

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OUR FATHER

WHO ART IN HEAVEN,

hallowed be your name,

YOUR KINGDOM COME,

YOUR WILL BE DONE,

ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

and forgive our debts,

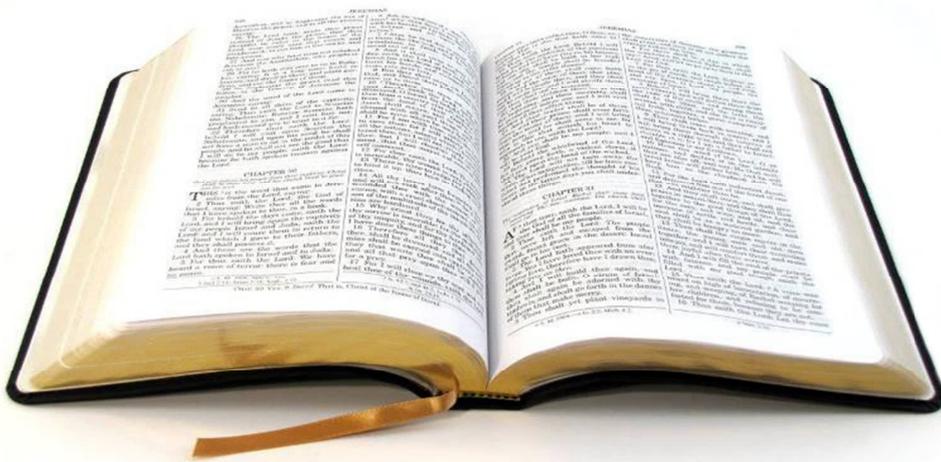
AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS.

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION,

BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE;

MATTHEW 6:9-13

for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.



THE LORD'S PRAYER: *THE STORY OF JESUS IN ME!*

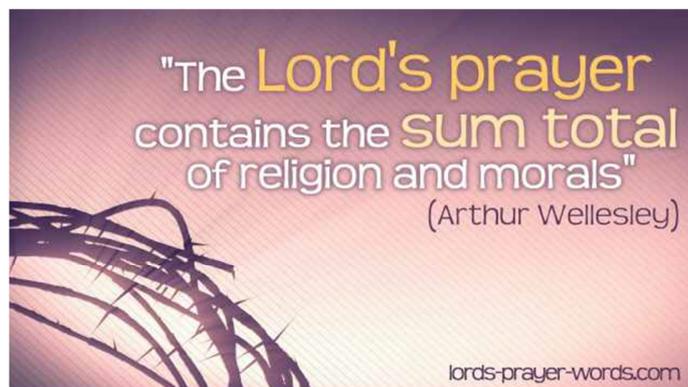
When God's prayer is prayed into my story....

The Bible says that God is the author and perfecter of our lives (Hebrews 12:2). This means that if we allow God to write our life-story, our lives gain purpose and meaning beyond our basic need to survive. We get to experience the perspective of God for ourselves, our community and our world in the words of the prayer of Jesus – commonly known as the Lord's Prayer, or the Our Father.

As we pray the Lord's Prayer, our own perspectives come closer to the values of Jesus. When we do this, Jesus' story takes root in the story of our lives, and so nurtures faith, hope, love and peace beyond understanding. It might feel like this prayer can be recited quickly, but habitually repeating it and hoping that the words themselves will weave their magic misses the point. It is our hearts that make the words powerful. Pope Benedict XVI writes, "The meaning of the Our Father goes much further than the mere provision of a prayer text. It aims to form our being, to train us in the inner attitude of Jesus."

We are going to spend 8 weeks in prayer, internalizing God's character and promises. May Jesus' story captured in this prayer, re-ignite his purpose and peace in our life-story!

Nadja & Pete





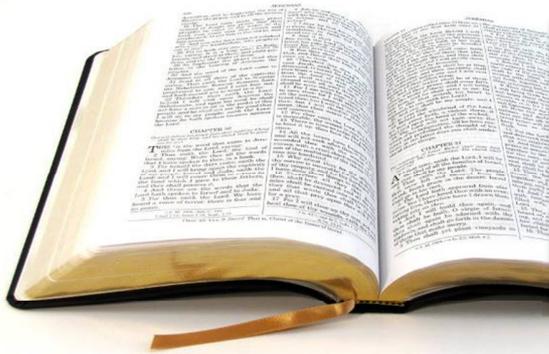
Matthew 6:9-13 (NIVUK)

This, then, is how you should pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

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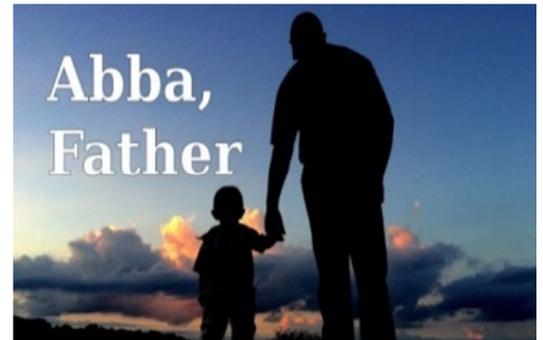




Week 1: *Our Father ...* God like a good father

The Bible has many ways of describing God: *El Shaddai* Lord God Almighty; *El Elyon* The Most High God; *Adonai* Master; *Yahweh* Lord Jehovah; *Elohim* a Creator God. Jesus invites us to discover another name for God – and with this a new way of relating to God: *Abba* Father.

