

## **The Simplicity of Prayer**

*Luke 11:1-4*

**Introduction:** “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1) – this is what we are asking our Heavenly Father so that each one of us encounters a deepening experience of prayer. Prayer at times can seem so complex and confusing, but at the same time, it really is simple. In his answer to the disciples’ request to be taught to pray, Jesus gives them and us a simple prayer that we can use to guide our praying. May this week’s study encourage each of us to pursue the simplicity of prayer.

**Opening Discussion:** When does prayer become complex for you?

### **Read Luke 11:1-4**

1. What topics does Jesus’ prayer cover?
2. Is there anything that surprises you about what Jesus does or does not include in this prayer?
3. Lowell said that the Lord’s Prayer is “an ocean of prayer.” How might this be so?
4. What do you think Jesus intended when he gave this prayer? Did he intend that these words would become part of the ongoing prayers of the church or was it intended to be simply a model prayer?
5. Lowell suggested that the Lord’s Prayer is a place to start; that it can jump start our prayers. What do you think this means?
6. Lowell suggested that there is value in recited prayers (e.g. The Lord’s Prayer and other prayers of the church)? Do you agree or disagree with this? Why?
7. How might using recited prayers at times simplify prayer?

8. What, if any, has been your experience of using recited prayers?

9. What are we “afraid” of with recited prayers at times?

Lowell quoted Philip Yancey:

Written prayers serve an especially useful purpose, I have found, during periods of spiritual dryness, when spontaneous prayer seems an impossible chore. I borrow the words, if not the faith, of others when my own words fail. At such time I have two options. I can stop praying completely, which only serves to distance me further from God. Or I can keep going, asking God to see me through this difficult period, meanwhile leaning on the prayers of others.

*Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference, pg. 179-80*

10. Have you had any experiences of borrowing the words of others and “leaning on the prayers of others” in your prayer life?

### **Read Hebrews 7:24-25**

11. What does this passage say Jesus is currently doing?

12. How might the knowledge that Jesus is making intercession for us help us in our praying?

Lowell suggested a simple place to start in our prayers would be with the model:

“Our Father”

“I praise you for \_\_\_\_\_”

“I thank you for \_\_\_\_\_”

“I ask you for \_\_\_\_\_”

“In Jesus name, Amen.”

13. What do you think might be the fruit of using this simple guide to shape how you pray this week?