

PRAYING WITH WORDS

A few weeks ago we talked about the Lord's Prayer, the words that Jesus gave to his friends when they asked him how they should pray. His answer was so inspiring that people have been praying Jesus's prayer ever since. But I wonder how Jesus chose the words that he used? And what do they mean? Here's some ideas that I have... I wonder what you think about the words of the Lord's Prayer?

Our Father in heaven,

When people in Jesus's day thought of the parent who provided for their needs, they thought of fathers. Jesus says not to talk to God like God is a king or a boss, but like a parent or grandparent or loving caregiver who wants the best for us.

hallowed be your name,

"Hallowed" means holy or special. This line tells God that we recognize God's specialness and want everyone to know about it.

your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

In Jesus's day countries had kings, so when you wanted to talk about someone being in charge you talked about kingdoms. In this part of the prayer Jesus is looking forward to the time when everyone on earth can experience what God wants for them. Right now, he says, God is in charge in heaven, but on earth humans get to make their own decisions—and sometimes we make bad ones. But if we open ourselves to God, we can see how to live the way God wants us to live in order to make the earth as joyful and loving a place as heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

We need things every day—like food!—and it's hard and stressful to be in charge of all our needs ourselves. We can look to God to provide us with what we need; and not just once, in one big chunk that we have to then be careful not to waste, but every day.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

God doesn't want us to feel like we're always doing the wrong thing. When we make mistakes and feel sorry for them, God rushes to forgive us. But for us to feel good about our forgiveness and our relationship with God we also need to try and forgive people who have done bad things to us. And the two are connected: when we're forgiving of others, we can feel good about ourselves and accept God's forgiveness.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

Sometimes things are scary or seem too hard for us. Jesus wants us to know that we can look to God to keep us safe. When we say these words we ask God to protect us, and we also remind ourselves of God's care for us.

flip over for more!

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

God is big, God is strong, and God is important! And we get to talk with God: pretty good!

There are lots of ways to pray. But building on the Lord's Prayer, people have come to think about a few different things that might feel helpful to include when we talk to God. First is praising God for God's wonderfulness; second is thanking God for the good things that we've experienced. Together, those two parts put us in mind of God's greatness and goodness, and help us feel safe, secure, and happy. Then the third part is asking God for what we need!

Wondering Questions

I wonder what you have to thank God for?

I wonder what you want to ask God?

I wonder how praying can change how you feel even before God does the thing you're asking for?