

## The Way of Prayer: Part 1—Our Father

Text: Matthew 6:9-13

### Warming Up

#### Questions:

1. *What is something new you would like to try in the new year?*
2. *Who was it that first taught you how to pray, and what do you remember first learning?*

### Digging In

Read **Matthew 6:9-13**.

#### Questions:

1. *Do you find the image of God as Father a help or hindrance to you in prayer? Why?*
2. *Why do you think Jesus, as he is teaching us **how** to pray, begins the prayer like this?*
3. *When you think of God as holy, what do you think of?*

“Hallowed” comes from the Greek word *hagios*, which means “holy”. Sometimes we think of holiness as sinlessness, or perfection, or purity. But *hagios* simply means “set apart”. Jesus teaches us to pray that God is in some way “set apart”. He is “set apart” in His “name”. To speak of someone’s “name” was to speak of their character. So when Jesus teaches us to remember God as holy, he is inviting us to remember that God is set apart in His *character*.

A few weeks ago we were reminded of this: Read **Isaiah 55:6-8**.

We are told that God is set apart from us *in his mercy and pardon*. Jesus wants us to remember God’s “set apartness” in these ways when we pray.

#### Questions:

1. *How do you imagine God feeling or seeming when you approach God in prayer?*
2. *What character traits of God are you most appreciative of?*
3. *How might your prayers be impacted if, before you prayed, you remembered these character traits of God?*

Read **Revelation 19:1-8**.

In the book of Revelation, we are told that our relationship with God as a people will be more like a bride to her husband than just a child to her parent.

#### Questions:

1. *What are some of the differences between how a child and parent relate, and how a husband and wife relate?*
2. *What kind of communication is important in a marriage, and how might that inform how we approach God in prayer?*
3. *Why do you think God’s final image of our relationship with Him is bride and bridegroom?*
4. *How might approaching God as both Father **and** spouse shape how you pray?*

### Sending Out

Jesus, in Matthew 6, says that he is teaching us *how* to pray, not *what* to pray.

#### Questions:

1. *What do you think the difference is in approaching the Lord’s prayer as **how** to pray rather than **what** to pray?*
2. *What obstacles do you face in your life of prayer?*
3. *How would you like to grow in your life of prayer?*

### Closing

Take a moment in silence to come before God and ask the question, “*What word or phrase or idea or moment does God want me to remember from this morning and carry with me this week?*”

Close with prayer.