

BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....” John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

MISSIONARIES OF THE WEEK



Joshua & Carol Ngunta | Mali

PRAISE
- We have raised the \$50,000.00 needed for the down payment toward the LAMBS School Purchase Project. This will move forward as soon as the government registration of Tabitha Cares as an entity in Mali is complete.
- A Tabitha Cares project proposal was recently approved to receive funds from a Foundation for planned projects

PRAY
- Our first grade class teacher in N’tdiambougou village unexpectedly died recently. Please join us in asking our Father to provide his replacement quickly and to journey with us in grief, especially the children in the school.
- We have a wonderful opportunity to open a house church across town. Pray for wisdom in planning and details and for a timely opening



Handout: 05/14/23
Study Date: 05/21/23

The Prayer of Praise

If you primarily think of God as your Father, and if you usually address God as Father when you pray, you have Jesus to thank. For prior to Jesus, no one — not in Judaism or in any other religious tradition — spoke of God or to God as Father in the personal ways Jesus did.

It’s true that Old Testament saints occasionally referred to God as Israel’s father (Deuteronomy 32:6; Psalm 103:13) and even less occasionally called him their Father when they prayed (Isaiah 63:16). But the fact that they rarely did so reveals that they didn’t relate to God primarily as a Father. Certainly not in the way Jesus did — which was also the way he taught all his followers to relate to God.

In all four Gospels, when Jesus speaks about God, he typically refers to him as his Father. And when the Gospel writers allow us to listen in on Jesus praying, we hear him addressing God as Father. This wasn’t merely an endearing metaphor to Jesus. God as his Father was a fundamental relational reality to him. This is clear when, as we hear him pray in Gethsemane, he cries, “Abba, Father” (Mark 14:36). Abba was the most common term Aramaic speakers used when speaking to their earthly fathers — Jesus and his (half) siblings would have used it when addressing Joseph.

This familial way Jesus referred to God scandalized and outraged the Jewish leaders. They understood God as their Father the way a potter might be called the father of his clay creation (see Isaiah 64:8). But Jesus viewed God as his “Abba, Father” the way a child views the paternal parent who begot him. To the Jewish leaders, this led to blasphemy worthy of capital punishment, because “he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God” (John 5:18). Indeed, he was God’s own Son — a reality they tragically failed to discern.

And astoundingly, Jesus, the “only Son from the Father” (John 1:14), wanted all of his disciples, we who are not sons of God the way he is, to also relate to God as our “Abba, Father.” For when Jesus provided us a model or pattern for how to pray, what Christians down through the ages have called the Lord’s Prayer, the first thing he taught us was to address God as “our Father in heaven” (Matthew 6:9).

In quoting Jesus here, Matthew remarkably uses the Greek word pater, the equivalent to Abba in Aramaic — the common, everyday term that everyone used for father. Pause and ponder just how astounding the phrase “our Father in heaven” is, considering the reality it represents: God as our heavenly Pater, Abba, Father. If we have lost our wonder over calling God our Father, it’s time to recover it.

Source: “We Call Him ‘Father’” by Jon Bloom

KEY VERSE

Matthew 6:9 (NKJV)

*This, then, is how you should pray:
“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,....”*

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Matthew 6:9-13; Psalm 100

Introduction

1. What does it mean to you that God is “Our Father”?
2. Believers get to call the God who created the universe, “Our Father”. Does this excite you or has calling God, “Father”, become mundane in your life? Why did you answer the way that you did?

Tuesday: Matthew 6:9; John 1:12-13; Galatians 4:6-7

God is Our Father

3. Why do you think that Jesus taught us to refer to God as “Our” Father?
4. How often do you pray with other people? What has that experience been like for you?

Wednesday: Matthew 6:9; Hebrews 4:6; Psalm 103

God is Our Heavenly Father

5. What does it mean that we can relate to God as our Father?
6. How has God shown Himself to be your Heavenly Father?

Thursday: Matthew 6:9; Isaiah 6:3-5; Exodus 20:7; Psalm 115:1-8

God is our Holy Father

7. What does it mean that God is holy?
8. How does the holiness of God impact the way that you think about prayer?
9. How does your life demonstrate your reverence for God?

Friday: Matt. 6:9; James 1:17; Psalm 139:14; Ephesians 1:3

Thank God For What He Has Done

10. What attributes of God make Him worthy to be praised?
11. What has God done in your life that you are thankful for?
12. How will you connect with God this week?