

becoming



vGroup Study



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Becoming: vGroup Study

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PRAYING TO BECOME

Who are we becoming? For the ‘Becoming’ series, each week in our worship gatherings Pastor Dustin has taken one of the virtues listed in 2 Peter 1:3–11 and explored this question. As Christians, God is concerned with the *type* of people we are becoming. This week’s sermon was on the virtue of godliness as modeled in the life of Daniel.

In our vGroups, the focus has not been on the *who*, but rather the *how* of becoming. How are we becoming the type of person that models Christ to the world? And what does that process look like? In the seventh ‘Becoming’ vGroup video, Pastor Dustin speaks on the spiritual habit of prayer.

Earlier in this series, Pastor Dustin mentioned that the spiritual habits are ‘*vehicles of becoming*’. If the goal of the Christian faith is to grow into spiritually mature Christians that look, speak, and act like Jesus, then spiritual habits, such as prayer, are the catalyst for that growth and transformation.

- Try to define ‘prayer’. What does the spiritual habit of prayer involve? What is its goal?
- Most Christians would agree that prayer is vital to our spiritual growth, yet we often struggle to pray consistently. What are some of our struggles with developing a healthy, consistent prayer life?
- Communication fosters deeper relationships. Think of how this works in the parent-child relationship. How does communication with God through prayer build deeper communion with him?

The most recognizable teaching on prayer in the Bible is the Lord’s Prayer. Jesus gives his disciples the Lord’s Prayer as a part of his broader teaching on the subject in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:5–15). Jesus offers his disciples this prayer as a *pattern* for how to pray and what to say.

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. ⁶But 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. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹Pray then like this:

*“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
¹⁰Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
¹¹Give us this day our daily bread,
¹²and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
¹³And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.*

Matthew 6:5–13

- In what ways does Jesus the Son describe God the Father in the verses leading up to the Lord’s Prayer (v.5–8)? How does Jesus want us to see our relationship with God (v.9)?
- In this week’s video, Pastor Dustin broke down the general flow of the Lord’s Prayer. Briefly discuss each line of the prayer and the general idea of each petition.
- Below is a brief outline of the Lord’s Prayer to help guide the discussion.
 - Our Father
 - We identify and acknowledge to whom we are praying.
 - Hallowed
 - We worship and praise God for who he is. Think about the attributes and character of God.
 - Kingdom come
 - We intercede and ask for God’s will to be done corporately as well as individually in the world as he works to reunite heaven and earth.
 - Daily bread
 - We intercede for ourselves now as well as for others (What do we need? What do others need from the Lord?).
 - Forgiveness
 - We confess of our sins, acknowledging how God has forgiven us so that this same radical forgiveness might be modeled in our lives toward others.

- Deliverance

- We ready ourselves for the trials and temptations thrown at us by the evil spiritual forces at work in the world. For they are sure to come! And when the trials come, we pray for the Lord's deliverance which we also know will come!

- How does Jesus address the motive of our prayers in these verses?

While Jesus gives us a pattern for what to say in our prayers, the Scriptures also offer a robust teaching on *when* we should pray as well as the different *ways* we engage in prayer. Through this diverse teaching, the Scriptures provide helpful insight into how we can each cultivate a healthy habit of prayer.

- When should we pray?

- Examples

- *Daily rhythm prayers*—think about devout Jews like Daniel in the Old Testament. Devout believers in the Lord prayed three times per day every day—morning, noon, and evening.
- *Pray without ceasing*—1 Thessalonians 5:16–18. Paul talks about a posture of prayer that we can have as we go about our day. This posture heightens our senses and readies us for the Holy Spirit to work and act as we communicate with him.
- *Conversation style prayers*—like any conversation there are times of talking and times of listening.

- What are some different ways the Bible shows that we can engage in prayer?

- Examples

- *Corporate prayer*
- *Private prayer*
- *Spoken prayer* (praying out loud) *versus unspoken prayer* (praying in our minds)
- *Prayer journaling*—writing out our prayers (think of the Psalms)

- *Reading others' prayers*—the Psalms or prayer books.

In this series, we have talked now at great length about the sanctification process for a Christian. We have likened this process to a journey of spiritual transformation in which God changes us from the inside-out. But, this journey is one of mutual partnership; we must be active participants in the process. Prayer is a grace from God that—if we choose to utilize this gift—can spur on our spiritual transformation into the image of Christ.

- This week, simply, how can you make prayer a greater reality in your life?

- If you are struggling with what to pray this week, use the Lord's Prayer as a pattern for what to pray and what to say. From that pattern, let your petitions to the Lord flow out.
- Create a rhythm. Start small. Simply, take a few minutes of interrupted time each day in the morning or in the evening to talk to your heavenly Father.
- Re-watch and reflect of Pastor Dustin's video from this week. Allow the Holy Spirit to convict you and inspire you concerning the different ways you can begin to become more involved in your own spiritual growth and relationship with the Lord through the spiritual habit of prayer.