom come, your will be done.

And then it says this, give us this day our daily bread. Give us this day our daily bread. Martin Luther calls this the social dimension of the kingdom of God.

You cannot pray this line, give us this day our daily bread and not be a generous person. You cannot. You cannot go, God, give us this day our daily bread and then you're sat next to someone who actually is hungry.

You cannot do that. It is impossible. You can't, well, you can, you can compartmentalize, which guys are very good at, but completely ignore this issue. But you cannot with absolute conscience pray this prayer and not help those who are in need.

[32:13] Give us this day our daily bread. And of course, what if this is an ode to? This is an ode to Exodus. When the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness and they had no food to eat in the desert and then what does God do?

Gives them manna every day. What's that trying to tell the Israelites? I am the one who provides. I got you and you need me every day.

Not just once and you're done, which so often many of us do when we pray, God, can you help me with this? Get me the job that I need because I need money to pay rent to live in this city so I can keep enjoying the life of the city and then I get the job and I'm done.

I'll see you next year until I lose my job and then we'll start praying again. Give us this day our daily bread. Give us. That's the social dimension.

You know what you're praying here? You're praying for justice. What is justice? It's for human society to be flourishing on all accounts. You're praying for an economy to be good.

[33:14] You're praying for there to be employment opportunities for people. You're praying for people to be able to flourish and for you to have a role in that. Give us this day our daily.

Every day we come to you, we recognize that we only have what we have because of you. Give us this day our daily bread. But we're in, I mean, I'm so glad we're back.

Why? Because the food, the food, in England, potatoes. There's lots of potatoes.

We were with Ken and Jess at a food court the other day and I was just like, oh, I nearly cried inside. Oh, pepper lunch, I missed you so much. Pepper lunch, we came back and we had tam jai, genki, and pepper lunch.

We're a simple family, don't judge. But actually, that makes it hard. Why should we ask God give us this day our daily bread when we can just use Food Panda and get whatever food that we need?

[34 : 18] Give us this day our daily bread. Reminds me of Proverbs 30. Lord, don't give me poverty and don't give me riches lest I deny you and forget you. Just give me just enough.

Give me just enough because when I have too much, I've had this happen. When you have too much, you're not grateful for anything. Actually, this happens all the time in Hong Kong.

We have so much food, we're like, oh, it's so hard to choose. Do you know how ridiculous that sounds? Oh, it's just so hard to choose what food to eat. All this good food. Whereas in England, you have Wetherspoons And Nando's!

And Greg's, which now cost like five pounds to eat. Lord, give us just enough so that we would rely on just you and only you.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. We're not going to spend enough time on this, but can I just say this is so, so, so important.

[35 : 19] The version in Matthew, Jesus comes back around after teaching this prayer and says, hey, you may have just got lost in my sermon teaching you how to pray, but I just wanted to highlight once again, this is the moment where, you know, the lecturer goes, hey, if you forget everything else, remember this line.

Forgiveness. Because if you have any forgiveness in your heart, you won't be forgiven. What does that mean? Unforgiveness is disconnection. He's saying, hey, if you choose to be disconnected from someone else because they wronged you somehow, some way, and you're bitter and you're resentful and you don't want to hang out with them, whew, you've just missed the gospel because actually, you have sinned, you have not done right by God and actually, he forgave you.

He didn't turn his back on you. So by you turning your back on them actually disqualifies you from connecting with him. This is, the consequences are dire if we don't take heed this line.

Forgive those who trespass against us and we've got to say that from the bottom of our hearts. Is there any unforgiveness that I don't have, that I have? Is there anyone that I haven't forgiven yet? Is there anyone that I'm bitter and resentful about man, I need to let that go because unless you let go of that bitterness, you won't be able to receive forgiveness. Unless you let go of that bitterness, you won't be able to receive forgiveness.

[36 : 35] Let me say this one more time because I am certain there are people in here who still have bitterness in their hearts. If unless you let go of that bitterness, you won't be able to receive forgiveness. It is that important.

Forgive others as you have forgiven us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. What's that saying? That's saying, God, we are so weak.

