

# Teach us how to **pray**

Notes Guide  
**Week Two**



# Hallowed be your Name

## Question Guide

### Way in

When you pray, what sort of things do you normally pray for?

If you woke up tomorrow and miraculously had the perfect prayer life, what do you think it would look like? How often would you pray? What would you pray for? What would your attitude to be prayer be?

### Read **Ecclesiastes 5:1-7**

1. Read Matthew 6:9-13. In what ways does the start of the Lord's prayer ('Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name') completely transform our attitude to prayer? How are we able to pray differently because of it?

2. In Ecclesiastes 5, we're cautioned about being too hasty in our approach to God. It would be easy to read these verses and allow them to put us off prayer! But, in what ways might verses 1-3 give us confidence in prayer? Compare this passage with Romans 8:26-27, and consider how both the enormity of God and the intimacy of the Holy Spirit are able to liberate us in prayer.

3. Read Exodus 34:5-7. What do we learn about God's name? What surprises you and what encourages you? How does this truth affect the things you pray for most often?

4. One day your friend says to you, 'There's no point praying – God never answers anyway.' What would you say in the light of who God is?

5 'Hallowing' God's name means to treat him as holy - it is a desire for him to be worshipped for who he really is. To pray this is a powerful statement of intent about the kind of lives we want to live. In Ecclesiastes 5:4-7, we are encouraged to keep our promises to God. How is praying 'hallowed be your name' a good way of asking God to keep you faithful in following him? In what areas of your life at the moment does God's name need to be hallowed?

6. Do you think your prayers are more 'me-centred' or 'God-centred'? If your prayers changed to being more 'God-centred, how different would they look? Would you still pray for the same things? How would your whole attitude to prayer be different?

7. Read Romans 8:28-29. Paul Miller says *'At the centre of self-will is me, carving a world in my image. At the centre of prayer is God, carving me in his Son's image.'* How might this change the way you look for God to answer your prayers? How might it help you to respond when you don't get the answers you hoped for?

## Quote for Reflection

*'This prayer is not so much a petition that God will do some great act that will show everyone who and what he is, as a prayer that he will bring people to a proper attitude toward him. It expresses an aspiration that he who is holy will be seen to be holy and treated throughout his creation as holy.'* (Leon Morris)

How can praying like this totally change your prayers for:

- a. Yourself?
- b. Your family & friends?
- c. Your colleagues and workplace?
- d. Our nation?

# How to pray with right priorities

## Question Guide

### Way in

When you pray, what sort of things do you normally pray for?

If you woke up tomorrow and miraculously had the perfect prayer life, what do you think it would look like? How often would you pray? What would you pray for? What would your attitude to be prayer be?

### Read **Daniel 9:1-19**

*God's people are in a mess. They have turned against God, started worshipping idols and as a result have been invaded and taken to Babylon as exiles. Daniel is amongst them, but because of God's favour and Daniel's resolve he has been elevated to a position of influence in the King's court.*

1. Read v1-3. In the midst of a really hard time, what key things does Daniel do? Are these our immediate response during difficulties? Why/why not?

2. Daniel knows that in the midst of hard times the only source of hope is God. This spurs him on to both trust God's word and pray to him. Can you think of any promises in the bible that spur you on to pray?

3. In verses 4-14, we read of Daniel's confession to God. As you read through it, what strikes you about it? What are Daniel's priorities here? If and when we ask for God's forgiveness, how is Daniel's approach different from ours?

4. Part of the sadness that Daniel and the exiles faced was that their temple in Jerusalem was in ruins. This meant that their sacrifice system was in tatters – they therefore had no certainty that they could be forgiven for their sin. Read Hebrews 10:11-14, which speaks of Jesus as the only priest to be able make a sacrifice sufficient for all time. How does this give us amazing confidence when we approach God in prayer? As we think about ‘hallowing God’s name’, how does it reassure us that followers of Jesus are ‘being made holy’?

5. Read v15-19. Having prayed for God’s forgiveness, Daniel then prays for rescue. But, it is noticeable the basis on which he prays – that God’s name would be honoured. If God’s people aren’t rescued and returned to their land, it would reflect badly on God. In other words, he doesn’t pray for his own sake, but for God’s sake! Do you ever pray like this? With the things you are currently praying for, how would praying like this change the way you pray?

6. If you were re-writing verse 19 for your own life at the moment, what would it say?

7. A well-meaning friend says to you, ‘If you just pray and have enough faith, you’ll get exactly what you want. After all God exists to bless you.’ In the light of Daniel’s prayer, what would you say? Why?

## Quote for **Reflection**

*‘Instead of hunting for the perfect spiritual state to lift you above the chaos, pray in the chaos.’ (Paul E. Miller)*

Where is there ‘chaos’ in your life at the moment? Take some time to pray about it with others.