

Lord of Our Prayers



SABBATH—JULY 30

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:5; John 14:12-14; Isaiah 53:12; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; Hebrews 12:24; Romans 8:34.

MEMORY VERSE: “ ‘And I [Jesus] will do anything you [Jesus’ disciples] ask in my name. Then the Son will bring glory to the Father’ ” (John 14:13, NlrV).

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: People who choose to live with Jesus as their Lord are called to follow Him in a life of prayer.

THE LIFE OF OUR LORD. Jesus’ life was a life of prayer. Jesus put prayer at the top of the list of important things to do. Mark writes that “it was very early in the morning and still dark. Jesus got up and left the house. He went to a place where he could be alone. There he prayed” (Mark 1:35, NlrV). Luke reports that Jesus “went out to the mountainside to pray. He spent the night praying to God” (Luke 6:12, NlrV).

“There was no one whose life was ever so crowded and busy with work and responsibility as Jesus’ life. But how often He was found in prayer!”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 362.

We are to follow the life and teachings of Jesus. So we, too, should dedicate ourselves to prayer. We should learn from Jesus’ example that prayer is the heart and soul of the Christian’s life. We would be spiritually dead without prayer.

When we pray, we should address our prayers to our heavenly Father. We should also pray in Jesus’ name. We should pray according to God’s will. This week, promise to join our Lord in the holy work of praying for other people.

Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, August 6.

SUNDAY—JULY 31

**PRAYING TO OUR
HEAVENLY FATHER
(Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6).**

In His prayers, Jesus addressed God as “Father” (John 17:1), “Holy Father” (John 17:11), and “righteous [holy] Father” (John 17:25). Even Jesus’ short prayer in Luke 10:21 is directed to “Father, Lord of heaven and earth.” During His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane, Mark writes that Jesus addressed the heavenly Father using the Aramaic¹ word *Abba* (Mark 14:36). *Abba* is an affectionate (loving) name suggesting the idea of “my father.” The early Christians followed His example (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6).

How do the following Old Testament verses show the kind of relationship God wants with His people?

Deuteronomy 1:31 _____

Deuteronomy 32:6 _____

Psalms 103:13 _____

Isaiah 63:15, 16 _____

Malachi 2:10 _____

Proverbs 3:12 _____

A perfect father is someone loving, caring, and protecting. Even a child can love, trust, and obey a father like this.



**Children can love a father
who protects them.**

The Bible also gives us an example of adoption. As followers of Christ, we have been “adopted” into the Father’s household (read Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5). In Roman times, when a son was adopted, he received full legal rights and honors that came with his new family. As Jesus’ followers, we receive

¹Aramaic—the common language of Jesus’ time.

full salvation because we have been adopted into God's family. "How great is the love the Father has given us so freely! Now we can be called children of God. And that's [that is] what we really are" (1 John 3:1, NlrV).

By praying to the Father, we show we are accepting who He is and what He has done for us. We show how we are related to Him. And we show the salvation we have from what He gave us in Jesus. In this way, the name Father should give us comfort, hope, and joy.

Many earthly fathers have been abusive, unloving, and uncaring. They are the opposite of what a father should be. What advice can you give someone who has an abusive father? How can you help him or her understand and experience our heavenly Father's love?

MONDAY—AUGUST 1

PRAYING IN JESUS' NAME (1 Timothy 2:5).

In John 14:12-14, Jesus says we should ask for things in His name. What we ask from the Father, we should ask in the name of Jesus. So we begin our prayers by saying something like, "Dear Father in heaven." Then we close our prayers with Jesus' name, like this: "And we ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen." What does "in Jesus' name" mean?

What are the following verses saying to help us better understand the idea of praying to the Father in Jesus' name? Isaiah 53:12; Romans 8:34; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; Hebrews 12:24.

By praying in Jesus' name, we are making an announcement to ourselves, to other humans, and to the universe (1 Corinthians 4:9). The announcement is that we accept Jesus' authority² and power in our lives. By praying in His name, we announce our personal acceptance of Him as our Savior who died for our sins. He is the One through whom we can reach the Father (Hebrews 8:1). By praying in Jesus' name, we can claim the promises of God that we have in and through Jesus. By praying in Jesus' name, we are openly announcing our faith in Him as the One who has closed the separation that sin caused between God and us. We are announcing that He is the One who has reunited us with our heavenly Father. "It is all from God. He brought us back to himself through Christ's death on the cross. And he has given us the task of bringing others back to him through Christ. God was bringing the world back to himself through Christ. He did not hold people's sins against them. God has trusted us with the message that people may be brought back to him" (2 Corinthians 5:18, 19, NlrV).

²authority—the skill to make someone obey; influence that creates respect and trust.

By praying in Jesus' name, we accept Him and what He has done for us (Isaiah 53:12). At the same time, what responsibilities does praying in Jesus' name put on us?

TUESDAY—AUGUST 2

PRAYING ACCORDING TO THE FATHER'S WILL (Mark 14:36; 1 John 5:14, 15).