Whilst all names for God are important, the name “*Abba*” Father is one of the most significant in understanding how we can relate to God. *Abba* is an Aramaic word that would most closely be translated into English as “Daddy”. It was a common term that young children would use to address their fathers. We can approach God with child-like simplicity and faith, with open trusting hearts. (See Romans 8:15 & Galatians 4:6). For this reason Jesus invites us to begin our prayer to God with these words: “*Our Father*”. It signifies the close, intimate relationship of a father to a child, as well as the childlike trust that a young child puts in a “daddy”. When we open our heart to God and accept God, our Heavenly Father rejoices just like the prodigal son’s father in Luke 15:11-32.



Jesus teaches us to pray “*our*” father not “*my*” father. This is a reminder that we are part of the bigger family of Christ. My relationship with God is not an individualized relationship to the exclusion of those around me. We are all adopted in fellowship into a bigger family and so I pray alongside brothers and sisters to *our* Father.

In Conclusion it is important to note that praying “*Our Father*” does not mean that God is a male figure! Whatever our picture of the very best father may be – God is far more than this image. Sadly, some have reduced their image of God to a male stereotype. Remember that God is a spirit, and as such is beyond the gender descriptions we use as human beings. Remember too that there are passages in the Bible that use the image of a mother to describe God: Luke 13:34; Isaiah 66:13; Isaiah 49:15; Deuteronomy 32:18. Key to this prayer is the invitation to a close, intimate relationship with God.





Worship: Listen to Jackie Evancho singing The Lord's Prayer

Download the song from 

Spend this time in adoration and worship, connecting with God, listening to the words of the prayer as if you hear them for the first time.

Take turns in reading the Bible verses provided (NIVUK):

Matthew 7:8-11

For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. 'Which of you, if your child asks for bread, will give them a stone? Or if they ask for a fish, will give them a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!



- ❖ **Luke 11:11-13** 'Which of you fathers, if your children ask for a fish, will give them a snake instead? Or if they ask for an egg, will give them a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'
- ❖ **Galatians 3:26** So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.
- ❖ **Matthew 6:33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- ❖ **James 1:17** Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.
- ❖ **Romans 8:15** The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to be his children. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'
- ❖ **Hebrews 4:16** Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
- ❖ **James 5:16** Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.
- ❖ **Malachi 2:10** Do we not all have one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our ancestors by being unfaithful to one another?



GROUP QUESTIONS



1. What is one of the biggest lessons you learnt growing up? Why has it stuck with you?

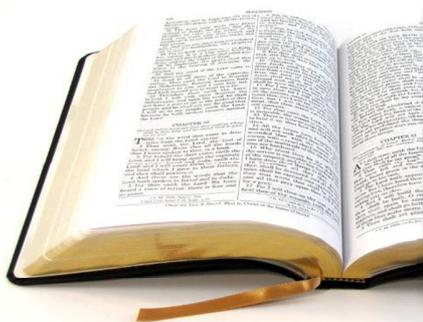
2. Which statement applies to you the most:
 - a. I hated my dad; I wouldn't ask him for anything!
 - b. My father was never around when I needed him.
 - c. My dad only told me what to do and never listened.
 - d. My father was kind and caring and always took care of me.
 - e. My dad is my rock and I wouldn't be able to cope without him.
 - f. My dad is the kind of dad I would like to be.

Do you think your dad has influenced the way you see God as your father? Please discuss.

3. If God says "he who asks receives", and my prayers aren't answered I am still a child of God?
4. Do you see yourself as part of the BMC family called together by the Heavenly Father? Explore what your answer might mean in your relationships with others in the church.

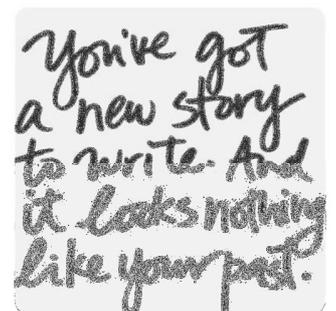


- ❖ For each other and any issues that arose in discussions.
- ❖ For Fathers, and Mothers and families.
- ❖ For those discriminated against because they can't have children.
- ❖ For those that are going to be parents and find the thought overwhelming.
- ❖ For the parents struggling with teenage hormones and wills.
- ❖ For the parents who miss their children living far away.
- ❖ For the households that have destructive habits that break relationships.
- ❖ To connect with God in such a way that there is no doubt in your mind that he is your *Abba* and that you have an open trusting relationship filled with love.



Week 2: *In Heaven* Heaven in us...

The word "heaven" (in Hebrew *shamyim*, in Greek *ouranos*) means God's dwelling place. This is not "somewhere else". Perhaps heaven is better understood as a dimension of reality – a God-reality. God is everywhere: with those who have lived in the past, with those living now, and with those still to be born. This prayer does not suggest that God is somewhere else away from us! We can draw near to God right here on earth (Hebrews 10:22 & James 4:8). John's vision in Revelation has heaven coming here, heralded as "the dwelling place of God is with humanity" (Revelation 21:1-3). Heaven begins wherever people begin to live out the values



of God. Our challenge is to be God's presence here on earth – to encouraging each other in our walk with him. Wherever the risen Christ is, heaven is visible. Our aim should be to bring heaven to every corner of earth through our Christ-filled actions.

This does not negate the longing to be with God after our death – in other words, to go to heaven one day. However, there is much speculation and very little substance to where such a place may be, and what such a heaven will mean. John 14:2 speaks about Jesus fetching us to a house with many rooms. The comfort of this passage is the reassurance that we have a home awaiting us beyond this life.



