

# THE FIRST 15

Thursday, January 16, 2025

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Today is Thursday, January 16, and we begin the year of 2025 with a study on the Practice of Prayer. This week we explore what it means to talk to God and how Jesus taught us to pray with the words of The Lord's Prayer.

## OPENING PRAYER

*At the dawn of a new day and the beginning of a new year, I seek God's presence - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I find a quiet space amid a busy day. I pause and become still, calm my thoughts, silence my mind, and breathe deeply and slowly. Lord Jesus, as the disciples once asked you to teach them to pray, I also ask you to teach me to pray. Instruct me in Your school of prayer and strengthen this practice in my life. Teach me to talk, speak, listen and respond. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Matthew 6:9-13 (ESV)***

## REFLECTION

Jesus teaches us how to pray. He invites us to ask God to, "Give us this day our daily bread." We are to request the common needs of life. God is the giver of all things. God gives us what we need and God keeps on giving to us each day, one day at a time. This reality has tremendous implications for our lives and especially for the way we pray. It encourages us to live a life of faith, trusting in a God who loves us, cares for us and provides for us. This is a posture of praying that makes us open, receptive and trusting.

As author Maxie Dunnam tells us, "The house of prayer is not a shop where we go to bargain and barter for the gifts of God. It is the home of the Father with whom we live, where all the treasures of God's love and concern are ours for the receiving."

Consider your current needs. Take stock of your physical needs, your material needs, your spiritual needs and your emotional needs. Conduct a personal inventory. What do you need today? These needs are your "daily bread" and you can ask God to supply you with whatever you need on a daily basis.

Believing God answers our prayers for sustenance means that we believe God provides enough resources for the needs of all people. It is each person's responsibility to be a good steward of God's gifts, to not selfishly store up things for ourselves and our families, but be willing to generously share with others. God has already given us gifts in abundance. We are to use these gifts to meet our needs as well as the needs of other people. Not only do these gifts meet physical and material needs, but spiritual and emotional needs as well.

Somewhere today you may cross paths with a person who has a need which you are equipped to fulfill. Be prepared to share what you have been given by God for the good of someone else. Maybe you can provide time, money, food, drink, clothing, or other resources. Perhaps you can give a kind word, a welcoming smile, a listening ear, or a caring heart. Maybe you will have the opportunity to pray for somebody today. Offer counsel, encouragement or advice. These are all good gifts from God.

### **Prayer Prompts:**

- Pray for God to meet your needs today - physical, material, spiritual and emotional.
- Pray God will use you to meet the needs of someone else.
- Pray for those who are physically or spiritual hungry today, that they may find their daily bread and be filled.

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

***Our Father who is in heaven, uphold the holiness of your name. Bring in your kingdom so that your will is done on earth as it's done in heaven. Give us the bread we need for today. Forgive us for the ways we have wronged you, just as we also forgive those who have wronged us. And don't lead us into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. (Matthew 6:9-13 CEB)***

Resources utilized: The Workbook of Living Prayer, Maxie Dunnam, Upper Room Books, Nashville, TN, 1994, p. 63-88.