

# SERMON STUDY GUIDE



## “How to Pray”- PREACHED ON MAY 11 & 12, 2024

### READ

Read Matthew 5- 6:15. Read it each day, perhaps in a different translation each day (A great resource for looking at various translations is [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)).

### DISCUSS

What stood out to you as you continued to read last week’s passages? Were you able to fast or donate money to an organization? What was it like to think about your righteousness this week? How did you feel about it? Where did you notice God moving in your heart and life?

### STUDY

When Jesus begins his section on prayer within this sermon, he once again highlights the sin of hypocrisy. Jesus uses the hypocrites (here, the pharisees) and the pagans to demonstrate the differences in his way to pray. The error of the hypocrites was mindlessness. 6:7 tells us not to keep “babbling” like pagans. Here, the word for babbling is *battalgeo*, a Greek word found only in this one instance. It’s thought to be onomatopoeic, meaning it sounds like babbling. Jesus calls us to be a people who focus our prayer lives solely on God, allowing ourselves to be transformed by aligning our will with God’s.

1. In what ways might we be guilty of meaningless, mindless prayers? When do we “babble” on?
2. When you pray the Lord’s Prayer in church, it’s likely that you sometimes say the words automatically, and other times you really think about the words. What makes the difference?
3. The New Testament idea of God as father is well known. Less known is the fact that the concept of God as father is already present in the Old Testament. When the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, God sent Moses to confront the Egyptian pharaoh and demand he free his people. Read Exodus 4:21-23. How does the Lord identify Israel?
4. In other parts of the Old Testament, we can find forerunners to the Lord’s Prayer. Look up Proverbs 30:7-9, Exodus 16:13-19, and Ezekiel 36:23. How do these lay the groundwork for the Lord’s Prayer?

### PRACTICE

Pray the Lord’s Prayer each day this week. Focus on one line per day, putting the prayer into your own words, asking for specifics for your life and your loved ones, for the community and the world. Write down some of the ways you personalized the prayer and prepare to share with your group.