Worship: Listen to Andrea Bocelli singing The Lord's Prayer

Download the song from 

Spend this time in adoration and worship, connecting with God, listening to the words of the prayer as if you hear them for the first time.

Take turns in reading the Bible verses provided (NIVUK):



Revelation 21:1-3

A new heaven and a new earth

Then I saw 'a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Look! God's dwelling-place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

- ❖ **Isaiah 57:15** For this is what the high and exalted One says –he who lives forever, whose name is holy: 'I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.
- ❖ **Colossians 1:5** The faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel.
- ❖ **Psalm 14:2** The LORD looks down from heaven on all humankind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.
- ❖ **Ecclesiastes 5:2** Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.
- ❖ **Hebrews 10:19** A call to persevere in faith. Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus.
- ❖ **Psalm 86:4** Bring joy to your servant, Lord, for I put my trust in you.

- ❖ **Psalm 20:6** Now this I know: the LORD gives victory to his anointed. He answers him from his heavenly sanctuary with the victorious power of his right hand.
- ❖ **Matthew 19:26** Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'
- ❖ **Colossians 1:16** For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.



GROUP QUESTIONS

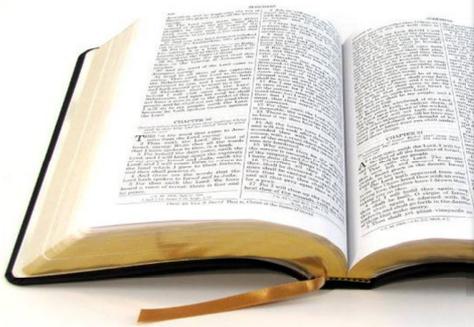


1. *John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*
God has prepared a place for you. What do you think your "room" would look like?
(Nadja: *My son thinks everything in his room will be made of chocolate 😊*).
2. Where have you seen heaven on earth? Think nature, people and events.
3. Where do you think your church, school, college, work, neighbourhood, country needs a bit of heaven - and what will your contribution be?
4. Can people see that you have a close relationship with God? Affirm each other with something that shows that heaven on earth is present in every one in your group.
5. Our aim should be to bring heaven to earth as much as we can and our purpose is to be with God in heaven one day. Do your prayers reflect this? How can you change this if not?



- ❖ For each other and any issues that arose during discussions.
- ❖ For those who live in desolate circumstances / places.
- ❖ That you will recognize God in others more often.
- ❖ For those who are on their deathbed and fear death.
- ❖ For those that struggle with the concepts of the resurrection, heaven and eternal life.
- ❖ That God gives you peace no matter your circumstances so that you can fully experience his heaven on this earth.



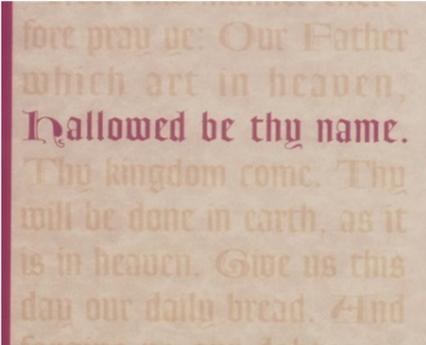


Week 3:

Hallowed be your name

God is Sovereign

The use of names in the time of Jesus was considered a very personal and intimate privilege: only family used each other's names. This section of the Lord's Prayer is a reminder that although we get to call God "Abba", we never forget that we are addressing a Holy Being. To "hallow" means to "make holy", to consecrate to God's use. The people of the Bible didn't only use names to identify someone physically, it was also a way to reflect someone's nature. The Old Testament had about 16 different names for God - see examples in the first



paragraph of Week One. Each name reflects a different aspect of God. God's names are revered so much that they never wrote them out fully, fearing disrespect to God. For this reason the Hebrew Text uses a tetragrammatron, the unpronounceable YHWH to refer to God. This word in Hebrew יהוה (*Yahweh*) is best translated into English as G-d.

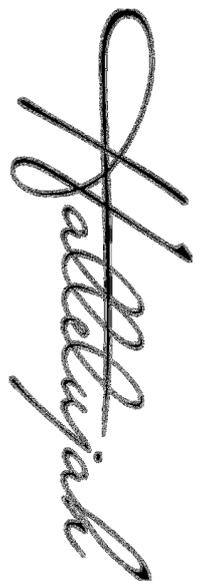
Some people use the Lord's name in vain on a daily basis. It has become something we say when we get irritated, annoyed or impatient. Let us remember that God is sovereign and guard against abusing overusing or misunderstanding this intimate privilege. God is our tenderhearted, compassionate, loving *Abba*, but at the same time, God creates universes, changes hearts and perform miracles. All God's names are hallowed and we dare not disrespect this. God's name(s) should be said in awe: whispered in love, shouted with joy or sung with a heart full of praise. *Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee; Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty! God in Three Persons blessed Trinity!*

Our lives should be a story of praise to God. Our speech should reflect God's thoughts. Everything we do should be in service to God and others. People get to know God through us (our actions), not just by reading the Bible.



When we pray, let us name God first. In so doing, we remind ourselves to whom we are praying, and so will develop the reverence for our Creator. At the same time, we also pray for others to see God in this hallowed sovereign light.

Praise be to God forever and ever!





Worship: Listen to the Methodist version of “Bawo Wethu” as led by Rev Dr Mehana, a Methodist minister.

