

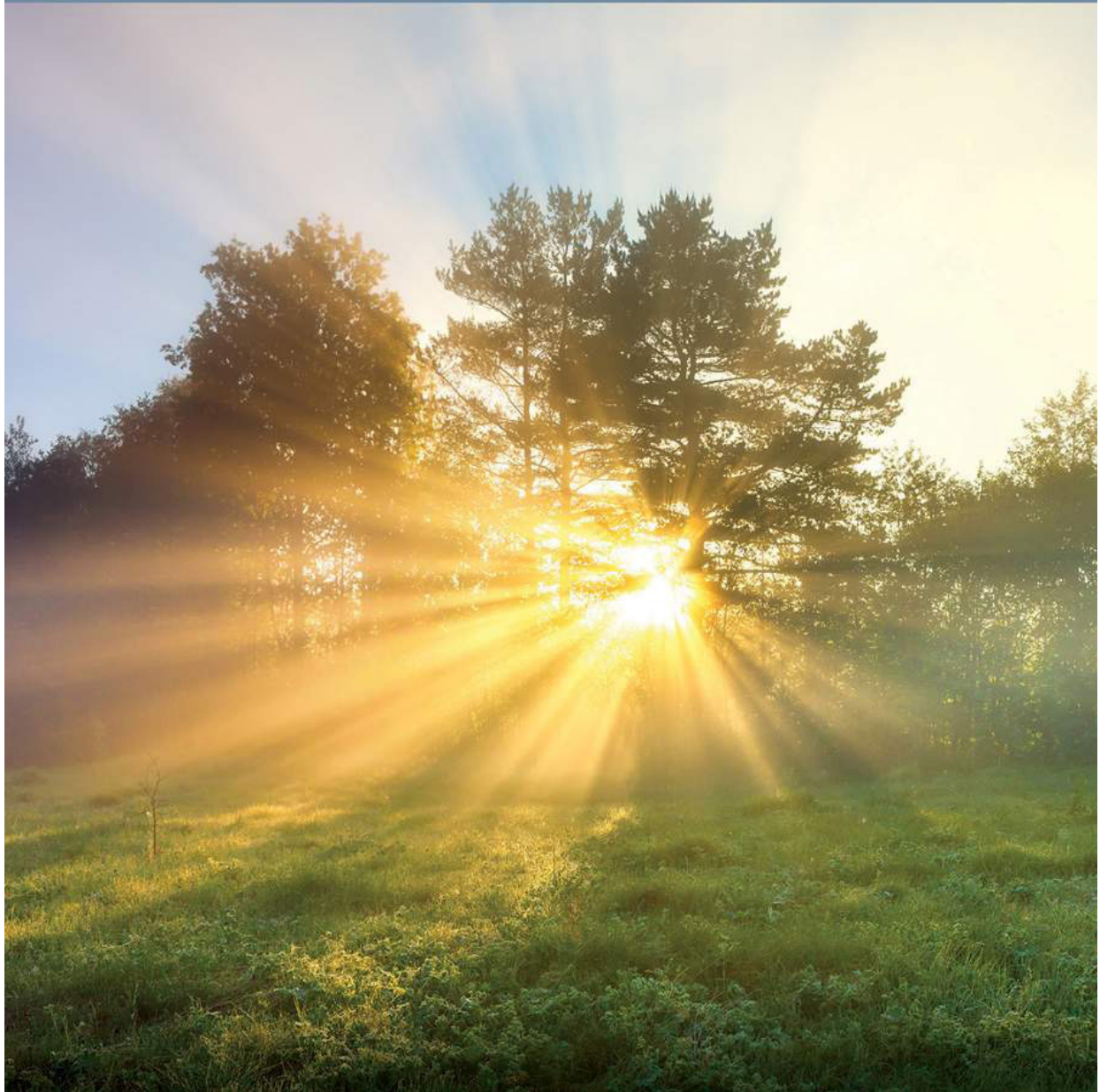


ROSE VISUAL
BIBLE STUDIES

6 SESSIONS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Bible Study



Our Father in Heaven



What is prayer? How does it work? Why should we pray? Is God moved to take decisive action that alters our reality because of prayer, or as the sovereign, all-knowing Lord, doesn't he already know exactly what the future holds? These questions tug at the edges of our imagination as we talk with God in prayer and study about prayer in the Bible.

While some element of mystery will always exist around prayer, we know that God has chosen to work through prayer to change us and to change our world. There is no question that prayer establishes a relational link between us and God, and that God works through that connection to re-order and re-organize our life just as he also changes the world in which we live.

