

Tony
Dominican Republic


Releasing children from poverty
Compassion[®]
in Jesus' name



The Lord's Prayer

Questions and reflections



The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer is known the world over and is treasured by Christians young and old.

It's recited in school assemblies, at family mealtimes, and in church services. You'll hear it spoken out loud by groups, murmured by individuals... and even sung. It's a prayer to say when facing a time of trial, or during a season of plenty. It brings hope to millions of people in every language and context imaginable.

But what does it all mean? Take a moment to reflect on each line of The Lord's Prayer. Why not use the discussion questions with your family or church small group.

“
Our
Father
in heaven”

LINE ONE





Our Father in heaven...

The Lord's Prayer begins by both acknowledging who we're praying to, and saying something about what they are like: "our Father who art in heaven".

God is described as a 'Father' – a relationship of closeness and deep love. Yet he is also described as 'in heaven'. This doesn't necessarily mean he's a physical place; but is rather talking about the vastness, the mystery and the holiness of God.

So, in The Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches us that we have a God of both intimacy, and of majesty. Amazing!

Reflect or discuss:

- How does knowing God is a loving Father change the way you pray? How can this truth encourage us, even if our experience with earthly fathers has been difficult?
- Why do you think Jesus taught us to say 'our' rather than 'my' father?

“
Hallowed
be your
name,
your kingdom come”

LINES
TWO & THREE



Hallowed be your name...

‘Hallowed’ is an old fashioned word meaning something that is holy.

It implies something that is special, set apart, and of incredible importance.

When we say that God's name is hallowed, we're declaring its significance – that it's worthy of great respect and honour, and not something to be taken lightly. How incredible then that this extraordinary, hallowed God loves each of us unconditionally.

Reflect or discuss:

- What other things do you think could be described as 'hallowed'?
- Does thinking of God's name as being hallowed change the way you pray?

Your kingdom come...

“The Kingdom of God” again doesn't simply mean a physical place. It refers to a way of doing things, a way of being.

The Kingdom of God is what the world looks like when everything is in harmony – when every person and every living thing can flourish under God's perfect rule and blessing. It is what the world looks like when it is freed from fear, from hate, from poverty.

When we say “Your kingdom come”, we're saying that this is what we want the world to be like, and that we're willing to help bring it about through evangelism and sharing Jesus' love.

Reflect or discuss

- What do you think of when you imagine what the Kingdom of God is like?
- What do you think prevents our world from being like this?
- What are some things you could do in your everyday life that could help bring God's kingdom into reality?

“
Your will
be done, on
earth
as it is in heaven”

LINES
FOUR & FIVE



Your will be done...

The Bible tells us that God is love and that his desire is for us to live in that love (1 John 4:7-12). Jesus said the greatest commandment is to love God first and then love others (Matthew 22:37-39).

When we pray, “Your will be done” (Matthew 6:10), we’re submitting our lives to God in obedience and faith, seeking to glorify him in all we do. As Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commands” (John 14:15).

Living this way often means setting aside our own desires to pursue what pleases God and blesses others. In doing so, we reflect his loving character and join him in his work of restoring the world.

Reflect or discuss

- How do you think we can know what God’s will is, for us and for the wider world?
- Spend some time prayerfully asking what God might be willing for you in your life. Write down a few answers. What might be getting in the way of these things?

On earth as it is in heaven...

“On earth” is the way things are. “In heaven” is the way things ought to be; the way things could be. “On earth” is things that might be broken, or wounded. “In heaven” is a realm where everything is made whole.

To ask for things to be “On earth as it is in heaven” is to ask for repair, for healing, and for justice. This line tells us that things don’t have to be the way they are: that change is possible.

Reflect or discuss

- If you could change one thing about your own life, and one thing about the wider world, what would they be?
- How can we help bring about change in a difficult world?

“
Give us
this day
our daily bread”

LINES
SIX & SEVEN





Give us this day our daily bread...

We all have our daily needs – the things we require both to survive and to thrive. This line asks God to provide us with these things. Yet it also subtly reminds us not to ask for more than we need.

What do we need to get through this day? What do we need to live lives of love? Are some of the things we desire actually getting in the way of that? “Our daily bread” grounds us in God’s provision, rather than in a desire for more. And in a world of such great inequality, it’s a reminder that the bread we have can also be shared.

