



A Well-Defined  
**FAITH**

*[fāth] (noun)*

Biblical words used in church...  
Discover what they really mean.



Sunday  
June 14, 2026

Matthew 6:9

## Example Teaching Rhythm

### **Welcome and Connect: 10 Minutes**

This helps people feel connected and more comfortable participating in the study and discussion.

### **Look Forward: 5-10 Minutes**

Share any important church events, service opportunities, or upcoming group plans. Keep this brief but clear.

### **Look at Scripture: 25-35 Minutes**

This is the main focus of Community Groups. Read the selected scripture together and guide the group through discussion questions and observations.

### **Prayer: 10 Minutes**

Invite members to share prayer requests and praises, then pray together as a group. This is a time to support one another.

## Explaining the H.E.A.R Method

The acronym **HEAR** stands for **Highlight, Explain, Apply, and Respond**. Each of these four steps aims to cultivate an atmosphere to hear God speak.

**Highlight** - After praying for the Holy Spirit's guidance, read the passage of scripture, and highlight each verse that speaks to you.

**Explain** - Explain what the text means. Ask questions like:

- Who wrote this, to whom, and why? What does this reveal about God? What do the key words actually mean? What did this call the original audience to, and what does that reveal for me?

By asking questions, with the help of God's Spirit, and by using helpful study resources, you can understand the meaning of a passage or verse.

**Apply** - This application is the heart of the process. Everything you have done so far culminates under this heading. As you have done before, work to uncover the significance of these verses and the implications they have. Ask questions like:

- What does this passage reveal about God, yourself, or the world that you need to embrace or sit with? Does this passage challenge an attitude, assumption, or habit that needs to change? Is there something to do? Is there someone to love?

**Respond** - Your response to the passage may take on many forms. Ask: Is there something to pray? - Let the passage shape your prayer, not just inform it. Use the "Five Daily Prayer Prompts" to guide you in your response.

# “Father” – Our God Who Loves Us In Our Weakness, Provides for Our Needs, Teaches Us in Our Ignorance, and Corrects Us When We go Astray

## Introduction

Most people carry their father into the room when they hear this word.

That is not a small thing. Whatever your history – a father who was present and good, one who was absent, one who was there but not quite safe – that history does not disappear when you open a Bible. It shapes the lens through which every description of God as Father either lands or doesn't. It is worth naming before we go further, because the passage we study today will only be as useful as the honesty you bring to it.

The word Jesus uses in Matthew 6:9 is not a formal title. He doesn't say "Almighty God" or "Creator of Heaven and Earth." He says Father. The word itself – in Aramaic, Abba; in Greek, pater – is what a Jewish child used in ordinary domestic life. Not a throne room word. A household word. Jesus places it in the mouth of every believer as the first word of prayer, and what He is doing is not accidental. He is defining the relationship before He describes the requests.

That definition matters enormously. A father who loves in weakness is different from a God who only shows up when you have something to offer. A father who provides is different from a God you have to coax or earn. A father who teaches in ignorance assumes you don't already know – and doesn't punish you for it. A father who corrects when you go astray is not the same thing as a God who abandons, or one who looks away.

Matthew 6:9 is one of the most memorized verses in the Christian world. The danger of memorized verses is that they stop being heard. The goal of this week is not to learn something new about the Lord's Prayer. It is to let the first two words do what Jesus intended them to do – reorient everything that follows around a relationship, not a transaction.

Before we go further: When you pray, who do you picture? What does that reveal about what you actually believe – not doctrinally, but functionally – about the God you are addressing?

## Discussion Questions + Illustration

Select a question or two below to open up discussion.

- What word describes your experience with God – judge, manager, distant authority, present father? Where'd that word come from?
- Is it easier to pray when you feel like you have been good – and what does that reveal about what you think prayer is?
- Have you ever experienced God's correction and been able to recognize it as love rather than rejection? What made the difference?
- When you hear "Our Father," does the "Our" register? What does it mean that the prayer is communal before it is personal?
- What's a word a child would use with a good father that you've never used with God – and why?

Researchers studying infant development found that what most determined a child's willingness to explore an unfamiliar room wasn't temperament or curiosity – it was whether a trusted caregiver was present. The child didn't need instructions or intervention. They needed to know where the caregiver was. That alone made the unfamiliar room navigable.