Download the song from 

Spend this time in adoration and worship, connecting with God, listening to the words of the prayer as if you hear them for the first time.

BAWO WETHU

Bawo wethu osezulwini,
 Maliphathwe ngcwele igama lakho,
 mabufike ubukumkani bakho,
 mayenziwe intando yakho
 emhlabeni, njengokuba isenziwa
 ezulwini.
 Siphe namhla isonka sethu semihla
 ngemihla.
 Sixolele amatyala ethu njengokuba
 nathi sibaxolela aabo banamatyala
 kuthi.
 Ungasingenisi ekulingweni,
 kodwa sihlangule ebubini.

Amen.

OUR FATHER

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.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.

 Amen.

Shalwani

Take turns in reading the Bible verses provided (NIVUK):



Revelation 4

The throne in heaven. After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.' At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne. Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the centre, round the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and behind. The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all round, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come. Whenever the living creatures give glory, honour and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say 'You are worthy, our Lord and God to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things and by your will they were created and have their being.

- ❖ **Psalm 111:9** He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever, holy and awesome is his name.
- ❖ **Romans 12:1** A living sacrifice. Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.
- ❖ **1 Corinthians 12:3** Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, 'Jesus be cursed,' and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ **1 Peter 4:10-11** Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.
- ❖ **1 Peter 2:9** But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.
- ❖ **Psalm 99:3** Let them praise your great and awesome name – he is holy

❖ **Psalm 86:9-11** All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God. Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.



GROUP QUESTIONS



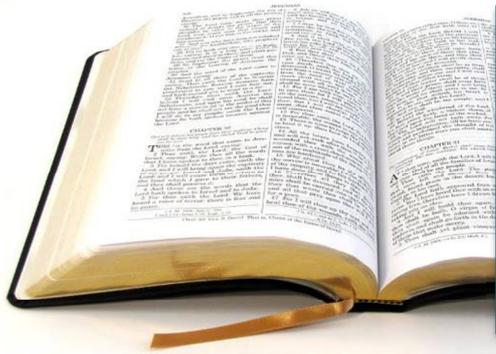
Read Revelations 4 together.

1. Imagine yourself there. What do you see, hear and feel? What do you learn of God?
2. Does what you have learned of God change how you see worship? Why yes or no?
3. **PERSONAL CHALLENGE:** When you pray “*hallowed be your name*” do you really mean it? See how true the following statements are for you by answering each with **Never, Sometimes, Usually, Always**, and discuss the outcome.
 - a. I try to live my life bringing honour to his name.
 - b. I am sad when I sin as it brings dishonour to his name.
 - c. I try my best to make his name known to those who do not know him.
 - d. I often affirm God’s authority and hand in my life to others.
 - e. I am saddened when my actions cause others to not honour God.
 - f. I hate it when people honour substitutes as a god.
 - g. I hate it when people swear using his name.
 - h. I often praise God with my words.
 - i. In my choices, God’s will is more important my wants.
 - j. I am sad when I see Christians living lives not honouring God.



- ❖ For each other and any issues that arose in your discussions.
 - ❖ For those who are lost and confused, who do not believe.
 - ❖ For those of us who make our small gods bigger than God.
- ❖ For God’s sovereign power to show in places where there is hatred, rejection and destruction.
 - ❖ That God will take the thoughts in our head and the emotions in our heart and turn them into a never-ending song of praise.
 - ❖ That we will never forget his awesome power and might, and that this power is inherently in and part of his names, so that we use his name with discernment and in faith.





Week 4:

*Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth
as it is in heaven*

God has authority over us

Too many people pray only for this evil world to end, so that God's good and perfect reign will begin. Jesus cuts across this in these words. Jesus' prayer is that the Kingdom of God may come, and the will of God be done ... *on earth, right now*. This is a prayer that claims God's authority here and now in our lives on earth. It is not a sentence to be prayed lightly; it is asking God to take charge and change our lives today. When we pray for God's will to happen in our lives, we give up control to God. We are submitting our lives to God in obedience to his call. We are committing ourselves to living the values of God's Kingdom here on earth. We do not stand for corruption, abuse or discrimination of any kind. We fight evil and actively seek to make disciples of all people. It is an active petition not a passive one: we commit to doing!

The Kingdom of God is not a future event. It begins whenever a person submits their life to the authority of God. We acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and reflect this in our mindset and principles. The real miracle is the miracle of new life at work in *us*. The reality of God's new creation overwhelms this old one, and everything will change.

When we pray the way he taught us, that God's kingdom come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:9-10), we know that it must first happen in our own lives — and then *through* our own lives. While so many are looking for that rare moment, for that



bedazzling glimpse of the other world, the truth is that the other world, in part, is already here. Heaven touches this world through his people — *by his Spirit, through his people . . . people like you and me.*

Having claimed the presence of God in this world now, we add our prayers to all who long for Jesus to return, as his kingdom is an eternal kingdom. This will be the final demise of evil and eradication of suffering. All will acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord! So we are in essence praying for a personal commitment, the conversion of our world to the kingdom values of Jesus, and for the return of Jesus and all that it will entail.

Dear God:
Your will,
nothing more,
nothing less,
nothing else.

Amen. - Bobby Richardson
Pinterest: Raul



Worship: Listen to Michael W Smith singing The Lord's Prayer

Download the song from 

Spend this time in adoration and worship, connecting with God, listening to the words of the prayer as if you hear them for the first time.



