



## **Sunday Teaching Discussion Guide: SERMON ON THE MOUNT 07.08.2018**

### Recap:

- Jesus is addressing a society in which during a call for prayer, rather than stopping and praying wherever people found themselves, people would plan their day so at the right times, they happened to be walking into public places to pray to look pious and religious.
- Jesus doesn't want us to pray so we are praised by others. He wants prayer to start in our hearts so that it is honest and sincere.
- Other people in Jesus' society were so concerned about not offending other potential gods that they would have long prayers naming numerous deities in an attempt to try to please any potential god that could exist. However, in praising and praying to "potential gods", they were dishonoring the true God.
- The Lord's Prayer should be used as a scaffolding, not a building. We should use the Lord's Prayer as a way to learn how to pray, not to see it as the only acceptable prayer.
- The acceptable prayer is not found in the form, but in the honest and sincere meaning of the prayer.

### Discuss:

- Do you know the Lord's Prayer by heart? If so, how did you learn it? Was it important in your prayer life? If you are not as familiar with the Lord's Prayer, what are your experiences and assumptions about it?
- READ Matthew 6:7-8.
- How are Jesus' instructions about prayer similar to those about giving to the poor?
- What do you think the words "babbling like pagans" means? What criticism does Jesus seem to be making?
- What do you make of the phrase "your Father knows what you need before you ask him (Mt. 6:8)? Is it comforting? Confusing? Helpful?
- READ Matthew 6:9-13.
- What phrases stick out for you in the Lord's Prayer? What parts of the prayer are easy to say and mean? Which parts are hard to say and mean?
- What do you think is a danger in constantly repeating a prayer? (Re-read Matthew 6:7-8.) How can you keep the Lord's Prayer fresh and not let it become like the babbling of the pagans?

Pray: Invite members of your group to share prayer requests. Give a short prayer thanking God for your group discussion and asking God to be with the requests that have been shared.

### Read at Home: Additional Readings about Prayer

- 1 Kings 18:16-39
- Psalm 86
- James 5:13-18