

Weekly Newsletter: 12th March 2024

Reflection: Seven Reasons to Say the Lord's Prayer Daily

By Joe Barnard

Jesus makes it easy for us to pray. Really easy. He tells us not to worry about length or eloquence or formality, but to speak simply to our Father who is already present, knows our need, and is infinitely interested in our wellbeing. But Jesus does more. He gives us a prayer template to use. He does this because he knows that most of us struggle to find words to express our thoughts and feelings. This short prayer (the 'The Lord's Prayer') is a life-changing recipe of praise and petition. Below are reasons why you should pray it daily.

1 – Your identity is defined

In two words Jesus answers all of those pesky questions about who and what we are. 'Our Father.' That's it. We are defined most deeply and permanently by a relationship to our Creator. God preceded us, made us, and loves us. Therefore, the only way to know ourselves is to know Him; He alone can tell us who we are. Furthermore, Jesus reminds us of the universal family he has created. This is the 'our'. No Christian is ever alone because every Christian has God as Father, Christ as Lord, and millions of brothers and sisters scattered throughout history and around the globe.

2 – Your passion is redirected

Your passion is what most deeply moves you, the drive beneath your actions and lifestyle. Some people almost seem born with a passion; others spend their whole lives trying to find one. In four words Jesus tells us the only object worthy of utmost devotion, the name of God. *Hallowed be Your name*: the name of God – his place, role, and public reputation – this is the beating heart of every Christian. All other objects fade in comparison. When God is supremely exalted, everything else falls into place. Shalom happens.

3 – Your life-purpose is clarified

The five words 'on earth as in heaven' are a clarion call to action. These words tell us two things about our life-purpose. First, the sphere of Christian discipleship is anything that happens on *earth*. In other words, any activity on planet earth has spiritual value. That means that everything must be done for the glory of God – parenting, cleaning, shopping at Tesco, visiting an elderly aunt, and so on. Second, Jesus tells us the standard to which his followers are to aspire: *as in heaven*. Wow. That's a scary calling. The perfect service of the angels in heaven is what Christ's followers are to aim at on earth. Grace will be needed, lots of forgiveness – there will be failure – but the calling stands: live on earth as if you were in heaven. Once a person grabs hold of that job description, no additional life-purpose is needed.

4 – Your need is acknowledged

We all live under the illusion of self-sufficiency. We're like five-year-olds who think parents are expendable. The truth is that we are totally dependent on the grace of God. This is why Jesus tells us to pray, 'Give us today our daily bread'. Jesus is not just talking about our need for food. He wants us to recognise that everything is dependent on grace – every breath we take, every bite we eat, every moment of health we enjoy. We live by grace; therefore, we need to seek our spiritual food *daily*.

5 – Your relationships are reprogrammed

The default programme for human relationships is contractual. I calculate how you treat me and treat you accordingly. If you are nice, I'll be nice; if you are friendly, I'll be your friend; if you are unkind, I'll treat you like an old pair of shoes. Jesus has no time for this. He tells us to pray, 'Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.' What does this mean? He's saying that forgiveness is an essential aspect of Christian identity. We are the people who are forgiven. As the people who are forgiven, we can't withhold forgiveness. To do so would be to deny who we are and to reject everything we stand for. The rule for Christian relationships is simple: treat others as God has treated you.

6 – Your mind is alerted

Western Christians are naïve. We're like country kids visiting the city for the first time, unaware of pickpockets, violence, and drugs. Few of us wake up on a Monday and have any thought that a spiritual battle is raging around us. Understanding this, Jesus confronts our naivety. He tells us to be mindful of the weakness of our flesh ('lead me not into temptation') and the wickedness of the devil ('deliver me from the evil one'). No Christian is ready for the day unless he or she has prayed these words.

