

# GROWN-UP PRAYERS

## PART 1: NOT LIKE THAT

After watching and listening to Jesus pray, his disciples concluded they'd been doing it wrong, even though they'd been praying their entire lives.

Based on the way Jesus responded, many of us—according to Jesus—aren't praying correctly. So, how should we pray?

### CONNECT

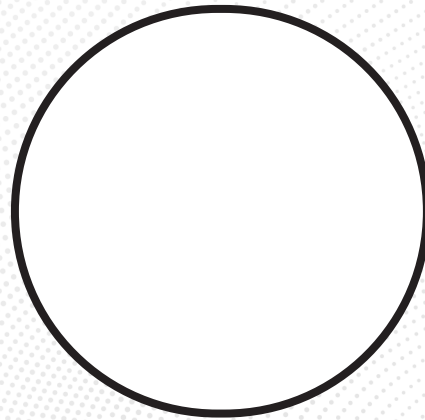
Spend five minutes answering the following questions individually. Once everyone has finished, discuss the questions on the following page.

1. About how many minutes do you think you've prayed during the last seven days? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In the list that follows, place a checkmark by the most common reason(s) you've prayed over the last seven days. "In the last week, I've prayed in order to..."
  - Ask for a specific desired outcome.
  - Ask for protection of loved ones.
  - Ask for wisdom about an upcoming decision.
  - Express anger about something that happened.
  - Express regret or ask forgiveness for something.
  - Express thankfulness for a meal.
  - Express thankfulness for something other than a meal.
  - Gain a better understanding of something in the Bible.
  - Get help in improving a particular area of my life.
  - Overcome a temptation I'm facing.
  - See another person become a Christian.
  - Seek peace during a difficult time.
  - Tell God how great he is.



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- Stay calm or focused in an upcoming stressful situation.
  - Other
3. Make a pie chart that represents the amount of time you spent in prayer for each of your reasons.



Discuss these questions with your group:

- How did you feel doing this exercise? What did you learn about yourself and the way you pray?
- How did you learn to pray? Was it modeled for you or were you taught specific prayers?
- Based on this exercise, what changes would you like to make in your prayer life?

## LEARN

You will watch a shortened version of a message from this series to set up your group discussion. Watch the full message sometime this week as a reminder of what you talked about today.

## APPLY

After sharing what stood out from the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. In the video, Andy said, “The best way to approach God is to approach him as a perfect father.” Is it difficult for you to see God as a perfect father? Why? How would your relationship with him change if you consistently saw him that way?





2. Read **Luke 22:39–44**. Jesus surrendered his will to his heavenly Father even when he was in anguish over the events leading to his resurrection. What does this tell you about the importance of submitting to the will of our heavenly Father?
3. In the video, Andy said, “The purpose of prayer is to surrender our will, not to impose it.” Think back to the times you’ve prayed in the last week.
  - Would you say you have been surrendering your will or imposing it?
  - How can you more consistently surrender your will to God?
4. At the end of the video, Andy presses into situations when we didn’t hear from God and situations where we try to pray our way out of a situation that we behaved our way into. Have you found yourself in one of those situations? To the extent you are comfortable, share your experience.
5. In hindsight, does the knowledge that God’s plan includes you but is bigger than you help? Why or why not?

## BEFORE NEXT TIME

You may be in the middle of a time when it seems like God is not answering your prayers. If so, share that with God—and your group if you are comfortable. Following the pattern Jesus provides, start by recognizing who your heavenly Father is. Surrender your will to him and ask for his will to be done. Your group can be an important community of support during this time.

Hold on to the exercise on pages 1 and 2 as a reminder of what you talked about today. Between now and next time, try praying this way. Alone. Undistracted. Begin by addressing God as Father. Take a moment to reflect on his greatness... and yet his closeness. Infinite, yet intimate. Then, tell him that his kingdom—his agenda—will be your priority all day long.

## PRAY

Have someone close your time together by praying the Lord’s prayer.

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today 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 the evil one. Amen.  
(**Matthew 6:9–13**)