Reflect or discuss

- What is your ‘daily bread’?
- What do you think humans need to be able to thrive in their lives, not just survive?
- What is a 'daily bread' you could share with someone else?

“
Forgive
us our sins,
As we forgive
those who sin against us”

LINES
SIX & SEVEN



Forgive us our sins...

“Sin” can be an off-putting word for many people, bringing with it connotations of shame and judgement. But “forgive us our debts” means something that we know already: that all of us sometimes fall short. We make mistakes. We do things that we wish we didn’t; we don’t do things that we wish did. We hurt people.

Yet God’s grace is infinite. There is always, always forgiveness. Which means we can always start again. We are loved more than anything we could ever do wrong.

Reflect or discuss

- What has made it possible for us to know God’s forgiveness?
- Are there any particular Bible verses that help you understand the depths Jesus had to go to so we can be forgiven?
- Why is it important to know that we are loved more than anything we could ever do wrong?

As we forgive those who sin against us...

Forgiving someone who has hurt us can be one of the hardest steps we ever take. It asks something deep of us. We’re not excusing the wrong or pretending it didn’t matter, but we’re releasing its grip on our hearts.

In God’s kingdom, forgiveness is an act of grace that mirrors the mercy God has shown us.

This grace doesn’t erase the need for wisdom or boundaries. We can forgive while still protecting ourselves from further harm. In doing so, we open the door for healing – in our own lives and, where possible, in our relationships – and we reflect the compassion of the one who forgave us first.

Reflect or discuss

- What stops us from forgiving other people?
- Who does unforgiveness hurt most: the person who did the wrong, or the person who won’t forgive them?
- How can an understanding of God’s grace help us as we look to forgive those around us?

“
Lead us
not into
temptation,
but deliver us from evil”

LINES
TEN & ELEVEN



Lead us not into temptation...

A clearer way to phrase this might be, “Help us to not give in to temptation.”

We all know what temptation feels like, and how it can lead us away from what we know is right. God sent his Holy Spirit to us to help guide us through those situations.

With God, we can find both the wisdom to know the right path and the strength and courage to follow it.

Reflect or discuss

- When you face temptation, what helps you pause and choose a different path?
- How can we support one another in resisting what pulls us away from God's best for us?

But deliver us from evil...

Evil is real in our world, but God's goodness is greater, and by his power, evil can be overcome (Romans 12:21). God is able to deliver us from the evil one.

Scripture promises that there is a light the darkness cannot overcome (John 1:5), the light of Christ. Jesus' light lives in us, by his Spirit, and we're called to let it shine bringing his hope and truth into the world around us.

Reflect or discuss

- What do you think it means to ‘overcome evil with good’?
- How can you help shine God's light to people in need?

“
For the
kingdom,
the power,
and the glory are yours”

LINE TWELVE





For the Kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours...

This line is all about declaring God's sovereignty. It says to God, "You're the one in charge." It reminds us that life isn't all about us. This is a humbling thought, yet it's freeing. We don't have to carry the weight of the world on our shoulders; this is God's story, not ours – and we're each invited to play our part.

You may have noticed that this line isn't always included in the Bible's record of The Lord's Prayer. That's because it was added to the prayer at a later date by the Church. Whether or not you say it is completely up to you, but there's no denying it's a powerful statement.

Reflect or discuss

- If you truly trusted each day that God is in control, what choices or attitudes might change in your life?
- Why do you think it's important to acknowledge that 'the power and the glory' belong to God?

“
Now and
forever.
Amen.”

LINE THIRTEEN



Now and Forever. Amen.

God is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). God isn't going to change; he isn't going to leave us; his love will never fail us. So many things in this life are temporary, but God is the rock that we can cling to in confidence, no matter what.

When we say "Amen", we're declaring that we agree with the prayer and want to see it come to pass. Which we definitely do!

Reflect or discuss

- What does it mean to you that God is the same 'yesterday, today and forever?'
- Which part of The Lord's Prayer resonates with you most at the moment? How could you take its words into your daily life?



Bujaga Child Development Centre
Uganda

“
Whoever
welcomes one
such child
in my name welcomes me”

MATTHEW 18:5