7 – Your heart is strengthened

The world is a scary place. But Jesus doesn't want us to live in fear. Thus he reminds us that our Father is '*in heaven*'. Most of us miss the significance of this. Jesus is not trying to locate God. He is impressing upon our hearts the status and authority of our caretaker. The point Jesus is making is that the one who loves us, God, *our Father*, is in the position of eternal power and absolute authority. This knowledge ought to give us confidence as we enter into a world of temptation and evil. No matter what degree of trouble awaits us, we have a Father who is ready and able to help us.

Children and Youth Discipleship Workshop - this Saturday

This Saturday from 9.30am – 12pm, David Kunzi (UK Director of Word of Life) is going to do a workshop at HEC to help us refine our vision for youth discipleship both as individual families and as a congregation.

Whether you are a parent, grandparent, volunteer with children's ministry, or just a member of the church family, please feel welcome to attend. If childcare is an issue for the morning, please let Liz@holyroode-vangelical.org know.

Litter Pick @ Montgomery Street Park - this Sunday

This Sunday we are helping the Friends of Montgomery Street Park Committee with a litter pick after the morning service. Please head over to the park about 12 noon and stay for as long or as short as you can. All the equipment will be provided and it's a great opportunity to serve the local community!

Easter Praise Workshop – this Sunday

Come along and learn some new songs and enjoy singing some old ones! This Sunday evening at 6pm we'll be having an Easter Praise Workshop and it would be great to see you there!

Minutes of Elders' Meetings

By Andy Scott

The elders in Holyrood are men from the congregation who together with Joe (who is our teaching elder) exercise spiritual oversight over the church and seek to "shepherd" the congregation. The elders generally meet every three weeks to discuss matters relating to spiritual and pastoral needs of the church.

In order to help members of the church to know what is being discussed at elders meeting, the elders have decided to make the minutes of their meetings (from the beginning of this year) available on the website. The minutes once approved will be uploaded to the Resources section of the website. The minutes will be password protected. All members will be sent an email with a note of the password. If you are not able to access the minutes via the website, please contact Liz Scott (Liz@holyroodevangelical.org)

Book Group

The next meeting of the book group is on 30th March at 3.30pm at 9 Craigentenny Avenue. This month's book is Truth Changes Everything by Jeff Myers. For further information speak to Anncris.

Christ Church – Easter Holiday Club



Christ Church (68 Britwell Crescent) is running a kids club for Easter, on Saturday 30th March from 2- 4.30pm.

It's open to all primary age kids and there will be games, crafts, drama, an Easter Egg hunt and stories of the first Easter. To book a place, please email- holidayclub.cce@gmail.com

The Easter Play – Saturday 30th March

On Saturday 30th March at 2pm there will be a live production of the Easter story by Cutting Edge Theatre in West Princes Street Gardens. This year's script is focussing on the women who witnessed the death and resurrection of Jesus.

It's free, unticketed and for more details go [here](#).



Friends International Questionnaire

Friends International in Edinburgh are asking local church members and volunteers to give them some feedback **by April 12**. Could you please take 3-4 minutes to fill out a survey for them? **It is anonymous** and is for anyone who currently connects with Friends International, or is aware of Friends International. They are looking for a wide range of participants – from those who are very involved to those who are not yet involved at all. Here's the survey - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BGHLFB6> Thank you!

Church Calendar

- Tuesday:
 - Men's Discipleship at 6.30am on Zoom
 - Pickleball and Table Tennis at 7pm in the church
 - Women's Bible Study at 7pm on Zoom
 - Mission Team Meeting
- Wednesday: Prayer meeting at 7pm on Zoom (with Naomi Amour from Edinburgh City Mission)
- Thursday:
 - Men's Discipleship at 11am in person
 - Session Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Saturday: Children and Youth Discipleship Workshop from 9.30am to 12 noon
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
 - Litter Pick at Montgomery Street Park from 12 noon
 - Easter Praise Workshop at 6pm
- Monday:
 - Baby and Toddler Group from 10am – 11.30am
 - Warm Space from 12noon - 3pm
 - Communications Team Meeting at 8pm on Zoom



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