Take turns in reading the Bible verses provided (NIVUK):

Matthew 6:31-33

So do not worry, saying “What shall we eat” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear”? For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

John 3:3-7

In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.” “How can a man or woman be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their Mother’s womb to be born!” Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, “you must be born again”.

- ❖ **I Chronicles 29:11-12** Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honour come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.
- ❖ **Psalms 145:12-13** So that all people may know of your mighty acts and the glorious splendour of your kingdom. Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.
- ❖ **Matthew 12:50** For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.
- ❖ **Luke 17:20-21** The coming of the kingdom of God. Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, ‘The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, “Here it is,” or “There it is,” because the kingdom of God is in your midst.’

- ❖ **Matthew 28: 19-20** Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'
- ❖ **Matthew 13:31-32** The parables of the mustard seed and the yeast. He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.'
- ❖ **Romans 12:2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.



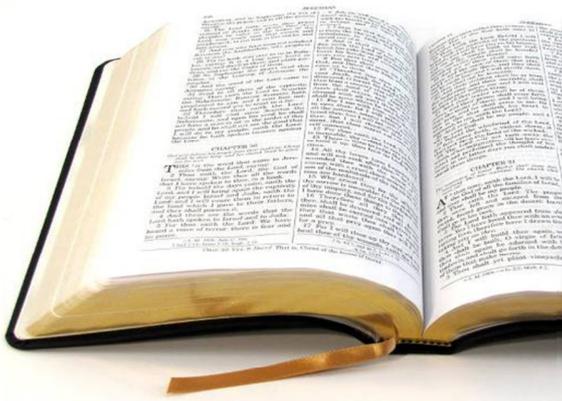
GROUP QUESTIONS



1. Does your family have rules with regards to how you spend Sundays?
Please share your answer with the group.
2. The Bible says we must submit to governing authorities (Romans 13). Which one has the most dramatic effect on your life today (school, church, government etc.) and do you give them what you owe them (tax, revenue, respect, honour)? Why yes or no?
3. Can we tell God what our will is? Discuss.
4. *There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, "Thy will be done," and those to whom God says, in the end, "Thy will be done." All that are in Hell choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it.*
From "The Great Divorce" C.S. Lewis, English novelist and Christian Apologist (1898-1963)
What feelings and thoughts do these words evoke in you? Share with the group.
5. Can you honestly say that you are looking forward to God's coming? Do you pray for the last days? Why yes or no?



- ❖ For each other and any issues that arose during discussions.
- ❖ For God's will to come about in your life no matter the situation.
- ❖ For the church and its mission on earth.
- ❖ For your family and friends who need to invite Jesus into their lives.
- ❖ For those who are in control of governing authorities, so that God's will be done.
- ❖ For justice and peace to reign in areas where there are riots and war.
- ❖ That you will be his agent for change so that the kingdom can be advanced wherever you are.
- ❖ For God's kingdom to come today, in our land, our city, and our homes.



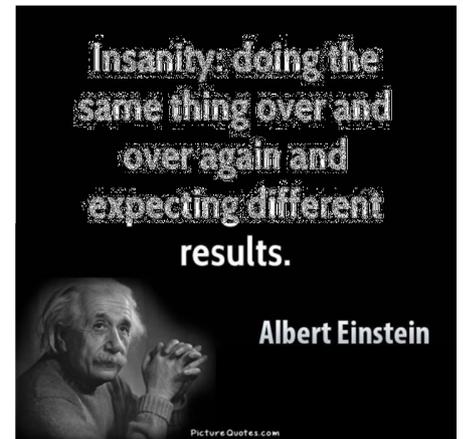
Week 5:

Give us today our daily bread

God provides for everyone

"*Qu'ils mangent de la brioche*" (Let them eat cake) are the words mis-attributed to Marie Antoinette. She is supposed to have said this when informed that the peasants had no bread. Bread has been a staple diet for people since the earliest times, and if people have no bread, then they are starving. It remains a symbol of our needs: we speak of the person that brings in the money for the household as the "breadwinner". Jesus teaches us to come to God in humble dependence for what we need, trusting that we will be supplied with those things that sustain us from day to day. This is not praying for our every wish to come true, but trusting that God will sustain our lives.

Praying these words does not mean that we sit back and wait on God for the provisions of our lives. We need to do our part too. We should work and plan for future needs, pension, retirement etc. But we do not allow these things to become the overriding worry that cripples our ability to live in the present. God hears us as we pray about our problems. Moreover, most of the things we worry about



never happen! Maybe if we spent as much time praying as we do worrying we might see very different results in our lives.



St Paul confidently asserts that God will meet all his needs, not just some of them (Philippians 4:19). Paul and the early apostles taught that God knows what we need and what we worry about, but wants us to place it in his hands by praying and asking for something specifically. God gives us what we need for today: enough strength and wisdom to make the decisions we need to make sure that our needs (not wants) can be met. We could easily obsess about tomorrow and what it will bring, but it will be in vain, as we only have today, this gift – the present. God gives us a daily supply of grace, enough to sustain our souls until tomorrow. This was the lesson of the Israelites in the desert with their daily bread/manna – see Exodus 16:19-21.

Not only can God provide help in miraculous ways (manna from heaven), but more often God provides through the generosity of people – after all we are called to be the hands and feet of God. We who have received God’s grace are called to pass it on. We need to “feed” and encourage the people that come into our lives today. No moment should be wasted. The undeniable truth is that as great as the need is in our country, we have enough resources to ensure no one goes hungry! All we have to do is to share what we have. It is not only morally right, but economically feasible. The challenge is to put God first in our lives, and then all the other things will be added.