Jesus announced, "I have not come down from heaven to do what I want to do. I have come to do what the One who sent me wants me to do" (John 6:38, NIV). Even in His prayers, Jesus showed His determination to surrender His own will to the Father's will. When we pray, there are several things we know are God's will. For example, John 3:16 tells us it is God's will for us to be saved. So when we pray for God to save us, we are praying according to God's will.

List three other things you know are God's will, so that when you pray for these things, you will be praying according to His will. Also list support from the Bible for the things you chose.

Sometimes, it is difficult to know what the Father's will is. Have you ever prayed for someone who is sick? How do you know the Father's will for that person? We are told to pray for the sick and to trust God to bring healing. But we do not know how the person is to be healed. We do not know God's timing. Should we then keep from praying for people who are sick and weak? No! "Let your prayer include this thought: 'Lord, you know every secret of the soul. You know these persons, because Jesus gave His life for them. He loves them more than we possibly can. If it is for your glory and the good of these suffering people to make them healthy, we ask you in the name of Jesus, that health may be given them at this time.' "

—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Health*, p. 375.

Read Jesus' prayer again in Mark 14:36. Notice His pattern of thought: (1) The word *Abba* shows His close relationship with His Father. (2) Jesus admits God's power. (3) Jesus talks about His own desire. (4) Then He surrenders His desire to the Father. Is there any prayer you need to pray that shows this same pattern? Why not

Request	Support from the Bible
1.	
2.	
3.	

get on your knees now and pray
this prayer in the will of God?

James 5:16 _____

Philippians 1:9, 10 _____

Mark 9:28, 29 _____

Romans 15:30, 31 _____

Jesus cannot be your Lord if you pray only for yourself. When Jesus is Lord of your prayers, you will join Him in praying for others. Jesus prayed for groups of people (John 17:9, 20). He also prayed for just one person at a time (Luke 22:31, 32). The New Testament uses several Greek verbs³ to describe Jesus' prayers. One of these verbs means "to beg." This is the verb used in Luke 22:32 to describe the prayer of intercession⁴ Jesus offered for Simon Peter. "Satan could do nothing against the all-powerful prayer of Jesus for others. And Jesus' prayer for Peter is also offered to all people who are humble and repentant."⁵—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 91.

How do the following verses help us understand why we should pray for others?

Jeremiah 29:7 _____

People ask us to pray for them when they are facing difficulties and troubles. Churches read names of people who need our prayers. Sometimes we may be tempted to give up, because there are so many names on our prayer list. But there are too many examples in the Bible of God's faithful people praying for each other. We must pray for others, also. There is a power in prayer that only people who pray in spirit and in truth can experience.



³verbs—words that show action. Run, drive, and walk are verbs, because they show action.

⁴intercession—prayer for other people.

⁵repentant—being sorry for sins and turning away from your sins.

Even science is beginning to understand more about the power of prayer. Studies show that praying for sick people does help them get better. This is a fact scientists and doctors do not understand, but many people have experienced getting better when people prayed for them.

What are some thoughts Satan puts into our mind to make us think we do not need to pray? What can you do to turn these thoughts aside and make a personal decision to pray for others?

THURSDAY—AUGUST 4

PRAYER EXAMPLES (Psalm 51).

The Bible is full of examples of powerful prayers given by God's people. None of these people were perfect. None of them had any righteousness (holiness) worthy of God's love. All of them were (and all of us are) sinners in need of God's mercy.⁶ They needed (and we need) Christ's righteousness in their prayers to make them acceptable to a holy God (Revelation 8:3). In their great need, they realized who they were and who God was. But they still prayed to their Creator, their Savior, and their heavenly Father.

Prayer shows we realize we cannot live without God. Prayer shows we know there are forces beyond our control. Prayer shows we know we are dependent upon something greater

than ourselves. Prayer shows we know worldly things can never fill all of our needs.

Listed below are three great prayers in the Bible. Each prayer is very long. So you might choose to read only one or two of them. Write down what makes the prayers so powerful. What can you learn from these prayers that can improve your prayer life?

Daniel 9:4-19 _____

1 Kings 8:15-61 _____

Psalm 51 _____

FRIDAY—AUGUST 5

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Read the chapter "The Privilege of Prayer" in *Steps to Christ*. What new ideas about prayer can you learn from this chapter?

Different ways to pray have been helpful for Christians. The best-known prayer is the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. It is possible to say this prayer in fewer than 60 seconds. But if you use the main themes (ideas) of this prayer as an outline for your prayers, you can stretch your prayer time for

⁶mercy—kindness we do not deserve.

half an hour, an hour, or even all night.

The services and sacrifices of the earthly sanctuary show us that our prayers can include praise, confession,⁷ and prayer for cleansing. The earthly sanctuary also shows us we can pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for power through the Bible, for others, and for a close relationship with the Lord.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Paul encourages believers to “pray without ceasing [stopping]” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). How can we pray “without ceasing”?
2. Share in class some personal experiences with prayer. You can talk about powerful answers to prayer or about what prayer does for you. You can explain your understanding of how prayer works. What can you share that can encourage others in their prayer life?
3. Is there anyone your class knows who needs prayer? Why not pray for this person in class? Then discuss the experiences of praying as a group and praying alone.
4. How can we help children have a meaningful prayer experience with their heavenly Father?

⁷confession—to tell God you have sinned.