



PRAYER

PRAISE | LISTEN | ASK

TALK WITH GOD

JESUS SHOWED HIS FOLLOWERS HOW TO PRAY

Imaginative Bible Story Based on Matthew 6:9-13

By Trevecca Okholm

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.

Jeremiah 33:3 (NIV)

The followers of Jesus spent a lot of time watching and waiting while Jesus prayed, so they already knew prayer was important for Jesus. They just weren't sure exactly what prayer was, or how they should pray. So one day, as they were outside sitting on a hillside overlooking the Sea of Galilee, Jesus' followers asked Jesus if He would show them how they should pray.

The first thing Jesus told them was "don't pray like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly and make a big show of how important they are." In case you don't know what that means, a hypocrite is what Jesus sometimes called people who said they were very religious but didn't really act like it. Then Jesus explained to His followers that the best way to pray is in a quiet time and space when you're all by yourself.

After that, Jesus gave them a model prayer. How cool is that that Jesus not only gave them a model to follow but we still have that same model written down in our Bible for us to follow today? Turns out that Jesus' model was so important that in a lot of churches around the world the people still pray this model prayer aloud together every Sunday! So it looks like people around the world and over the centuries all spent time practicing prayer the way Jesus taught His followers by the Sea of Galilee!

You can find Jesus' model prayer in your Bible! Just turn to Matthew 6: 9-13 and you'll find the prayer that Jesus taught His followers, all those year ago on that hillside overlooking the Sea of Galilee! I wonder if praying Jesus' model prayer regularly, every day, might be a great way to start your spiritual practice of prayer?

Talk about the story together... what do you wonder?

Do you ever wonder how the followers of Jesus felt when Jesus taught them how to pray?

I wonder if you can find that model prayer in your Bible and read it aloud? (In case you forgot, it is in Matthew 6:9-13. Can you find it?)

Do you think it matters that this model prayer begins with praising God? I wonder if we should always begin our prayers with praise to God?

I wonder why Jesus taught His followers to ask for God's Kingdom to come? What do you think it means when people pray for God's Kingdom to come to earth as it is in heaven?

Read verse 11. What does it have to say about the food we eat every day? I wonder if that makes you feel different about food if you always try to remember to thank God before you eat it? I wonder if that means to say thanks for ice cream and M&Ms, too?

Be careful with verse 12! It asks for God to forgive us just as much as we forgive others! Yikes! Are you really ready to pray that?

I wonder why temptation is such a big deal that Jesus included it in His prayer model? What do you think? What is a temptation? What might be a temptation for you?

I wonder if you can think of any other prayers that are written in the Bible? One of my favorites is found in John 17. It's the longest prayer in the Bible! It is called "the prayer of Jesus" and is one of the very last prayers that Jesus prayed on earth. Can you find it and read it together?