Worship: Listen to *Pater Noster* in Latin: the Lord’s Prayer as sung by the Christian church for 1000 years.

Download the song from 

Spend this time in adoration and worship, connecting with God, listening to the words of the prayer as if you hear them for the first time.

Take turns in reading the Bible verses provided (NIVUK):



Philippians 4:19

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 6:25-34 Do not worry

‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? ‘And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

- ❖ **Matthew 6:30** If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith?
- ❖ **Matthew 6:33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- ❖ **Hebrews 3:12-14** See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called ‘Today’, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.
- ❖ **Proverbs 30:8-9** Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, “Who is the LORD?” Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonour the name of my God.
- ❖ **2 Timothy 3:12** In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
- ❖ **Psalms 90:17** May the favour of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us – yes, establish the work of our hands.



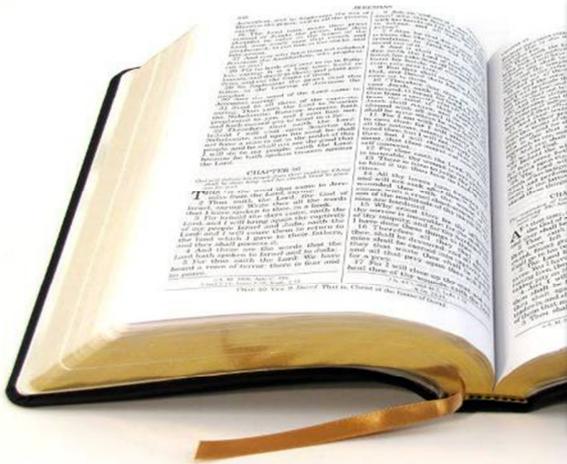
GROUP QUESTIONS



1. What do you see as the “daily bread” without which you cannot live? Discuss in the group.
2. Do you trust the Lord to provide your every need?
3. Woodrow Wilson (the 28th President of the USA) said: “In the Lord’s Prayer, we petition for daily bread. No one can worship God or love his neighbour on an empty stomach.” Share your thoughts on this statement with your group. What can we do about it as individuals, a small group, and the church?
4. Isaiah 33:15-16 (NIVUK) says: *Those who walk righteously and speak what is right who reject gain from extortion and keep their hands from accepting bribes, who stop their ears against plots of murder and shut their eyes against contemplating evil – they are the ones who will dwell on the heights, whose refuge will be the mountain fortress. Their bread will be supplied, and water will not fail them.*
Share your thoughts on these verses.



- ❖ For each other and any issues or needs that arose during discussions.
- ❖ For the things you need to get through each day.
- ❖ For spiritual bread, a word from God that would give you encouragement.
- ❖ For those who are hungry, ask God to show you what you can do to help.
- ❖ For strength and endurance for those that work in charity organizations to clothe and feed the poor.
- ❖ For our BMC Lazarus Ministry to continue to thrive and feed the people of Bryanston.



Week 6:

*And forgive us our debts, as we
also have forgiven our debtors*

God forgives sin

There is a common idea that we will be saved because we live exemplary lives. Listen to these words from Richard Rohr: *“We thought we come to God by doing it right, and lo and behold, surprise of surprises, we come to God by doing it wrong—and growing because of it! The only things strong enough to break open our heart are things like pain, mistakes, unjust suffering, tragedy, failure, and the general absurdity of life. I wish it were not so, but it clearly is. Fortunately, life will lead us to the edge of our own resources through such events. We must be led to an experience or situation that we cannot fix or control or understand. That’s where faith begins. Up to that moment it has just been religion! Only on the other side do you know that everything has been preparation.*

We cannot come to God without a humble heart. Only at the foot of the cross can we begin to heal. We are all a broken people, not one is perfect. Despite our best efforts we still live sinful lives! As soon as we give up control of our lives, God meets us in that desolate place, restores us and gives us the strength to continue.



We have to accept that we are forgiven before we can forgive. This can sometimes be the most difficult to do. We keep on going back to old sin, digging it up again, seeking absolution over and over again. Our shame puts us in a cycle of destructive behaviour that keeps us prisoner. We are so wrapped up in old (forgiven) sin that we do not participate in spreading the joy of forgiveness, thus missing the central point of God’s teaching of grace and love.

When we receive the Grace of God, we begin to find the capacity to forgive others. While it is true that Jesus prayed for those who crucified him, the truth is that forgiving someone for the hurts they have caused can be very difficult. This is often a process rather than an instantaneous moment. Forgiving someone does not mean liking them. Neither does it mean that we have to demand that they first say sorry. It is an attitude of the heart – of letting go of the pain and allowing the healing of God to embrace our battered souls. If you cannot forgive someone, then at least pray for them: nothing changes how we feel about someone as much as praying for them.



Worship: Listen to Ignite Media singing The Lord's Prayer

Download the song from 

Spend this time in adoration and worship, connecting with God, listening to the words of the prayer as if you hear them for the first time.



Take turns in reading the Bible verses provided (NIVUK):

Micah 7:18

Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. **See Matthew 18:21-35**

- ❖ **Romans 3:23** For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
- ❖ **Psalm 130:3-4** If you, LORD, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you.
- ❖ **Ephesians 4:31-32** Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
- ❖ **Matthew 5:44** But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,
- ❖ **Psalm 51** Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.
- ❖ **James 3:2** We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.