We are so weak against the powers that we're facing. Johnny preached the whole armor of God, right? What we're facing in this world is not just what we see. It's what we don't see and we are powerless against it.

But we're saying, God, lead us away from that temptation. Save us from ourselves. Jesus later actually says this prayer as he tells his disciples to say this in the garden and say, hey, you guys are falling asleep.

You're not understanding the communication that you need to have with God to have that connection. Pray that he would lead you from temptation and deliver you from evil.

[37 : 42] Again, it's the humility here that we're talking about. Do we have that kind of humility when we talk to God or are we kind of like, God, okay, so, hey God, sorry we haven't spoken for a while but I need a couple of things from you.

I need this, this, and this and I would love for some sunshine because we're about to go on a boat trip so sunshine will be great for that please and I'll see you soon but don't come back to me until you've done these things.

This prayer, this theological framework, this template has none of that. This prayer reminds us it is so much bigger than us. It is so much bigger and we are so much weaker than we ever realized. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. Some of you are like, okay, this prayer is too intense, it's too real.

Here's the thing, don't not pray just because you feel you're too weak. Pray because you're weak is what it's saying. Pray because you're weak.

[38 : 48] If you feel as though you are too far from God, you are perfectly qualified to pray. You're saying, God, lead me not into temptation, deliver me from evil because I cannot deliver myself.

I cannot lead myself and the scripture that Paul read for us at the beginning, Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd. The Lord is the one who's going to guide me. I am a stupid sheep and I keep getting lost in the thicket.

I keep losing my way but Lord, you are my shepherd. I shall not want. Can you lead me to the green pastures because I'm not in the green pastures right now. Would you restore my soul?

Would you lead me on the path of righteousness? Why? Because actually, you prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies which is actually those enemies, those things, those distractions, those lies that I have no power against, you are not afraid of.

You actually invite me to the table with them all around us and you're saying, hey, don't worry about those. Come and sit with me. Those things that are trying to pull you down have no power against you when you're with me.

[39 : 50] That's what it's trying to say here. And can we pray that prayer with humility? And again, Richard Foster said, this prayer, this prayer is the death to self prayer.

This prayer is when we lay down our lives and go, actually, your will be done. Only you are different. So give us this day our daily bread.

That's all I need. Nothing more, nothing less. I just need you. Help me forgive those that have wronged me. Because I have wronged you and you forgave me.

Can you see? What Jesus is teaching them is so different to what they were praying and what we pray so often.

It must have blown their minds, which is why when they saw him praying, they go, man, we want some of that. We want some of that kind of prayer. My prayer is this, that this would be a house of prayer.

[40 : 48] Jesus takes prayer very seriously. Now, on the most part, Jesus was a pretty friendly, nice guy. The children would flock to him and he would have a good time with them.

But there's one scene in Luke 19 later where he walks into a temple and he just goes berserk because people have turned the temple into just a marketplace. And what does he say?

My father says, my house will be a house of prayer, but you've turned it into a den of thieves. Now, I don't think we've turned this into a den of thieves right now.

I think we're here all with good intentions. But I'm like, my theory is sometimes we turn up to a memorial service. Sometimes we turn up to a birthday party, but we've forgotten whose birthday it is.

We're just here to hang out and have fun. We're here to meet friends. We're here to meet spouses. We're here to hang out and do interest groups together and drink wine and wrestle.

[41 : 51] Which are all okay things, by the way. But to pray. But to pray. Are we prepared to pray this prayer that causes us to die to ourselves and say, God, you are so much bigger.

It doesn't matter how I feel about my job. It doesn't matter how I feel about my boss. It doesn't matter how I feel about my personal circumstances. I'm here to pray this prayer because this is the prayer that you prayed. That you didn't care about yourself either, but you cared about us and you said your will be done.

Even as you were sweating blood, knowing what was about to happen to you, you prayed this prayer so that we would have life in you. Are we willing to pray that prayer?

And here's the thing. When we are prepared for that and when we start praying that, yes, we will die to ourselves but then we will also be raised to life in him. Romans 8 says this, provided we are willing to suffer with him, we will be glorified with him.

So only when you die to yourself will you have the life to the full is what it's saying. That's the secret. The moment you die to yourself is when you come to life. That's what this prayer is saying. Of course, we then have the final bit which is the glory and honor and praise and then in Jesus' name.

[43:05] Of course, Jesus doesn't pray that bit. That's something that maybe the early church fathers added in just to kind of wrap up the prayer nicely. But actually, John Calvin was the one who said actually to even pray our father is to pray in Jesus' name.

Does that make sense? Because we are orphans. We're not, he's not our father until he adopted us until what Jesus did for us. Romans 8 talks about this, that it's when Jesus died and his spirit lives in us.

That's when we received a spirit of adoption as sons. Imagine, think of the richest guy you know. Think of the wealthiest sugar daddy you know.

Francis just points to the point. That's funny. Think of the person that you think is the wealthiest person. Maybe someone old enough to be your parent. Think about that person.

Think now that you actually need some resources from that person. But of course you're not their child. So you can't really go to them and go, hey, friendly rich man.

[44:10] I need me some money. Give me some money. And then that doesn't work because you're not their son, you're not their daughter.

But imagine if you were close enough that you were adopted into their family. that you speak to them as though you are their child. That changes the game, right?

That's different. When you have access to them in a way that only a child has access to. And so this is where I'll wrap up. And we're going to go back to those first two words that I think we take for granted completely.

Our father. father. The only reason we can even utter those words is because of what Jesus did. Because he laid his life down for us that we are now co-heirs with him. So we get to look at his dad and go, dad. I think I take that for granted.

[45:16] Do you? Our father. father. We're going to finish now and I'm going to ask Paul to come up and lead us in a time of response.

But before that I wanted to ask you to just reflect on those two words. Do you truly understand what it means to say our father?

And maybe just here just to give a bit of a take home thing because you might be okay this is helpful to understand a little bit more about the Lord's prayer but it doesn't help me go home with my prayer life because it still sucks. I'm still easily distracted.

This is a great template that I first learned from reading Tim Keller's book on prayer and it's actually to use this template and to expand from this template. So let me give you an example. So this is how I pray often when I don't have the words to pray.

Which is ironic because I really don't have words. But for some reason when I talk to God sometimes I struggle. And so I'll do this. Our father in heaven.

[46:19] hallowed be your name. God I don't really truly understand what that means but you are different. Your thoughts on ways are higher.

Only you are holy. I don't know what it means to be able to call you dad. But here I am saying it. God I don't know what it means to be able to do this with. Your kingdom come your will be done. This world is broken.

And I keep wanting my own way. I keep wanting those idiots to go away. I keep wanting this to change. But I'm coming to you now and just asking that you would change my heart.

Reorder my broken desires. Because I only want what you want. Give us this day our daily bread. Lord if there's anyone in my community who is in need can you show me?

[47:27] Lord can you show us how to help the waters? How to love them? How to love help me forgive those who have wronged me.

There's some people that I'm so annoyed with. And my wife is so annoyed with me about something. But help her forgive me.

Help me forgive her. Help me forgive my colleague. Help me forgive her. Because you've forgiven me God and thank you. And lead us not into temptation.

God I'm still struggling with anxiety. I'm still struggling. With pride I'm still struggling. I'm still so tempted just to keep thinking about myself.

Pull me out of my own mind. And deliver me from evil. God I take this prayer.

[48:36] This template that you've given me and I use it to communicate with you. To connect with you. Because that is the one thing that is the most important. And I know I can only say any of these things to you because of what Jesus did for me.

And so now I come to you in his name. I come to you with his cross before me and the world behind me. I come to you because your word tells me that I am now a co-air.

But I get to call you dad. And can I just say thank you for letting me call you that. I have no business being here. But you've brought me into this family and so I'm grateful for that.

Can you remind me every day what it means that you are my father and that I have siblings. I died to myself and I realized this is so much bigger than me.

And so again, in Jesus' name I pray. Amen. I found that to be a helpful way where I just expand on each line.

[50:02] I take what each line represents and I pray whatever is on my heart in that moment. Pete Gregg, the guy who founded the 24-7 prayer movement, says this simple line, pray what you've got.

You don't have to pray with long words, you don't have to pray with over spiritual things, just pray what you've got. If you've got anger, pray anger. If you've got doubt, pray doubt. If you've got confusion, pray confusion.

If you've got gladness, pray gladness. Pray whatever you've got. That's all that's asked of us, because it's relationship that he's after.

So Paul's going to sing a song over us and feel free to join in with him, but let's just use this time and maybe to avoid kind of being bombarded with too many thoughts, let's just hone in on our Father.

And let's start there. What does that truly mean for you? That you are part of a community, our, that you're sat here today with people, but you're not here on your own.

[51:04] That's called sitting at home on YouTube, in your boxes and listening to a sermon that way. You chose not to do that today, well done. But that means you've chosen to be in the presence of people, and these are your brothers and sisters.

So you say our, and it's great comfort in that. When our kids want to ask us whether they can watch TV, they like to come together because there's strength in numbers.

And so we come as our God. We're coming together to you, our Father. God, what does that even mean?

But let's come to him with whatever we've got. And I invite you just to spend this last, these last five minutes or so, just to process that, just to pray that, and to pray for us as a community, that we would be a church of prayer, that we would come here for him and not for anything else.

That this is his party and he is the focus. Our Father. So Lord, we come earnestly to you.

[52:40] Would you grant us a season of prayer, being with you, where we can seek your heart, true relationship with you, because you truly are different.

Your thoughts and your ways are higher, you alone are holy. And Lord, this world is falling apart, as it seems, it seems.

And so we pray for your kingdom to come, your will to be done. not ours, yours. Give us what we need to pursue you.

Give us what we need to know you, to trust you, to worship you. Help us to be a community of forgiveness. Lord, we are weak.

Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil. As we lift up members of our community to you who are hurting, whether those who are hurting in secret, in the hidden place.

[54:10] Lord, would you bring comfort? Would you turn their eyes, would you turn our eyes to you? would you lift up our drooping hands and strengthen our weak knees?

We pray for Aaron again. We pray that your will would be done in his life, that you would grant him and Rebecca and the kids peace that surpasses understanding, that you would bring healing, that you would restore his body.

But no matter what happens, would you be glorified in this situation? We thank you for the progress that baby Theo has made.

We thank you for this beautiful life that you've created. would you continue to strengthen him? Allow him to bear your image to all those who see him, that through his life you would be glorified, that your goodness and your mercy will be on show to everyone that meets him and their family.

We ask, Lord, that your will would be done. Your kingdom come again. And we pray all these things because you are now our father who loves us so deeply.

[55:56] Help us to truly understand what that means and to walk around as your children. and to ask as your children.

In your name we pray. Amen. Please take a seat. That's just a final thing, just a final challenge, maybe a little piece of homework to you.

what's your certain place? Can you come next week and ask yourself this week about what that certain place looks like? What's that thing that you do?

Those of you who remember before the summer, I had about four weeks without my wife and children around. I developed this thing that I started every morning. I would start off by saying, God, I'm so glad that you're here.

And that was it. And then I'd spend the next hour in complete silence just to sit and just go, I'm so glad that you're here. And that was me trying to find my certain place to start my day.

[57:02] Since I've been reunited with my kids, that hour has now turned into one minute. But it's still there. It's what I've got right now. What's your thing? Is it a phrase that you start with?

Is it a place that you go to? There are a few of us who are actually going to start gathering here on mornings just to do nothing else but just to pray in the most low-key kind of way.

Have a think about that. And be prepared. And this season, I'm still asking God, how are we going to even do this next series on prayer? Because it's an interesting one, right? Because I don't want to just talk about prayer because that feels like a complete waste and we've completely missed the point about what we're trying to do.

But I'm going to pray with me. And if the Lord says something to you, this would be a good idea to do together.

I encourage you, and if you're going to keep coming back in these few weeks, just be prepared that we're going to try different things. Why? Because we only have one thing that we want, to connect with him, to pray with him, to talk to him. So I encourage you to start thinking about that.

[58:07] The only way, the only way we have a praying church is if we have praying individuals. The only way we can have a praying church is if we have praying individuals.

So it starts with you. It starts with me. So I encourage you to think about that. Again, join us for lunch if you're around. Otherwise, we'll see you next week.