Jesus taught his followers how to pray by giving them a model prayer recorded in Matthew 6:9–13. This prayer has been called the Lord's Prayer and it is far more than mere words we repeat. It provides a pattern to follow as we form our own personal prayers to God. Think of this prayer like a photographer creating a collection of portraits by zooming in, zooming out, then zooming back in on his subject. Our model prayer begins with a singular focus on God himself; then zooms out to God's plan and work in his world; and then zooms back in to specific needs we experience and our petitions for his help.

The Seven Petitions

The seven petitions of the Lord’s Prayer emphasize various attributes of God that help us place our needs and desires in proper perspective. The first three center on God. Only by focusing on our Father in heaven can we find the attitude that puts our own needs in perspective. The next four center on our needs—body, soul, and spirit—and the needs of others.

PETITION	THE LORD’S PRAYER	GOD’S ATTRIBUTE	MEANING
	Our Father in heaven,	God’s Love	God is a loving Father.
“Your”	1 Halloed be your name,	God’s Holiness	God’s name is holy.
	2 Your kingdom come,	God’s Sovereignty	There is no one above God our King.
	3 Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.	God’s Authority	God’s will is perfect.
“Us/Our”	4 Give us today our daily bread.	God’s Providence	Our needs are met by our heavenly Father.
	5 And forgive us our debts [trespasses], as we also have forgiven our debtors [those who trespass against us].	God’s Mercy	Forgiveness is our greatest need.
	6 And lead us not into temptation,	God’s Protection	Trials prove our faith and develop character.
	7 But deliver us from the evil one.	God’s Deliverance	We are more than conquerors through Christ.



Live It

Jesus taught us to pray starting with the words, “Our Father in heaven.” Perhaps you’ve repeated those words so often that they roll from your tongue in an almost-commonplace fashion. But this way of addressing God was nothing less than revolutionary in Jesus’ day.

Pagan peoples who worshiped idols and myths—such as the Romans worshiping Jupiter or the Greeks worshiping Zeus—may have sometimes referred to their god as “father.” However, they used the term to indicate their god was the origin or source of all things, not to imply a family relationship with the deity.

Although Old Testament passages occasionally refer to a notion of God as Father (Deut. 14:1–2; Ps. 103:13; Jer. 31:20), Judaism by the time of Jesus considered calling God “our Father” to be presumptuous and blasphemous. Jesus, however, repeatedly called God *Father* (this was one reason the Jewish leaders wanted to execute him). When we speak to God as *our Father*, we use the intimate language of a child communicating with a loving parent.

We pray to God as our Father because that is what Jesus taught us to do and because we have been adopted as children into the family of God. We become children of God by faith in his Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:12), and so we can boldly approach God in prayer. Our Father is near to us and accessible; but he is also “in heaven,” which reminds us that he is above us and greater than we are. He sees our end from the beginning and is worthy of our trust.

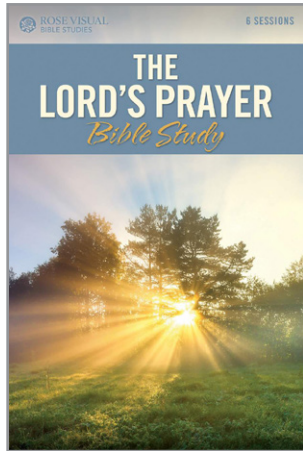
Exercise in Prayer

Praying the Scriptures

There are many ways you can pray the words of Scripture, but try this: *paraphrase* and *place* yourself in the story. The words of the Bible give us an opportunity to direct God's words back to him in the form of prayer. Take a verse or two from your devotional time, a favorite Bible passage, a prayer recorded in the Bible, or perhaps a psalm; then, rephrase the words to compose your own prayer to God.

- Praying Psalm 23 can bring peace to a troubled mind.
- Praying Psalm 100 can inspire sincere praise.
- The optional Bible reading in each session of this study provides a passage that can be turned into your own paraphrased prayer.





Learn More

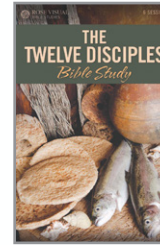
The Lord's Prayer Bible Study

Using colorful visuals, easy-to-read summaries, and reflections, *The Lord's Prayer Bible Study* takes you through the seven petitions of one of Jesus's most famous prayers. Enrich your prayer life with a deeper understanding of this model prayer that Jesus taught his closest disciples to pray.

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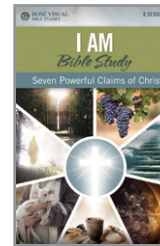
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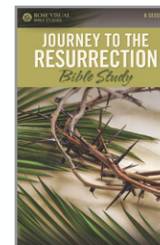
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