GROUP QUESTIONS



1. What is the difference between true repentance and an apology?
2. What do I do when admitting a sin could hurt someone more than keeping it a secret would (like being unfaithful to my partner)?
3. How do we know if I have forgiven someone?
4. Ephesians 4:31-32 says, *“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

Which bad behaviour mentioned above speaks to you most. Why? Have you tried to get rid of it before? How is it affecting your relationship with God? Ask your group to pray for you



- ❖ For each other and any issues that arose during discussions.
- ❖ For the Holy Spirit to reveal a sinful attitude or action.
- ❖ Ask for forgiveness.
- ❖ Thank God for the forgiveness that is yours.
- ❖ For a new direction.
- ❖ For those that have sinned against you, forgive them.
- ❖ For your enemies.



Temptation is the inclination to do something that you know is not right. Temptations are everywhere, some easy to identify, others more subtle, but just as dangerous. Because we live in a broken world with broken people we are constantly confronted by temptation. And just as often, we try to pretend that we are not tempted, by pointing out the obvious “in your face” sins of others. We thus hide our own sinfulness behind righteous indignation at the failings of other people.

For this reason this prayer: “Lead us not into temptation” keeps us honest. This admission of my frailties prevents me from feeling superior to other people. *Romans 14:13-18(NIVUK) Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.... anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.*



We cannot prevent temptation from coming our way – but we can choose what we do with the temptation. Here we need to take responsibilities for our choices. We cannot be repeat offenders of bad thoughts or behaviour, as it will destroy who we are in our relationship with Christ. *Romans 7:22-23 For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in me,*

waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.

We can fight temptation...

1. When we are convinced that what we are doing is really bad for us. We need to be convicted and feel strongly about it.
2. When we know our weaknesses and anticipate when we might be tempted. Our resolve might break when we feel vulnerable, so know what might happen and how you are going to react to it. *James 1:14 (NIVUK) but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.*
3. When we find people that feel the same as us and mix with them. Avoid places or people that can lead us into temptation. *Proverbs 13:20 (NIVUK) Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.*
4. When we pray for help. *Matthew 26:41 (NIVUK) Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

Temptations will never go away; the temptation to sin is part of our lives. It is part of who we are and where we live. We can ask Jesus to help us, as he knows what it is to be tempted: remember that Jesus was tempted and resisted. Just like him we can ask the Holy Spirit to help us to withstand temptations. He is our strength!



Worship: Listen to the Mzansi Youth Choir sing The Lord's Prayer (Baba Yetu).

Download the song from 

Spend this time in adoration and worship, connecting with God, listening to the words of the prayer as if you hear them for the first time.

Baba Yetu is the Swahili translation of the Lord's Prayer composed by Christopher Tin in 2005.

Baba yetu, yetu uliye (Our Father, who art)
Mbinguni yetu, yetu amina! (in Heaven. Amen!)

Baba yetu yetu uliye (Our Father)
M jina lako e litukuzwe. (Hallowed be they name)
Utupe leo chakula chetu (give us this day our daily bread)
Tunachohitaji, utusamehe (forgive us of)
Makosa yetu, hey! (our trespasses)
Kama nasi tunavyowasamehe (as we forgive others)
Waliotukosea usitutie (Who trespass against us)
Katika majaribu, lakini (Lead us not into temptation, but)
Utuokoe, na yule, muovu e milele! (deliver us from the evil one forever)

Ufalme wako ufike utakalo (They kingdom come, they will be done)
Lifanyike duniani kama mbinguni. (On earth as it is in heaven)
Amina (Amen)

Take turns in reading the Bible verses provided (NIVUK):



Hebrews 4:14-16 Jesus the great high priest

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

See Matthew 4: 1-11

- ❖ **John 16:13** But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.
- ❖ **Psalms 25:4-5** Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long.
- ❖ **Romans 14:13** Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.
- ❖ **Psalms 119:165** Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.
- ❖ **1 Peter 5:8** Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.
- ❖ **Luke 22:31-32** 'Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.'
- ❖ **Nehemiah 4:9** But we prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night to meet this threat.



GROUP QUESTIONS

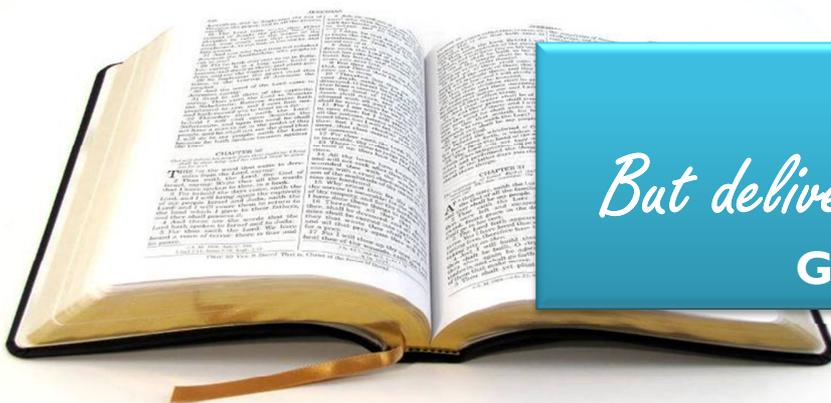


1. Someone once said that our conscience is like a brick with sharp edges thrown in a tumble drier. As we repeat sin the edges become smoother until we do not notice the sin anymore. How do you feel about yourself and the other(s) involved when you make a mistake or fall for temptations? Do you feel guilty at all? What do you do about it?