- That is what "Father" does at the opening of this prayer. It is not a request. It is an orientation – establishing whose presence you are in before anything else is said. The asking becomes possible because the relationship is already settled.

## Highlight | Read Matthew 6:9

Matthew 6 sits inside the Sermon on the Mount – Jesus' most concentrated teaching on Kingdom living. By chapter 6, He has addressed hypocrisy in giving and prayer. What He offers next is not more critique. It is a model.

The prayer opens with two words that do more theological work than anything that follows: Our Father. The "Our" places the one praying inside a community of brothers and sisters who address the same God by the same name – it refuses to let prayer be purely private.

"Father" (patēr) does not merely describe origin. In the ancient world, a father named you, formed you, and was responsible for you. When Jesus tells His disciples to address God this way, He is conferring a relationship – and with it all four qualities the definition captures: love that holds in weakness, provision that doesn't wait to be earned, teaching that meets ignorance without contempt, and correction that aims at restoration, not punishment.

"Who art in heaven" is not a distance marker. It is an authority marker – His provision is not limited, His teaching is not partial, and His correction is not small.

- Jesus chose Father over every other title available to him. What does it tell you that he didn't say King, Judge, or Creator?
- Of the four qualities – love in weakness, provision, teaching, correction – which feels most difficult to receive? What does that cost you?

## Explain | Consider the Context

The Sermon on the Mount is addressed to disciples already following Jesus. What He teaches in chapter 6 is not a new religion. It is what it looks like to live inside the relationship the Kingdom makes possible.

The Lord's Prayer arrives after a warning against two failures: praying to be seen, and praying as though God needs convincing. Jesus cuts against both: your Father already knows what you need before you ask. The prayer is not about informing God. It is about orienting the person who prays.

That is what "Father" does. The one making requests is a child, not a subject. The one receiving them is not a judge evaluating a case, but a Father who already loves, provides, teaches, and corrects – not because you triggered the right response, but because that is who He is.

Each of the four qualities meets a specific human condition: weakness, need, ignorance, waywardness. None of those conditions disqualify you. They are precisely what the relationship was designed to address.

- Jesus says God already knows what we need before we ask. Why pray at all – and how does your answer reveal what you think prayer is for?
- Which condition – weakness, need, ignorance, or having gone astray – do you find hardest to bring into prayer honestly? What would change if you did?

## Apply | Discuss as a Group

The most common failure mode in prayer is not unbelief. It is distance – the assumption that you need to close a gap before you address God. Clean yourself up first. Get to a better place first. Then pray.

Matthew 6:9 does not describe that God. It describes a Father whose address is the starting point of prayer, not the reward for having been good enough to knock on the door. The child who is weak, needy, confused, and wandering is not the exception this relationship handles – it is the ordinary condition the relationship was built for.

That reorientation shows up in whether you pray when things are broken or only when they are manageable. Whether you bring actual confusion into prayer or only formed requests. Whether you can receive correction – a hard season, an unanswered prayer, a consequence – as the action of a Father who loves rather than a God who has written you off.

The most important application is not a technique. It is a posture: coming to God as a child who is learning, not a subject who is proving. The prayer Jesus teaches assumes need in every line. "Give us." "Forgive us." "Lead us." "Deliver us." That is not performing competence. It is practicing dependence.

- Where are you still approaching God as a subject presenting credentials rather than a child addressing a Father? What would it cost to change that this week?
- Where in your life are you waiting until things are more resolved before you bring them to God – and what are you assuming about him by waiting?

## Respond | How should I live/pray?

Matthew 6:9 does not end with "who art in heaven." It keeps going – because a Father is not just a relationship to understand. He is someone to address.

The posture this passage creates is not reverence alone, and not familiarity alone. It is the posture of a child who knows whose house they are in – bringing the full weight of their weakness, need, confusion, and wandering without curating any of it first. The Father already knows. The prayer is not the disclosure. It is the turning.

To call God Father is to remember what you are: a child who is loved in weakness, provided for in need, taught in ignorance, and brought back when they stray. Not a project. Not a performance. A child.

And children ask imprecisely, imperfectly, sometimes for the wrong thing – and a good father does not punish them for the asking. He answers in the way that is best. That is not a failure of the relationship. It is the shape of it.

