

SUMMARY

Jesus did not hand us a magic prayer to repeat mindlessly, he handed us a model that asks for our engagement. And notice who the prayer includes: not one person alone, but all of *us*. Human nature reads it as “*my* Father, give *me*, forgive *me*, lead *me*,” but Jesus deliberately avoided that. Individualism produces isolation, comparison, self-righteousness, and blindness toward other people.

Saying “*us*” forces humility, dependence, and responsibility. The things we ask for, peace, provision, hope, restoration, direction, health, are not only requests for divine intervention; they are invitations for the body of Christ to embody God's character through presence, generosity, encouragement, reconciliation, guidance, and care. The prayer is a template for shared life in community, which is exactly what Acts 2 describes.

MAIN TAKEAWAY

The quiet danger for us is personal faith without other people. What we pray for is often what we are invited to embody: God's character carried out in our lives towards each other.

ICE BREAKER

Introvert or extrovert? What you would do if a stranger sat next to you and started talking.

LOOK BACK

- How have you viewed faith up to this point, as something personal between you and God, or as something shared with other people?
- What has made you cautious about getting connected with people in the church in the past, and what has drawn you in?

LOOK UP

- Read Matthew 6:9-13 slowly and out loud. Notice that every request is plural. What changes in the prayer when you hear “us” and “our” instead of “me” and “my”?
- Read Acts 2:42-47. What stands out to you about the way these believers lived together? How close to, or far from, your own experience of church does that feel and how can you be a part of bringing this kind of community?
- Read 1 Corinthians 12:20-27. Paul says no part of the body can tell another part “I don't need you.” What do we lose when we try to hold a personal faith without other people?

LOOK AHEAD

- Being known by a church takes more than showing up. What is one step that would move you from attending to belonging, and what has held you back from taking it?
- We often pray for peace, provision, hope, restoration, direction, and health. God frequently answers those prayers through people. Who around you is asking for one of those right now, and how could you be the church for them this week?
- You cannot know everyone... but everyone can be known. Who are a few people you could connect with and what would it take to know them and to be genuinely known by them?

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Make it a goal to connect with others. Maybe that's joining a small group or a serving team, or maybe it's grabbing coffee with someone during the week. Whatever it looks like, write down one action step.

CONVERSATION TIPS

- **Listen Well.** Give others your full attention, and listen to understand rather than to respond.
- **Share Honestly.** Be open about your thoughts and questions; none of us have all the answers.
- **End with prayer.** Share requests around the group, then close your time together in prayer.