

Reflection Questions: Matthew 6:5-13

For the message, "Our Father in Heaven" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on March 10, 2019

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life.

You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion.

To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read the Scripture text: Matthew 6:5-13

5 "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. **6** But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

7 "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. **8** Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. **9** Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,

12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

A summary of the message:

Jesus invites us into a relationship with God that entails the privilege of addressing and experiencing the Creator of the universe as "Father."

Key Quotes:

- J.I. Packer, "You sum up the whole of [the] New Testament...if you describe it as the knowledge of God as one's holy Father.... 'Father' is the Christian name for God."

- HB Charles, “We should find it difficult to get past this opening address—Father. We should linger there. We should rejoice in it. We should stand in awe of God’s gracious condescension. We have the privilege of bringing our needs and wants and sins and hurts and fears directly to God in prayer. Not a priest or a patron saint or a guardian angel. God.
- Jl Packer, “If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God’s child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means he does not understand Christianity very well at all.
- David Powlison, “Prayer is meant to be the conversation where your life and your God meet.”

Bottom Line:

- Because of Jesus, we have access to call upon the Creator as our “Father,” and therefore we can talk to him about everything and anything that is on our minds and hearts.

Let’s get started...

- Do you find prayer to be easy or difficult? When do you find it easier or more difficult to pray?
- What do you think is your biggest obstacle to prayer?

QUESTIONS

1. Let’s think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.

- Jesus invites his followers to learn to address God as “Our Father in heaven.” How does this first phrase of the Lord’s prayer help us to properly orient ourselves before God? What are some of the implications?
- How does addressing God as “Father” / “Dearest Father” / or even “Daddy” take the pressure off of trying to impress God with our words and / or performance in prayer?

- How does this text clarify how Jesus wants me to experience God in my life?
- What wrong thoughts result when we forget this truth?

2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.

- What would it look like for a community of faith like MHC to fully embrace our relationship with God as "Father"? How would this form the character of MHC?
- What is the cost if we are not transformed by this text? In other words, what is lost if we are not transformed by the idea of being God's adopted children?

3. Let's think about how this text applies to our city.

- What questions do you think people in our city might ask of this text? In other words, if you shared this teaching of Jesus with someone in your family, workplace, or city, how do you think they would receive it?
- How does this text serve as Good News for those outside the faith?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

- _____
- _____