

# Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus

*A Discipleship Journey*



## **Discipleship Habit #1: Pray Every Day**

Week 11

Lord, Teach Me to Pray

We have spent the first three months of our Discipleship Journey exploring our relationship with God and discerning Jesus' invitation for us. For the upcoming months we delve deeper into the six habits of discipleship: Prayer, Scripture, Mass, Sacrament of Reconciliation, Service, and Community Life. During this month we will focus on the habit of Prayer.

This weekly material is offered to support our Discipleship Journey as we walk in the foot prints of Jesus.

We encourage you to use this material as a part of your daily prayer practice as follows:

- ❖ Begin with the Opening Prayer.
- ❖ Reflect on Prayer.
- ❖ Study Discipleship Habit #1: Pray Every Day.
- ❖ Allow Jesus to Teach You to Pray.
- ❖ Close with the Closing Prayer.

Let us pray for each other that we are transformed, as individuals and as community, by this Discipleship Journey.

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### Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we praise You for You are patient! You lovingly wait for us to come to You and long to listen to us. Forgive us for the times in our lives when we have not drawn close to You in prayer. In Your Scripture You tell us, "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6 - 7) We claim this promise. Thank You for being so available to us. Help us to know that You long to meet with us in prayer.

Lord, teach us how to pray. Give us the desire to get to know You in prayer every day and the discipline to guard our prayer time when busyness tempts us away from You. Jesus, we trust in You. We make this prayer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN

Reflection: On Prayer

As turning to Jesus in prayer becomes a habit in your life, you will not only grow in friendship with Him, you will also grow into deeper friendship with His people, both near and far. We grow into Jesus and each other at the same time. But the only way for any of this to start happening is for us to start praying. We need to start making prayer a habit if it isn't already. Like the mustard seed, we need to start small so Jesus can help our prayer grow into something big. So, practice taking at least 10 minutes a day to have a conversation with the Lord. Speak to Him from your heart and listen to Him dwelling in your soul. Foster the habit of personal prayer to encounter Christ!

This month, we explore how Jesus prayed to His Father. He had to find time amidst all the needs of others. He had to find a quiet place to go away. He had to carve out time for God in both His schedule and in His heart. Jesus faced some of the same challenges in prayer as we do today.

Jesus invites you, here and now, to a life of deeper prayer and a life of deeper discipleship. If you ask, you will receive. If you seek, you will find. If you knock, the door will be opened for you.

How might you be open to a deeper call from Jesus through a habit of daily prayer?

What might you discover about yourself, or about Jesus, in your conversation with Him?

### Discipleship Habit #1: Pray Every Day

The first habit of discipleship that we want to explore is the call to “*Pray Every Day*”. This is the habit that finds the disciple in regular personal conversation with Jesus as a close friend. Recognizing that faith is first and foremost about a relationship with the person of Jesus, the habit of personal prayer is how we open up the lines of communication to build and grow that relationship.

Simply put, daily prayer is the habit of spending time with our friend, Jesus. It’s that simple and that amazing! Just as we would with any good friend, in prayer, we take time to set distractions aside and be truly present with Him. We spend quality time, both telling Him about what’s happening in our lives and listening to Him. We tell Him the things that we love about Him and apologize when we hurt Him. Sometimes we’re just together in silence, appreciating each other. Because we are talking to a good friend, we need not worry about what to say or how to say it.

In prayer, you can just speak from your heart. Go ahead and tell Him everything – your hopes, your fears, your dreams, your doubts, and your needs. The more you go to Jesus in prayer with everything in your life, the more Jesus will become everything for your life – and that’s the goal! As turning to Jesus in prayer becomes a habit in your life, you will not only grow in friendship with Him, you will also grow into deeper friendship with His people, both near and far.

In fact, that’s the ultimate litmus test of true prayer: Are we also growing in love and forgiveness with our family members, friends, co-workers, mild acquaintances, and even our enemies? As Jesus teaches us in the Our Father, prayer is always the simultaneous movement of hallowing God’s name and longing that all people receive their daily bread. We grow into Jesus and each other at the same time.

*The danger in not having the proper interiority (intimacy with God) and the personal moral fidelity to back up our faith preaching is that we end up turning Christianity into a philosophy, an ideology, and a moral code, but ultimately missing what Christianity is all about, a relationship with a real person.*

*(Holy Longing, pg. 63)*

Describe a time when you talked with a friend who really listened to you and understood you. How did you feel? What happened?

## Lord, Teach Me to Pray

In the 11<sup>th</sup> Chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, we find Jesus teaching His disciples to pray. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus did so much more than teach His disciples a simple prayer for them to recite. The Lord's Prayer is, truly, the prayer of disciples. It provides us, not only with the ultimate prayer, but also a roadmap of how we are to live.

How so? Read the passage below from Luke 11:1 – 4, 9 – 10. Here, we find the disciples come to Jesus and ask, "Lord, teach me to pray." In other words, much like many of us, they weren't sure how to pray either. Like many of us, they wondered if they had the right words. They knew that Jesus had a powerful connection to God, the Father – and they wanted that for themselves. They wanted to pray, they wanted to grow in relationship with God – but they weren't sure where to start. And so, Jesus taught them how. The foundation of discipleship is prayer.

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Luke 11:1 – 4, 9 – 10

[Jesus] was praying in a certain place, and after He had finished, one of his disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

He said to them, "When you pray, say:

    Father, hallowed be Your name.

    Your kingdom come.

    Give us each day our daily bread.

    And forgive us our sins,

        For we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

    And do not bring us to the time of trial.

So, I say to you, ask and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened."

If God knows our needs, why do we need to ask?

If we didn't ask, would we still receive the same answers to our needs?

The word Jesus uses for *Father* is closer to the meaning of *Daddy*. Does this change the feeling of the prayer for you?

Why do you think Jesus told us to say *Our Father* instead of *My Father*? Do you think He did that intentionally? What does this mean for us?

*Hallowed be Your name*: Why would we praise God's name? Is there something special about God's name? What other names is God called?

*Your kingdom come*: What kind of a world do you long for? What would it be like if we prayed for and followed God's will instead of our own?

*Give us each day our daily bread*: What do you need to get through the day? Does God know what you need? Do you trust Him to give you what you need?

*And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us*: Have you ever thought about these words as you prayed them? Would you want God to forgive you the same way/to the same degree that you forgive others? Why or why not? Who do you need to forgive?

*And do not bring us to the time of trial*: What are the greatest sources of temptations for you? God doesn't tempt us, but He allows us to be tempted. Why do you think He does that? What are some of the trials you are facing? What would it look like to be delivered from these trials?

Closing Prayer

## Closing Prayer

### *Our Father – A Reflection*

*Our Father Who Art In Heaven* – O Creator, You made all things in love. All of creation is a blessing emanating from You.

*Hallowed Be Thy Name* – Help us to let go, to clear the space inside of busy forgetfulness so that You can come and reside within us.

*Thy Kingdom Come* – Let Your counsel rule our lives; unite our “I can” to Yours so that, together, we can bring forth a new world of peace.

*Thy Will Be Done On Earth As It Is In Heaven* – As we find Your love in ours, let Your heart’s fervent desire move us beyond ourselves to help bring about a new way of being.

*Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread* – Grant what we need each day in bread and insight; sustenance for the call of growing life.

*And Forgive Us Our Trespasses As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us* – Loose the cords of mistakes that bind us, as we release the strands we hold of other’s guilt.

*And Lead Us Not Into Temptation, But Deliver Us From Evil* – Don’t let surface things distract us; free us from the things that hold us back from our true purpose.

*AMEN*