

Our Father in Heaven

Matthew 6:5–9

Today we continue our new series, *Pray Like This: Seeing and Saying the Lord's Prayer*.

Let's break down this phrase into three parts: the first is *plural*, the second is *paternal*, and the third is *eternal*.

[1] "Our"

- It's *plural*, not singular – a prayer not designed for the individual.
 - See also: "Give *us* this day *our* daily bread, and forgive *us our* debts," etc.

- The prayer that should shape our social priorities in life—to find others to pray this with!

[2] "Father"

- We are to assume God's relationship to us is *paternal*, a father to his children.

- This title for God? Rare. *Very* rare when Jesus said it.

[3] "in Heaven"

- Our initial focus is *eternal*, not this-worldly.

- "Seeing" the Lord's Prayer: orienting ourselves upwards, to heaven
 - Why doesn't Jesus say, "Our Father, who is *everywhere*"?

To the Supper:

- What does the Lord's Supper have to do with the Father?
 - See John 6:32, 6:57. Compare with Matthew 6:8, 6:11.

For further reflection and application:

1. "Our" and "us" are used throughout the Lord's Prayer. This is a prayer to be said with others. How does Jesus' prescribed spirituality implicitly set your social priorities?
2. "Father" is a unique and privileged way of addressing God. What is your favorite way to address God in prayer? Why do you think this is? If it's not "Father," do you think you are prone to forget the Father?
3. "In Heaven" anchors us in the eternal world. How is this an *anchor* for you? Have you felt anchored lately?