

What the Lord's Prayer Tells Us About Who We Are – October 19 & 20, 2019

Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Psalm 42

- How does the psalmist describe his overwhelmed state (1-3)? What does he remember (4)? In the throes of emotional and spiritual chaos, he proceeds to “pour out his soul” in this prayer, and even puts it to song. What sort of inspiration or framework for prayer does this provide to you?
- Summarize the psalmist’s message to his own soul (5-7). Meditate on the phrase “deep calls to deep.” How do you think God feels when the inmost part of us calls out to him in prayer? Reflect on your most soulful time of longing for the Lord. Pray such moments would be met with our Heavenly Father’s generous love.
- Describe the psalmist’s re-emphasis on feelings of abandonment and chaos (9-10). Despite these feelings, what does he remember (8)? How? In concluding this song, what are his final remarks to his soul (11)? Speak to your own soul now, exhorting it to take notice of and receive God’s extravagant love for you, his child.

Day Two: Isaiah 55

- Describe the experience of coming to “the waters” (1-4). Consider this an invitation to prayer: parched and penniless, you can come to God and be satisfied. Will you RSVP “yes”? If not, what’s holding you back? Who will approach God’s people (5)? Why (5)?
- When should we seek the Lord (6)? What hope do “the wicked” have (7)? Describe God’s thoughts and the power of his word (8-11). What do these four verses tell us of God’s holiness? How is he different than any earthly father? How does this make you feel?
- Consider again all the invitations in this prophecy: come, buy, eat, delight, seek, call, go out, etc. What framework does this provide for how we ought to pray? Over this next week, whenever you pray, begin by imagining God as a father, welcoming you into his home, inviting you to eat, to delight, etc. What changes might this create in your heart and in your spiritual outlook?

Day Three: Romans 8:14-17

- What is the identity of those led by the Spirit of God (14-15)? To what extent do you believe this about yourself? Perhaps instead you feel afraid or unworthy before God. Do what Paul claims is possible in verse 16: ask the Holy Spirit to testify to your heart that you are part of God’s family; you are his child. How does this feel?
- Thanks to the Holy Spirit, how can we cry out to the Lord (15)? Speaking to God in this incredibly personal way is a wonderfully revolutionary shift, but it can also be unsettling because perhaps fathers don’t seem safe. Begin regularly asking God to impress his perfect example of fatherhood upon your heart, and give thanks whenever you sense him answering this prayer.
- What is the implication of being a child of God (17)? What does the word “heir” bring to mind? Alongside everyone else called into Christian community, what do you picture inheriting from God?

Day Four: Ephesians 4:1-16

- What sort of life does Paul urge us to live (1)? What exactly does that look like (2-3)? Is this how you relate to other Christians, including those with whom you share many differences? Invite the Lord into this reflection. What is he revealing? Describe all the

“ones” Paul then writes about, and how they are connected (4-6). To what extent do you sense this “oneness” in your spiritual community? What work does God still want to do among you?

- What has been given to us, and how (7-10)? How does this play out for church leaders (11-13)? What role do your actions and your prayer life play in the pursuit of unity and maturity for all God’s people? If you sense an adjustment is in order, pray for greater alignment with God’s heart for our beloved community.
- When we pursue maturity and seek to bless one another, what will happen (14-16)? Re-read verse 16. This week, in both prayer and action, how can you “grow and build up” our community?

Day Five: 1 Peter 2:4-10

- How does Peter describe Jesus, the one we come to (4)? What happens as we come to him (5)? Do you think of yourself as one of the many “living stones” of a “spiritual house”? Or do other identity-markers that emphasize your individuality take precedent? How might God want to adjust your self-perception?
- What Old Testament scriptures whisper of Jesus being like a stone (6-8)? Why is Jesus precious to you? Do you tell him of his preciousness? If not, do so now. Also ask him to help you deeply trust God and protect you from any temptation to reject him.
- In verse 9, Peter returns to the topic of identity. Which heavenly identity-marker speaks the most to your heart? Why? What is one way you can invite others to share in this identity? Prior to following Jesus, what did we miss out on (10)? In Christ, *together* we get to pray “*our* Father.” This is something to celebrate and cultivate! May it be so in your life and in your community.