

AS ABOVE SO BELOW

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME, YOUR KINGDOM, COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN, GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD, AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE ALSO HAVE FORGIVEN OUR DEBTORS, AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE. MATTHEW 6:9-13

DISCUSSION GUIDE

WHEN YOU PRAY

SPEAKER: Bo Stern Brady

DATE: January 4, 2026

TEXT(S): Matthew 6:5–13

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE: This resource is designed to help you, or your group, step through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. Our goal is to help you better understand and apply B4's teaching.

MESSAGE SUMMARY + DISCUSSION PROMPTS

This message invites us to take the posture of true disciples by listening deeply to the words of Jesus, and then living them out. Rooted in Matthew 6, Jesus' teaching on prayer reveals that formation, not performance, is God's goal. Prayer is not about impressing others or anxiously persuading God. It is about an intimate, authentic relationship with a loving Father who already knows our needs. Jesus contrasts cheap, human rewards with the rich response of God. Beginning with "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name," the Lord's Prayer grounds us in God's nearness, holiness, and kingdom mission, calling us to be truly formed by what we believe.

LEAN IN: These are icebreakers and warm-ups, mostly to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What's a habit or practice you've tried to start that was harder than you expected?
2. When you hear the word "prayer," what emotions or images come to mind?
3. What helps you feel most focused or present in conversations?
4. What's one word you'd use to describe your current spiritual season?
5. What does the phrase "God is near" stir up in you? Comfort, doubt, curiosity, or something else?

LOOK DOWN: These are questions about the Bible passage(s) above. Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:

1. What stands out to you about where the Lord's Prayer appears in the Sermon on the Mount?
2. Why do you think Jesus contrasts praying "to be seen" with praying "in secret"?
3. How do the two different Greek words for "reward" shape your understanding of this passage?
4. What does this passage reveal about what Jesus believes God is like?
5. How does Jesus' understanding of God as Father shape the way He teaches prayer?

LOOK OUT: *These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:*

1. Where do you see performative spirituality showing up in your culture today?
2. Where and how do you see anxiety shaping how people approach God or spirituality?
3. What modern equivalents might there be to praying like “pagans” in this passage?
4. How does social media affect the way people express faith publicly?
5. What would need to change in churches if formation mattered more than appearance?

LOOK IN: *These questions help you consider how to engage the teaching for yourself. Spend about 15-20 minutes discussing your choice of two or three questions:*

1. Where do you notice performance creeping into your spiritual life?
2. How do you personally relate to God as Father? Friend? King?
3. What emotions surface when you think about praying with complete honesty?
4. In what ways might God be inviting you into deeper trust and intimacy this season?
5. What part of this teaching feels most uncomfortable, or most freeing, for you and why?

LIVE IT OUT: *These practical action steps help you apply this message to day-to-day life. Choose one prompt and talk it over for 5-10 minutes:*

1. Set aside five minutes each day this week to pray with no agenda. Just focus on your awareness of God's presence.
2. Reflect daily for one week on what kind of “reward” you’re living for, and journal this question each day: Am I becoming what I believe?

You can find B4's [Series Resources and a link to 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting here.](#)