The invitation this week is not to understand the Lord's Prayer more completely. It is to pray it more honestly – as a child addressing a Father who was already waiting, and who has never needed you to earn your way to the first two words.

- What would it look like to begin prayer this week not by listing requests, but by simply sitting with the word "Father" – and letting it do what Jesus intended before anything else is said?
- Is there a need, a weakness, or a place where you have wandered that you haven't brought to God because you didn't feel qualified? What would it look like to bring exactly that – unresolved, unfinished?
- What would you bring to God right now if you were completely convinced he wouldn't be disappointed by it?

## Response Tool: Five Daily Prayer Prompts

As you leave today, let these five questions carry the weight of your response into the week ahead – not as a checklist, but as an ongoing conversation with God. Introduce the five daily questions as a simple spiritual practice that can help us intentionally live out our faith in our workplaces, homes, families, and communities.

- God, where do you want me to go?
- God, who do you want me to see?
- God, what do you want me to say?
- God, what do you want me to pray?
- God, how do you want me to serve?

After this time of reflection, transition into a time of prayer requests. Allow time for members to share and, if appropriate, allow others in the class to pray for each other.

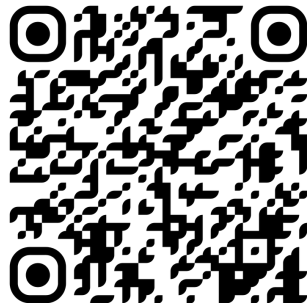
## Additional Commentary

- On "Our Father" (v.9) – patēr: In Jewish prayer, God was addressed as Father in formal liturgical settings. Jesus makes it the ordinary daily opening – not a special occasion word, but the standing orientation of a child who lives in the household. The "Our" refuses to let the relationship be purely private. To address God as Father is to recognize that everyone else who prays this prayer is your sibling.
- On "who art in heaven" (v.9): This is not a distance marker. In Hebrew thought, "heaven" denotes the realm of God's uncontested authority – the place where His will is fully done, which is why the prayer immediately asks for that same fullness to come to earth. The Father is not far away. He is pressing His uncontested reign into ours.
- On love in weakness: The biblical pattern is consistent – God's care intensifies toward the weak, not away from them. The Father of Matthew 6 is not a God whose attention you earn through strength. He is a Father whose attention is most fully present precisely where human strength runs out.
- On provision: In the ancient world, a father provided for his household not conditionally, but as the basic expression of who he was. When Jesus defines God as Father, provision is not a feature He is adding. It is built into the title.
- On teaching in ignorance: The prayer asks for God's will to be done – which assumes the one praying does not always know what that looks like. Ignorance is not disqualifying in this relationship. It is the ordinary starting condition of everyone who has ever prayed honestly.
- On correction: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" is not a prayer that assumes God is a threat. It assumes the child needs guidance. The Father who corrects is not the Father who abandons. Correction is the action of someone who intends for you to arrive, not merely to begin.

## Community Group Resource Page

Visit our website to view our **leadership resources.**

From Community Group training and resources to Discipleship Group starter guides, we want to equip you to make disciples.



# Additional Study

## Watch/Listen

### Bible Project - Matthew



See a collection of videos, classes, and articles that dive into [Matthew](#).

### Bible Project - Lord's Prayer



In this guide, we explore the [Lord's Prayer](#).

## Overview

### Enduring Word - Matthew 6



Text commentary, written materials, and audio/video recordings over [Matthew 6](#).

### Got Questions - God as Father



Biblical Q&A, articles, translations, audios, videos, apps, podcasts and more on [God as Father](#).

## Expand

### Bible Reference - Matthew 6



Explore chapter and verse commentaries to deepen your understanding of [Matthew 6:9](#).

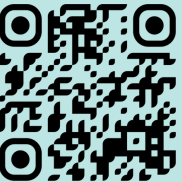
### Bible Hub - Matthew 6:9



Parallel translations, language tools, commentaries, and much more on [Matthew 6:9](#).

## Deepen

### Logos Factbook - Father



Logos Factbook shares information resources and articles about [God as Father](#).

### Blue Letter Bible - Matthew 6



Original texts, Translations, Cross-Refs, Commentaries, Dictionaries + more on [Matthew 6:9](#).

