

INTRO

- Describe something you are really passionate about (sport/hobby/cause) and how it's impacted you.
- What's been your exposure and/or experience of the Lord's Prayer?

Over the next few weeks, we will take Jesus' Masterclass on prayer by working through what has traditionally been called *The Lord's Prayer*.

READ

Matt 6:9-13

REFLECT

Jesus is modelling to us what true prayer is. The basis of prayer is relationship with God as our heavenly Father.

Qu: out of all the names to address God, Jesus chose Father. What significance does this have for us particularly as we think about prayer?

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

Next, Jesus encourages prayer to begin with adoration: deep love, passion and respect for God. Hallowed be your name is a prayer for God's reputation to be upheld both in the world and in my life. One of the best ways we do that is to have hearts that are captured by Him, or said in another way, hearts that adore him.

CULTIVATING ADORATION

Adoration begins by **learning to pay Attention** to God's presence in the everyday.

Qu: What things compete for your attention on a regular basis? How can you start paying more attention to God at work in your life?

An ancient practice for this is called the **prayer of examen**. Each day, build in a practice whereby you *examine* your day asking God to

highlight where He was at work, where you felt God's presence (or absence) and why.

Attention leads to Awareness

Attention makes us notice something & awareness means we grow in knowledge & perception of it. As we begin to pay more attention to God in the every day, an awareness of his presence in our everyday grows.

Qu: Read Greg Boyd's quote on pg2. What is the danger to us if we fail to discern God's presence in our everyday lives?

Awareness leads to Appreciation

As we grow in our awareness of God, begin to thank Him for it. Gratitude is a good practice but we must learn to channel appreciation for God into adoration of God.

Qu: What does it mean to adore God? What would it look like in your life?

Appreciation leads to Adoration

CS Lewis talks about how looking at a sunbeam and looking *along* the sunbeam are 2 different experiences. (see his quote on pg2). Our appreciation can grow into adoration as we allow the things that bring us joy and happiness begin to encourage us to seek out the giver of those gifts. Perhaps a way to say this is: We appreciate God for what he does; we adore God for who He is.

Qu: what 'sunbeams' are you aware of in your life right now? How can your appreciation for them encourage you to grow in love for God?

Read Psalm 95 or 98 together as a way to begin a time of prayerful praise and thanks to God.

RESPOND & PRAY

- What challenged you the most from this discussion? What comforted you?

Quotes

*“If we can’t discern God’s presence in our day-to-day lives, it’s unlikely that we’ll find him at a revival. We may find a lot of excitement, great speakers, superb music, and maybe even some “signs and wonders.” **But unless a person learns to find God as much in the ordinary as in the exciting, the exciting will do nothing more than serve as a momentary distraction.**”*

— Greg Boyd, *Present Perfect: Finding God in the Now*

“Pleasures are shafts of glory as it strikes our sensibility.... I have tried to make every pleasure into a channel of adoration. I don’t mean simply by giving thanks for it. One must of course give thanks, but I mean something different ... Gratitude exclaims, very properly, “How good of God to give me this.” Adoration says, “What must be the quality of that Being whose far-off and momentary coruscations (flickers, sparkles) are like this!” One’s mind runs back up the sunbeam to the sun.”

— CS Lewis

Further Resources on Prayer:

Face to Face: Praying the Scriptures for Intimate Worship
By Kenneth Boa

Prayer: Finding the Hearts True Home
by Richard Foster

Red Moon Rising: How 24-7 Prayer is Awakening a Generation
by Pete Grieg

A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World
by Paul Miller

Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God
by Tim Keller

Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer
by Eugene Peterson