2. There are certain behaviours or thoughts we struggle with that are hard to stop doing. What is a temptation you currently face that you struggle to avoid (judging others, jealousy, negativity etc.)? Ask the group to help you with ideas to avoid doing this and to hold you accountable to stop doing it.
3. In Matthew 9:27-30 Jesus says "...Do you believe that I am able to do this?" Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith let it be done to you".
Do you believe in your heart that God can help you with temptation? Discuss with the group.



- ❖ For each other and any issues that arose during discussions.
- ❖ For those with addictions to seriously harmful substances.
- ❖ For those families who need to cope with an addict in the family.
- ❖ For people on the edge of hopelessness to make a mind-shift to hope.
- ❖ Not hiding behind a self-righteous mask, whilst judging others.
- ❖ For you to approach God with confidence, strong in faith, believing that he is our strength when tempted.



Week 8:
But deliver us from the evil one
God can rescue us

Both the Prophet Isaiah and John of Revelation speak of future events at the end of the age (the Eschaton) as parallel to the account of the beginnings of the creation. Just as in the beginning the Lord brought life out of the deep, so God will re-create at the end of the age. This new heaven and new earth will emerge after God defeats all the evil forces that stalk the earth. Isaiah chapter 27 affirms that the new creation will come about through a great victory over the forces of chaos. Revelation describes how Satan "that ancient serpent" will be thrown down. This day will be the end of evil, as we know it and God's authority will be fully established.



No one knows when the end of the age will happen. Until then we live within a world that is broken by lawlessness and corruption, while loss, despair and heartache tempt us to feelings of helplessness. It is in times like these that we need to remind ourselves that we serve a powerful God, who is

bigger than all the evil in the world. God is a life-creating God! The same God that raised Jesus from the dead – saves us. Paul says in *Ephesians 1:18 (NIVUK)* *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people.* Paul is saying that we should know that if we believe we already have this power and hope in us.

When we pray for God to deliver us from evil we not only speak of our longing for the end of time, but we also affirm our belief that God begins this work of delivery right here and right now. We therefore live, as did the disciples of Jesus – with the protection of Jesus: *Matthew 28:18 (NIVUK).* *Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been*



given to me. He defends us against the “accuser” and watches over us day and night. We have the most powerful force in the universe on our side! Jesus is the “Guardian of the Galaxy”. And as his disciples we can claim this power. In Matthew 10:1 Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and illness. We can resist the evil present in this world. In fact, it is part of our purpose. We will combat evil at every turn – whether it is

the evil that lurks in our own hearts, the evil that hides in the unequal access to the resources of our city, or the corruption that invades the systems of law and order in our country. We are partners with God in delivering our world from the evil one.



Worship: Listen to Bethel Live: Our Father ft. Jenn Johnson singing The Lord's Prayer

Download the song from 

Spend this time in adoration and worship, connecting with God, listening to the words of the prayer as if you hear them for the first time.

Take turns in reading the Bible verses provided (NIVUK):



Isaiah 27:1-5 Deliverance of Israel

In that day, the LORD will punish with his sword – his fierce, great and powerful sword – Leviathan the gliding serpent, Leviathan the coiling serpent; he will slay the monster of the sea. In that day – ‘Sing about a fruitful vineyard: I, the LORD, watch over it; I water it continually. I guard it day and night so that no one may harm it. I am not angry. If only there were briars and thorns confronting me! I would march against them in battle; I would set them all on fire. Or else let them come to me for refuge; let them make peace with me, yes, let them make peace with me.’

Revelation 12:9-12

The great dragon was hurled down – that ancient snake called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short.’

- ❖ **Luke 10:19** I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.
- ❖ **Matthew 28:18** Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me’.
- ❖ **2 Chronicles 13:12** God is with us; he is our leader. His priests with their trumpets will sound the battle cry against you. People of Israel, do not fight against the LORD, the God of your ancestors, for you will not succeed.
- ❖ **Matthew 1:21** She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.’
- ❖ **1 John 5:18** We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them.
- ❖ **Ezekiel 28:24** “No longer will the people of Israel have malicious neighbours who are painful briars and sharp thorns. Then they will know that I am the Sovereign LORD.
- ❖ **Ephesians 6:11** Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.
- ❖ **1 John 2:14** I write to you, dear children, because you know the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.
- ❖ **Psalms 34:4** I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.



GROUP QUESTIONS



1. Have you experienced evil? What did it look like?
2. Have you experienced God's life-giving power in your life? Tell your story to the group.
3. What is your default reaction to trials, pressure or temptation?
4. What is preventing you from effectively living for God?
5. Psalm 34:4 (NIVUK) *I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.* Why are you still worried about certain aspects of your life?

BUT FIRST
pray

- ❖ For each other and any issues that arose during discussions.
- ❖ For God's protection over you and those you love.
- ❖ That the challenges you face will only make you stronger in faith.
- ❖ For safety for those in the hotspots in the world (wars, floods, racial clashes, etc.)
- ❖ For protection of those who are persecuted because of their faith.



SOURCES CONSULTED

www.cslewisinstitute.org
www.lords-prayer-words.com
www.blueletterbible.org/study
www.catholicfaithstone.com
www.bibleinfo.com
www.biblebub.com
www.allaboutprayer.com
www.jw.org

Daily Meditation: Richard Rohr: We Come to God by Doing It Wrong Thursday, August 3, 2017, Trust and Surrender Tuesday, March 7, 2017

IMAGES: Google Images

SONGS: You Tube

BIBLES: Life Application Bible, Serendipity Bible

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October-November 2017**



NOTES:

