



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

## Assessing our motives and rewards of prayer

### GETTING STARTED

What is one thing you are thankful for this week and what is one thing we can pray for you this week?

Remind each other of our simple expectations for meeting together

What has been the difference in how you pray when you were a child, teen and how you pray now? In what way is it different and why?

### QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

What idea, context, Scripture do you think could have been expanded on, or included in the message?

In Matthew 6:5-15 Jesus gives us two negative examples of our motives/rewards to pray, then gives us the example for us to emulate in prayer. He uses the example of the Pharisees who pray performatively in public to be seen, and the example of the Gentiles at prayer who go on and on with formulaic prayers to get “god” to move.

Why are these bad examples? In what ways can we be “guilty” of similar patterns? Why does it matter?

In what way are we too pray? What pattern does Jesus set out for us to pray? Why does it matter?

### EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [Matthew 6:5-15]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however, good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

According to Jesus, what wrong motivation prompts some individuals to pray? (6:5)

What name did Jesus call people who pray for show? Why? (6:5)

Where do hypocrites prefer to do their praying? (6:5)

What type of reward will religious performance bring? (6:5)

How did Jesus command His followers to pray? (6:6)

Where did Jesus suggest we talk to God? (6:6)

What is rewarded in prayer? (6:6)

What did Jesus have to say about repetitive prayers? (6:7)

What insights or facts about God are revealed in this passage? (6:6, 8, 9)

To whom did Jesus tell us to pray? (6:9)

What should be our attitude toward God? (6:9)

What should be our attitude toward God’s kingdom and will? (6:10)

What should be our attitude toward life’s necessities? (6:11)

What should be our attitude toward those who have wronged us? (6:12)

What should be our attitude toward temptation? (6:13)

Why is it crucial for us to forgive those who wrong us? (6:14-15)

## QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

If God knows what we need before we ask, why should we pray?

If Jesus commands us to pray in secret, what is the value of public prayer? Why can we often be uncomfortable praying “publicly”?

Jesus taught us to pray...

First, we pray to God and for the glory of God (vv. 9-10)

Second, we pray for our deepest needs (vv 11-12)

Third, we pray for help in our greatest spiritual battle (v. 13)

Discuss what Jesus means in teaching us how to pray in the way he describes.

If you were to begin praying this way, what would change, be different in how you pray?

How does “The Lord’s Prayer” teach us about our expectations, and reward of prayer? How is it different from the Pharisees and Gentiles? What would it mean for you?

What sins or offenses by others do we find especially difficult to forgive? Why is this connected to prayer?

## APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?

How can we pray for each other?