**Small Group Material: w/b April 16th**

**Teach us how to pray: a pattern**

*Welcome*

Who is the person that most admire or look up to in the world? How would you prepare yourself to meet with that person?

*Worship*

Listen or sing together ‘Good good Father’ - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zImUxzi-p_Y>

or read Psalm 145 (or another psalm of adoration / praise.

*Word*

The Sermon on the Mount, follows on in Matthew’s Gospel from the Beatitudes, which introduce it. Central in the sermon (i.e. in the place of strongest emphasis) is the Lord’s Prayer.

Read **Matthew 6 verses 5-15.**

Jesus gives us this prayer and the guidance around it not so much as something to repeat unthinkingly, but rather to help us with our **approach** to prayer, and with the **anatomy**/structure of our prayers

First he warns us about true and false approaches to prayer…

1. What kinds of false approach to prayer does Jesus warn about in verses 5-8?
2. In v.6 Jesus tells us to pray in secret. Does that mean he’s telling us not to pray together in public? Why?

Do you have to lock your door physically before you pray, or can you do this in other ways in practice? Share examples of how you go about this yourselves.

1. On Sunday, James talked about to key to the right **approach** being to remember that - in prayer - you are actually approaching the God who created you, sustains you and loves you more than anyone in the world… and to remember that **you are praying to an audience of one**.

Discuss ways that you have found to bring those things to mind as you pray.

1. What are the full personal implications of being able to pray ‘Our Father…’?
2. In verses 9-13, there are 7 separate petitions. What is the most striking contrast between the first three and the last four? How does this order build on what Jesus has already said about our **approach** to God in prayer?
3. Considering the **anatomy** / skeleton of our prayers that Jesus offers, when we pray ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ - how does this apply a) in our lives? b) in the lives of people around us who don’t yet know Jesus? c) to the wider world?
4. Think about how the last 4 petitions give shape to our prayers for ourselves in body (our physical needs), mind/soul (that part of us which relates to others), and spirit (that part of us which communes with God).

*Witness*

**Jesus tells us to pray ‘Thy Kingdom Come’, and we will be doing that particularly from May 10th-20th leading up to Pentecost as part of a global prayer initiative. Look at the website** <https://www.thykingdomcome.global> **and spend some time talking about how your Small Group might get do something together in that week.**

More personally, ask God to give you the names of 2 people who live locally whom you know, and would like to come to know Jesus’ reign in their lives (write them down now and share them with someone in your Small Group so that you can be accountable to them). Commit to pray for them daily for the next month. Commit to inviting them to the Alpha celebration on 24th April.