Passage Guide
Am I Praying the Wrong Way? | Week 6
Matthew **6:9-15** (Primary Passage)
October 18th, 2026

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Jesus teaches you that prayer is more than saying the right words; it is learning to follow God. The Lord's Prayer begins by turning your attention to God's holiness, His kingdom, and His will before bringing Him your daily needs. As you trust God for daily provisions, you learn to depend on Him one day at a time. Jesus also calls you to seek forgiveness, forgive others, and depend on God for strength against temptation. Prayer is not just something you say; it is a pattern for how you know God, trust God, and follow God in everyday life.

MAIN POINTS

1. Hands Up — Know God (Matthew 6:9) *Presence and Praise.* Begin by remembering that you are coming before your holy and loving Father. Ask God to help you honor His name through your words, choices, and actions. (Romans 8:15; Psalm 145:3)

2. Hands Open — Trust God (Matthew 6:10–11) *Purpose and Provision.* Ask for God's kingdom to be seen in your life and His will to shape your desires. Trust Him to provide what you need today, even when His provision looks different from what you expected. (Matthew 26:39; Exodus 16:4; Deuteronomy 8:3)

3. Hands Out — Follow God (Matthew 6:12–15) *Pardon and Protection.* Confess your sins, receive God's forgiveness through Christ, and extend forgiveness to others. Ask God to help you resist temptation and remain faithful through difficult situations. (Ephesians 4:32; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 John 1:9)

Big Idea: The Lord's Prayer doesn't just teach you what to say; it teaches you how to live

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does Jesus teach you to pray for God's name to be honored and His kingdom to come before asking for your daily needs? *Possible answer:* Prayer helps you put God first. You learn to value who He is and seek His will rather than treating prayer as a way to get everything you want. In other words, be careful not to treat God like a vending machine. (Matthew 6:9–10; Matthew 6:33)

2. What does Jesus teach you about the relationship between receiving forgiveness and forgiving others? *Possible answer:* You cannot earn God's forgiveness by forgiving others. Instead, when you understand and receive God's mercy through Christ, that mercy should change how you treat people who have hurt you. A refusal to forgive reveals a heart that is resisting the grace God calls you to show. (Matthew 6:12, 14–15; Ephesians 4:32)

3. Which posture do you need most this week: hands up, hands open, or hands out? Why? *Possible answer:* You may need hands up because your worries have taken your attention away from God. Beginning each day with praise can help you remember His character and faithfulness. Praise the Lord for His love, patience, kindness, mercy, etc. (Psalm 46:10; Matthew 6:9)

4. Where are you struggling to trust God with your needs, your plans, or an uncertain situation? *Possible answer:* You may be worried about finances, family, or the future. You can bring those concerns to God while choosing to obey Him today, even when you cannot see what comes next. (Matthew 6:11; Proverbs 3:5–6)

GOSPEL CONNECTION

The Lord's Prayer reminds you that you need more than better habits; you need a changed heart and the grace of God. Jesus lived in perfect obedience to the Father, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again so that all who repent and believe in Him can be forgiven and brought into God's family.

If you have not trusted Christ: Turn from your sin and put your faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. You cannot earn salvation by praying correctly or doing good works; you receive it by God's grace through faith.

If you already follow Jesus: Repent of the ways you have put your desires ahead of God's will. Return to Him in humility, receive His grace, forgive as you have been forgiven, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you live out the truth you pray.

This week's challenge: Don't just recite the Lord's Prayer. Live it. Lift your hands in praise, open your hands in trust, and extend your hands in obedience. Ask yourself: *What posture do I need to take this week?*

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Monday — Hands Up: Know God
Key Verse: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." (Matthew 6:9)
Reflection: Prayer begins by turning your attention to who God is, not just what you need from Him. Because God welcomes you as His child through Jesus Christ, you can approach Him with confidence while seeking to honor His name in everything you think, say and do.
Application Question: How can you put God first in your prayers today? *Possible Answer:* Before bringing God my requests, I can spend time praising Him for His goodness, faithfulness, and holiness, asking Him to help me honor Him throughout my day.
Prayer Response: Heavenly Father, thank You for welcoming me into Your family through Jesus. Help me see Your greatness, honor Your name, and reflect Your goodness in what I say and do today. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Tuesday — Hands Open: Trust God's Will
Key Verse: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10)
Reflection: Prayer is not about persuading God to follow your plans; it is about learning to trust Him and align your heart with His will. Even when His direction differs from what you hoped for, you can trust His wisdom and take the next faithful step.
Application Question: Where do you need to surrender your plans to God and trust His direction? *Possible Answer:* I may be worried about a decision or uncertain about the future, but I can ask God to guide me through His Word and help me obey Him today rather than demanding to know every step ahead.
Prayer Response: Father, help me desire Your will more than my own. Give me faith to trust Your wisdom when I do not understand what You are doing, and help me follow You one step at a time. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Wednesday — Hands Open: Trust God's Provision
Key Verse: "Give us this day our daily bread." (Matthew 6:11)
Reflection: God invites you to bring Him your everyday needs and depend on Him one day at a time. Just as He provided for Israel in the wilderness, He teaches you to trust His care, even when His provisions look different from what you expected.
Application Question: What need or concern do you need to place in God's hands today? *Possible Answer:* I can bring God my concerns about my family, finances, work, or future and ask Him to provide what I need while faithfully doing what He has called me to do today.
Prayer Response: Heavenly Father, thank You for knowing my needs before I ask. Help me trust Your provision, be content with what You provide, and remember to depend on You each day. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Thursday — Hands Out: Receive and Extend Forgiveness
Key Verse: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." (Matthew 6:12)
Reflection: Because God has shown you mercy through Jesus, you are called to confess your sins and extend grace to others. Forgiving someone does not mean pretending the hurt never happened or excusing harmful behavior; it means releasing revenge and entrusting justice to God as you pursue what is right.
Application Question: Is there someone you need to forgive, or a sin you need to confess to God? *Possible Answer:* I can honestly confess my sin to God and ask Him to help me release bitterness toward someone who hurt me, taking wise steps toward peace while maintaining appropriate boundaries when necessary.
Prayer Response: Father, thank You for the forgiveness You offer through Jesus Christ. Search my heart, help me confess my sin honestly, and give me the grace to forgive others as You have forgiven me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Friday — Hands Out: Follow God and Resist Temptation
Key Verse: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (Matthew 6:13)
Reflection: You do not have to face temptation in your own strength, because God invites you to depend on Him for help and protection. Rather than waiting until you have fallen into sin, ask Him to prepare your heart, recognize situations that make you vulnerable, and give you courage to obey Him today.
Application Question: What is one practical step you can take this week to resist temptation and follow God? *Possible Answer:* I can identify a situation where I am especially vulnerable, pray for God's help, turn away from that situation when possible, and seek support from a trusted Christian when I need accountability.
Prayer Response: Lord, I know I am vulnerable to temptation and need Your strength every day. Help me recognize danger, choose what honors You, and remain faithful even when obedience is difficult. Thank You for Your grace when I stumble and for Your help as I grow. In Jesus' Name, Amen.